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Nebraska Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution

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**Mrs. Laura B. Pound Second and Sixth State Regent,
Nebraska Society, Daughters of the American Revolution.
1896-1897, 1901-1902**

**COLLECTION OF
NEBRASKA PIONEER
REMINISCENCES**

ISSUED BY THE

NEBRASKA SOCIETY OF

THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION



NINETEEN SIXTEEN

THE TORCH PRESS

CEDAR RAPIDS

IOWA

FORETHOUGHT

This Book of Nebraska Pioneer Reminiscences is issued by the Daughters of the American Revolution of Nebraska, and dedicated to the daring, courageous, and intrepid men and women—the advance guard of our progress—who, carrying the torch of civilization, had a vision of the possibilities which now have become realities.

To those who answered the call of the unknown we owe the duty of preserving the record of their adventures upon the vast prairies of "Nebraska the Mother of States."

"In her horizons, limitless and vast
Her plains that storm the senses like the sea."

Reminiscence, recollection, personal experience—simple, true stories—this is the foundation of History.

Rapidly the pioneer story-tellers are passing beyond recall, and the real story of the beginning of our great commonwealth must be told now.

The memories of those pioneers, of their deeds of self-sacrifice and devotion, of their ideals which are our inheritance, will inculcate patriotism in the children of the future; for they should realize the courage that subdued the wilderness. And "lest we forget," the heritage of this past is a sacred trust to the Daughters of the American Revolution of Nebraska.

The invaluable assistance of the Nebraska State Historical Society, and the members of this Book Committee, Mrs. C. S. Paine and Mrs. D. S. Dalby, is most gratefully acknowledged.

LULA CORRELL PERRY
(Mrs. Warren Perry)

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SOME FIRST THINGS IN THE HISTORY OF ADAMS COUNTY

BY GEORGE F. WORK

Adams county is named for the first time, in an act of the territorial legislature approved February 16, 1867, when the south bank of the Platte river was made its northern boundary. There were no settlers here at that time although several persons who are mentioned later herein had established trapping camps within what are now its boundaries. In 1871 it was declared a county by executive proclamation and its present limits defined as, in short, consisting of government ranges, 9, 10, 11, and 12 west of the sixth principal meridian, and townships 5, 6, 7, and 8, north of the base line, which corresponds with the south line of the state.

Mortimer N. Kress, familiarly known to the early settlers as "Wild Bill," Marion Jerome Fouts, also known as "California Joe," and James Bainter had made hunting and trapping camps all the way along the Little Blue river, prior to this time. This stream flows through the south part of the county and has its source just west of its western boundary in Kearney county. James Bainter filed on a tract just across its eastern line in Clay county as his homestead, and so disappears in the history of Adams county. Mortimer N. Kress is still living and now has his home in Hastings, a hale, hearty man of seventy-five years and respected by all. Marion J. Fouts, about seventy years of age, still lives on the homestead he selected in that early day and is a respected, prominent man in that locality.

Gordon H. Edgerton, now a resident and prominent business man of Hastings, when a young man, in 1866, was engaged in freighting across the plains, over the Oregon trail that entered the county where the Little Blue crosses its eastern boundary and continued in a northwesterly direction, leaving its western line a few miles west and a little north of where Kenesaw now stands, and so is familiar with its early history. There has already been some who have questioned the authenticity of the story of an Indian massacre having taken place where this trail crosses Thirty-two Mile creek, so named because it was at this point about thirty-two miles east of Fort Kearny. This massacre took place about the year 1867, and Mr. Edgerton says that it was universally believed at the time he was passing back and forth along this trail. He distinctly remembers an old threshing machine that stood at that place for a long time and that was left there by some of the members of the party that were killed. The writer of this sketch who came to the county in 1874, was shown a mound at this place, near the bank of the creek, which he was told was the heaped up mound of the grave where the victims were buried, and the story was not questioned so far as he ever heard until recent years. Certainly those who lived near the locality at that early day did not question it. This massacre took place very near the locality where Captain Fremont encamped, the night of June 25, 1842, as related in the history of his expedition and was about five or six miles south and a little west of Hastings. I well remember the appearance of this trail. It consisted of a number of deeply cut wagon tracks, nearly parallel with each other, but which would

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converge to one track where the surface was difficult or where there was a crossing to be made over a rough place or stream. The constant tramping of the teams would pulverize the soil and the high winds would blow out the dust, or if on sloping ground, the water from heavy rains would wash it out until the track became so deep that a new one would be followed because the axles of the wagons would drag on the ground. It was on this trail a few miles west of what is now the site of Kenesaw, that a lone grave was discovered by the first settlers in the country, and a story is told of how it came to be there. About midway from where the trail leaves the Little Blue to the military post at Fort Kearny on the Platte river a man with a vision of many dollars to be made from the people going west to the gold-fields over this trail, dug a well about one hundred feet deep for the purpose of selling water to the travelers and freighters. Some time later he was killed by the Indians and the well was poisoned by them. A man by the name of Haile camped here a few days later and he and his wife used the water for cooking and drinking. Both were taken sick and the wife died, but he recovered. He took the boards of his wagon box and made her a coffin and buried her near the trail. Some time afterwards he returned and erected a headstone over her grave which was a few years since still standing and perhaps is to this day, the monument of a true man to his love for his wife and to her memory. [13]

The first homestead was taken in the county by Francis M. Luey, March 5, 1870, though there were others taken the same day. The facts as I get them direct from Mr. Kress are that he took his team and wagon, and he and three other men went to Beatrice, where the government land office was located, to make their entries. When they arrived at the office, with his characteristic generosity he said: "Boys, step up and take your choice; any of it is good enough for me." Luey was the first to make his entry, and he was followed by the other three. Francis M. Luey took the southwest quarter of section twelve; Mortimer N. Kress selected the northeast quarter of section thirteen; Marion Jerome Fouts, the southeast quarter of eleven; and the fourth person, John Smith, filed on the southwest quarter of eleven, all in township five north and range eleven west of the sixth principal meridian. Smith relinquished his claim later and never made final proof, so his name does not appear on the records of the county as having made this entry. The others settled and made improvements on their lands. Mortimer N. Kress built a sod house that spring, and later in the summer, a hewed log house, and these were the first buildings in the county. So Kress and Fouts, two old comrades and trappers, settled down together, and are still citizens of the county. Other settlers rapidly began to make entry in the neighborhood, and soon there were enough to be called together in the first religious service. The first sermon was preached in Mr. Kress' hewed log house by Rev. J. W. Warwick in the fall of 1871.

The first marriage in the county was solemnized in 1872 between Roderick Lomas or Loomis and "Lila" or Eliza Warwick, the ceremony being performed by the bride's father, Rev. J. W. Warwick. Prior to this, however, on October 18, 1871, Eben Wright and Susan Gates, a young couple who had settled in the county, were taken by Mr. Kress in his two-horse farm wagon to Grand Island, where they were married by the probate judge.

The first deaths that occurred in the county were of two young men who came into the new settlement to make homes for themselves in 1870, selected their claims and went to work, and a few days later were killed in their camp at night. It was believed that a disreputable character who came along with a small herd of horses committed the murder, but no one knew what the motive was. He was arrested and his name given as Jake Haynes, but as no positive proof could be obtained he was cleared at the preliminary examination, and left the country. A story became current a short time afterward that he was hanged in Kansas for stealing a mule. [14]

The first murder that occurred in the county that was proven was that of Henry Stutzman, who was killed by William John McElroy, February 8, 1879, about four miles south of Hastings. He was arrested a few hours afterward, and on his trial was convicted and sent to the penitentiary.

The first child born in the county was born to Francis M. Luey and wife in the spring of 1871. These parents were the first married couple to settle in this county. The child lived only a short

time and was buried near the home, there being no graveyard yet established. A few years ago the K. C. & O. R. R. in grading its roadbed through that farm disturbed the grave and uncovered its bones.

In the spring and summer of 1870 Mr. Kress broke about fifty acres of prairie on his claim and this constituted the first improvement of that nature in the county.

J. R. Carter and wife settled in this neighborhood about 1870, and the two young men, mentioned above as having been murdered, stopped at their house over night, their first visitors. It was a disputed point for a long time whether Mrs. Carter, Mrs. W. S. Moote, or Mrs. Francis M. Luey was the first white woman to settle permanently in the county; but Mr. Kress is positive that the last named was the first and is entitled to that distinction. Mrs. Moote, with her husband, came next and camped on their claim, then both left and made their entries of the land. In the meantime, before the return of the Mootes, Mr. and Mrs. Carter made permanent settlement on their land, so the honors were pretty evenly divided.

The first white settler in the county to die a natural death and receive Christian burial was William H. Akers, who had taken a homestead in section 10-5-9. The funeral services were conducted by Rev. J. W. Warwick.

In the summer of 1871 a colony of settlers from Michigan settled on land on which the townsite of Juniata was afterward located, and October 1, 1871, the first deed that was placed on record in the county was executed by John and Margaret Stark to Col. Charles P. Morse before P. F. Barr, a notary public at Crete, Nebraska, and was filed for record March 9, 1872, and recorded on page 1, volume 1, of deed records of Adams county. The grantee was general superintendent of the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad Company which was then approaching the eastern edge of the county, and opened its first office at Hastings in April, 1873, with agent Horace S. Wiggins in charge. Mr. Wiggins is now a well-known public accountant and insurance actuary residing in Lincoln. The land conveyed by this deed and some other tracts for which deeds were soon after executed was in section 12, township 7, range 11, and on which the town of Juniata was platted. The Stark patent was dated June 5, 1872, and signed by U. S. Grant as president. The town plat was filed for record March 9, 1872. [15]

The first church organized in the county was by Rev. John F. Clarkson, chaplain of a colony of English Congregationalists who settled near the present location of Hastings in 1871. He preached the first sermon while they were still camped in their covered wagons at a point near the present intersection of Second street and Burlington avenue, the first Sunday after their arrival. A short time afterward, in a sod house on the claim of John G. Moore, at or near the present site of the Lepin hotel, the church was organized with nine members uniting by letter, and a few Sundays later four more by confession of their faith. This data I have from Peter Fowlie and S. B. Binfield, two of the persons composing the first organization.

The first Sunday school organized in the county was organized in a small residence then under construction on lot 3 in block 4 of Moore's addition to Hastings. The frame was up, the roof on, siding and floor in place, but that was all. Nail kegs and plank formed the seats, and a store box the desk. The building still stands and constitutes the main part of the present residence of my family at 219 North Burlington avenue. It was a union school and was the nucleus of the present Presbyterian and Congregational Sunday schools. I am not able to give the date of its organization but it was probably in the winter of 1872-73. I got this information from Mr. A. L. Wigton, who was influential in bringing about the organization and was its first superintendent. [16]

The first school in the county was opened about a mile south of Juniata early in 1872, by Miss Emma Leonard, and that fall Miss Lizzie Scott was employed to teach one in Juniata. So rapidly did the county settle that by October 1, 1873, thirty-eight school districts were reported organized.

The acting governor, W. H. James, on November 7, 1871, ordered the organization of the county

for political and judicial purposes, and fixed the day of the first election to be held, on December 12 following. Twenty-nine votes were cast and the following persons were elected as county officers:

Clerk, Russell D. Babcock.
Treasurer, John S. Chandler.
Sheriff, Isaac W. Stark.
Probate Judge, Titus Babcock.
Surveyor, George Henderson.
Superintendent of Schools, Adna H. Bowen.
Coroner, Isaiah Sluyter.
Assessor, William M. Camp.
County Commissioners: Samuel L. Brass, Edwin M. Allen, and Wellington W. Selleck.

The first assessment of personal property produced a tax of \$5,500, on an assessed valuation of \$20,003, and the total valuation of personal and real property amounted to \$957,183, mostly on railroad lands of which the Burlington road was found to own 105,423 acres and the Union Pacific, 72,207. Very few of the settlers had at that time made final proof. This assessment was made in the spring of 1872.

The first building for county uses was ordered constructed on January 17, 1872, and was 16x20 feet on the ground with an eight-foot story, shingle roof, four windows and one door, matched floor, and ceiled overhead with building paper. The county commissioners were to furnish all material except the door and windows and the contract for the work was let to Joseph Stuhl for \$30.00. S. L. Brass was to superintend the construction, and the building was to be ready for occupancy in ten days.

The salary of the county clerk was fixed by the board at \$300, that of the probate judge at \$75 for the year.

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It is claimed that the law making every section line a county road, in the state of Nebraska, originated with this board in a resolution passed by it, requesting their representatives in the senate and house of the legislature then in session to introduce a bill to that effect and work for its passage. Their work must have been effective for we find that in July following, the Burlington railroad company asked damages by reason of loss sustained through the act of the legislature taking about eight acres of each section of their land, for these public roads.

The first poorhouse was built in the fall of 1872. It was 16x24 feet, one and one-half stories high, and was constructed by Ira G. Dillon for \$1,400, and Peter Fowlie was appointed poormaster at a salary of \$25 per month. And on November 1 of that year he reported six poor persons as charges on the county, but his administration must have been effective for on December 5, following, he reported none then in his charge.

The first agricultural society was organized at Kingston and the first agricultural fair of which there is any record was held October 11 and 12, 1873. The fair grounds were on the southeast corner of the northwest quarter of section 32-5-9 on land owned by G. H. Edgerton, and quite a creditable list of premiums were awarded.

The first Grand Army post was organized at Hastings under a charter issued May 13, 1878, and T. D. Scofield was elected commander.

The first newspaper published in the county was the *Adams County Gazette*, issued at Juniata by R. D. and C. C. Babcock in January, 1872. This was soon followed by the *Hastings Journal* published by M. K. Lewis and A. L. Wigton. These were in time consolidated and in January, 1880, the first daily was issued by A. L. and J. W. Wigton and called the *Daily Gazette-Journal*.

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EARLY EXPERIENCES IN ADAMS COUNTY

BY GENERAL ALBERT V. COLE

I was a young business man in Michigan in 1871, about which time many civil war veterans were moving from Michigan and other states to Kansas and Nebraska, where they could secure free homesteads. I received circulars advertising Juniata. They called it a village but at that time there were only four houses, all occupied by agents of the Burlington railroad who had been employed to preëempt a section of land for the purpose of locating a townsite. In October, 1871, I started for Juniata, passing through Chicago at the time of the great fire. With a comrade I crossed the Missouri river at Plattsmouth on a flatboat. The Burlington was running mixed trains as far west as School Creek, now Sutton. We rode to that point, then started to walk to Juniata, arriving at Harvard in the evening. Harvard also had four houses placed for the same purpose as those in Juniata. Frank M. Davis, who was elected commissioner of public lands and buildings in 1876, lived in one house with his family; the other three were supposed to be occupied by bachelors.

We arranged with Mr. Davis for a bed in an upper room of one of the vacant houses. We were tenderfeet from the East and therefore rather suspicious of the surroundings, there being no lock on the lower door. To avoid being surprised we piled everything we could find against the door. About midnight we were awakened by a terrible noise; our fortifications had fallen and we heard the tramp of feet below. Some of the preëmptors had been out on section 37 for wood and the lower room was where they kept the horse feed.

The next morning we paid our lodging and resumed the journey west. Twelve miles from Harvard we found four more houses placed by the Burlington. The village was called Inland and was on the east line of Adams county but has since been moved east into Clay county. Just before reaching Inland we met a man coming from the west with a load of buffalo meat and at Inland we found C. S. Jaynes, one of the preëmptors, sitting outside his shanty cutting up some of the meat. [19] It was twelve miles farther to Juniata, the railroad grade being our guide. The section where Hastings now stands was on the line but there was no town, not a tree or living thing in sight, just burnt prairie. I did not think when we passed over that black and desolate section that a city like Hastings would be builded there. The buffalo and the antelope had gone in search of greener pastures; even the wolf and the coyote were unable to live there at that time.



Oregon Trail Monument on Nebraska-Wyoming State Line Erected by the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution of Nebraska and Wyoming. Dedicated April 4, 1913. Cost \$200



Monument on the Oregon Trail Seven miles south of Hastings. Erected by Niobrara Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution at a cost of \$100

Six miles farther on we arrived at Juniata and the first thing we did was to drink from the well in the center of the section between the four houses. This was the only well in the district and that first drink of water in Adams county was indeed refreshing. The first man we met was Judson Buswell, a civil war veteran, who had a homestead a mile away and was watering his mule team at the well. Although forty-four years have passed, I shall never forget those mules; one had a crooked leg, but they were the best Mr. Buswell could afford. Now at the age of seventy-three he spends his winters in California and rides in his automobile, but still retains his original homestead.

Juniata had in addition to the four houses a small frame building used as a hotel kept by John Jacobson. It was a frail structure, a story and a half, and when the Nebraska wind blew it would shake on its foundation. There was one room upstairs with a bed in each corner. During the night there came up a northwest wind and every bed was on the floor the next morning. Later another

hotel was built called the Juniata House. Land seekers poured into Adams county after the Burlington was completed in July, 1872, and there was quite a strife between the Jacobson House and the Juniata House. Finally a runner for the latter hotel advertised it as the only hotel in town with a cook stove.

Adams county was organized December 12, 1871. Twenty-nine voters took part in the first election and Juniata was made the county-seat.

We started out the next morning after our arrival to find a quarter section of land. About a mile north we came to the dugout of Mr. Chandler. He lived in the back end of his house and kept his horses in the front part. Mr. Chandler went with us to locate our claims. We preempted land on section twenty-eight north of range ten west, in what is now Highland township. I turned the first sod in that township and put down the first bored well, which was 117 feet deep and cost \$82.70. Our first shanty was 10x12 feet in size, boarded up and down and papered on the inside with tar paper. Our bed was made of soft-pine lumber with slats but no springs. The table was a flat-top trunk. [20]

In the spring of 1872 my wife's brother, George Crane, came from Michigan and took 80 acres near me. We began our spring work by breaking the virgin sod. We each bought a yoke of oxen and a Fish Brothers wagon, in Crete, eighty miles away, and then with garden tools and provisions in the wagon we started home, being four days on the way. A few miles west of Fairmont we met the Gaylord brothers, who had been to Grand Island and bought a printing press. They were going to publish a paper in Fairmont. They were stuck in a deep draw of mud, so deeply imbedded that our oxen could not pull their wagon out, so we hitched onto the press and pulled it out on dry land. It was not in very good condition when we left it but the boys printed a very clean paper on it for a number of years.

In August Mrs. Cole came out and joined me. I had broken 30 acres and planted corn, harvesting a fair crop which I fed to my oxen and cows. Mrs. Cole made butter, our first churn being a wash bowl in which she stirred the cream with a spoon, but the butter was sweet and we were happy, except that Mrs. Cole was very homesick. She was only nineteen years old and a thousand miles from her people, never before having been separated from her mother. I had never had a home, my parents having died when I was very small, and I had been pushed around from pillar to post. Now I had a home of my own and was delighted with the wildness of Nebraska, yet my heart went out to Mrs. Cole. The wind blew more fiercely than now and she made me promise that if our house ever blew down I would take her back to Michigan. That time very nearly came on April 13, 1873. The storm raged three days and nights and the snow flew so it could not be faced. I have experienced colder blizzards but never such a storm as this Easter one. I had built an addition of two rooms on my shanty and it was fortunate we had that much room before the storm for it was the means of saving the lives of four friends who were caught without shelter. Two of them, a man and wife, were building a house on their claim one-half mile east, the others were a young couple who had been taking a ride on that beautiful Sunday afternoon. The storm came suddenly about four in the afternoon; not a breath of air was stirring and it became very dark. The storm burst, black dirt filled the air, and the house rocked. Mrs. Cole almost prayed that the house would go down so she could go back East. But it weathered the blast; if it had not I know we would all have perished. The young man's team had to have shelter and my board stable was only large enough for my oxen and cow so we took his horses to the sod house on the girl's claim a mile away. Rain and hail were falling but the snow did not come until we got home or we would not have found our way. There were six grown people and one child to camp in our house three days and only one bed. The three women and the child occupied the bed, the men slept on the floor in another room. Monday morning the snow was drifted around and over the house and had packed in the cellar through a hole where I intended to put in a window some day. To get the potatoes from the cellar for breakfast I had to tunnel through the snow from the trap door in the kitchen. It was impossible to get to the well so we lifted the trap door and melted fresh snow when water was needed. [21]

The shack that sheltered my live stock was 125 feet from the house and it took three of us to get to the shack to feed. Number two would keep within hearing of number one and the third man kept in touch with number two until he reached the stable. Wednesday evening we went for the horses in the sod house and found one dead. They had gnawed the wall of the house so that it afterwards fell down.

I could tell many other incidents of a homesteader's life, of trials and short rations, of the grasshoppers in 1874-75-76, of hail storms and hot winds; yet all who remained through those days of hardship are driving automobiles instead of oxen and their land is worth, not \$2.50 an acre, but \$150.

[22]

FRONTIER TOWNS

BY FRANCIS M. BROOME

With the first rush of settlers into northwest Nebraska, preceding the advent of railroads, numerous villages sprang up on the prairies like mushrooms during a night. All gave promise, at least on paper, of becoming great cities, and woe to the citizen unloyal to that sentiment or disloyal to his town. It is sufficient to recount experiences in but one of these villages for customs were similar in all of them, as evidence of the freedom common to early pioneer life.

In a central portion of the plains, that gave promise of future settlement, a man named Buchanan came out with a wagonload of boards and several boxes of whiskey and tobacco and in a short space of time had erected a building of not very imposing appearance. Over the door of this building a board was nailed, on which was printed the word "SALOON" and, thus prepared for business, this man claimed the distinction of starting the first town in that section. His first customers were a band of cowboys who proceeded to drink up all of the stock and then to see which one could shoot the largest number of holes through the building. This gave the town quite a boom and new settlers as far away as Valentine began hearing of the new town of Buchanan. Soon after another venturesome settler brought in a general merchandise store and then the rush began, all fearing they might be too late to secure choice locations. The next public necessity was a newspaper, which soon came, and the town was given the name of Nonpareil. It was regularly platted into streets and alleys, and a town well sunk in the public square. Efforts to organize a civil government met with a frost, everyone preferring to be his own governor. A two-story hotel built of rough native pine boards furnished lodging and meals for the homeless, three saloons furnished drinks for the thirsty twenty-four hours in the day and seven days in the week; two drug stores supplied drugs in case of sickness and booze from necessity for payment of expenses. These with a blacksmith shop and several stores constituted the town for the first year and by reason of continuous boosting it grew to a pretentious size. The second year some of the good citizens, believing it had advanced far enough to warrant the establishment of a church, sent for a Methodist minister. This good soul, believing his mission in life was to drive out sin from the community, set about to do it in the usual manner, but soon bowed to the inevitable and, recognizing prevailing customs, became popular in the town. Boys, seeing him pass the door of saloons, would hail him and in a good-natured manner give him the contents of a jackpot in a poker game until, with these contributions and sums given him from more religious motives, he had accumulated enough to build a small church.

[23]



**Mrs. Angie F. Newman Second Vice-President General from
Nebraska, National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution.
Elected 1898**

After the organization of the county, the place was voted the county-seat, and a courthouse was built. The court room when not in use by the court was used for various public gatherings and frequently for dances.

Everybody had plenty of money and spent it with a prodigal hand. The "save-for-rainy-days" fellows had not yet arrived on the scene. They never do until after higher civilization steps in. Old Dan, the hotel keeper, was considered one of the best wealth distributors in the village. His wife, a little woman of wonderful energy, would do all the work in a most cheerful manner while Dan kept office, collected the money and distributed it to the pleasure of the boys and profit to the saloons, and both husband and wife were happy in knowing that they were among the most popular people of the village. It did no harm and afforded the little lady great satisfaction to tell about her noble French ancestry for it raised the family to a much higher dignity than that of the surrounding plebeian stock of English, Irish, and Dutch, and nobody cared so long as everything was cheerful around the place. Cheerfulness is a great asset in any line of business. The lawyer of

the village, being a man of great expectations, attempted to lend dignity to the profession, until, finding that board bills are not paid by dignity and becoming disgusted with the lack of appreciation of legal talent, he proceeded to beat the poker games for an amount sufficient to enable him to leave for some place where legal talent was more highly appreciated.

These good old days might have continued had the railroads kept out, but railroads follow settlement just as naturally as day follows night. They built into the country and with them came a different order of civilization. [24]

Many experiences of a similar character might be told concerning other towns in this section, namely, Gordon, where old Hank Ditto, who ran the roadhouse, never turned down a needy person for meals and lodging, but compelled the ones with money to pay for them. Then there was Rushville, the supply station for vast stores of goods for the Indian agency and reservation near by; Hay Springs, the terminal point for settlers coming into the then unsettled south country. Chadron was a town of unsurpassed natural beauty in the Pine Ridge country, where Billy Carter, the Dick Turpin of western romance, held forth in all his glory and at whose shrine the sporting fraternity performed daily ablutions in the bountiful supply of booze water. Crawford was the nesting place for all crooks that were ever attracted to a country by an army post.

These affairs incident to the pioneer life of northwestern Nebraska are now but reminiscences, supplanted by a civilization inspired by all of the modern and higher ideals of life. [25]

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF BOX BUTTE COUNTY

BY IRA E. TASH

Box Butte county, Nebraska, owes its existence to the discovery of gold in the Black Hills in 1876. When this important event occurred, the nearest railroad point to the discovery in Deadwood Gulch was Sidney, Nebraska, 275 miles to the south. To this place the gold seekers rushed from every point of the compass. Parties were organized to make the overland trip to the new El Dorado with ox teams, mule teams, and by every primitive mode of conveyance. Freighters from Colorado and the great Southwest, whose occupation was threatened by the rapid building of railroads, miners from all the Rocky Mountain regions of the West, and thousands of tenderfeet from the East, all flocked to Sidney as the initial starting point. To this heterogeneous mass was added the gambler, the bandit, the road agent, the dive keeper, and other undesirable citizens. This flood of humanity made the "Old Sidney Trail" to the Black Hills. Then followed the stage coach, Wells-Fargo express, and later the United States mail. The big freighting outfits conveyed mining machinery, provisions, and other commodities, among which were barrels and barrels of poor whiskey, to the toiling miners in the Hills. Indians infested the trail, murdered the freighters and miners, and ran off their stock, while road agents robbed stages and looted the express company's strong boxes. Bandits murdered returning miners and robbed them of their nuggets and gold dust. There was no semblance of law and order. When things got too rank, a few of the worst offenders were lynched, and the great, seething, hurrying mass of humanity pressed on urged by its lust for gold.

This noted trail traversed what is now Box Butte county from north to south, and there were three important stopping places within the boundaries of the county. These were the Hart ranch at the crossing of Snake creek, Mayfield's, and later the Hughes ranch at the crossing of the Niobrara, and Halfway Hollow, on the high tableland between. The deep ruts worn by the heavily loaded wagons and other traffic passing over the route are still plainly visible, after the lapse of forty years. This trail was used for a period of about nine years, or until the Northwestern railroad was [26]

extended to Deadwood, when it gave way to modern civilization.

Traveling over this trail were men of affairs, alert men who had noted the rich grasses and wide ranges that bordered the route, and marked it down as the cattle raiser's and ranchman's future paradise. Then came the great range herds of the Ogallalla Cattle Company, Swan Brothers, Bosler Brothers, the Bay State and other large cow outfits, followed by the hard-riding cowboy and the chuck wagon. These gave names to prominent landmarks. A unique elevation in the eastern part of the county they named Box Butte. Butte means hill or elevation less than a mountain, Box because it was roughly square or box-shaped. Hence the surrounding plains were designated in cowman's parlance "the Box Butte country," and as such it was known far and wide.

Later, in 1886 and 1887, a swarm of homeseekers swept in from the East, took up the land, and began to build houses of sod and to break up the virgin soil. The cowman saw that he was doomed, and so rounded up his herds of longhorns and drove on westward into Wyoming and Montana. These new settlers soon realized that they needed a unit of government to meet the requirements of a more refined civilization. They were drawn together by a common need, and rode over dim trails circulating petitions calling for an organic convention. They met and provided for the formation of a new county, to be known as "Box Butte" county.

This name was officially adopted, and is directly traceable to the discovery of gold in the Black Hills. The lure of gold led the hardy miner and adventurer across its fertile plains, opened the way for the cattleman who named the landmark from which the county takes its name, and the sturdy settler who followed in his wake adopted the name and wrote it in the archives of the state and nation.



[27]

**Unveiling of Monument at Kearney, Nebraska, in commemoration of the Oregon Trail
Left to right: Mrs. Ashton C. Shallenberger, Governor Shallenberger, Mrs. Oreal S. Ward, State Regent Nebraska Society, Daughters of the American Revolution; Mrs. Andrew K. Gault, Vice-President General, National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution; Mrs. Charles O. Norton, Regent Ft. Kearney Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution; John W. Patterson, Mayor of Kearney; John Lee Webster, President Nebraska State Historical Society; Rev. R. P. Hammons, E. B. Finch, assisting with the flag rope**

A BROKEN AXLE

BY SAMUEL C. BASSETT

In 1860, Edward Oliver, Sr., his wife and seven children, converts to the Mormon faith, left their home in England for Salt Lake City, Utah. At Florence, Nebraska, on the Missouri river a few miles above the city of Omaha, they purchased a traveling outfit for emigrants, which consisted of two yoke of oxen, a prairie-schooner wagon, and two cows; and with numerous other families having the same destination took the overland Mormon trail up the valley of the Platte on the north side of the river.

When near a point known as Wood River Centre, 175 miles west of the Missouri river, the front axle of their wagon gave way, compelling a halt for repairs, their immediate companions in the emigrant train continuing the journey, for nothing avoidable, not even the burial of a member of the train, was allowed to interfere with the prescribed schedule of travel. The Oliver family camped beside the trail and the broken wagon was taken to the ranch of Joseph E. Johnson, who combined in his person and business that of postmaster, merchant, blacksmith, wagon-maker, editor, and publisher of a newspaper (*The Huntsman's Echo*). Johnson was a Mormon with two wives, a man passionately fond of flowers which he cultivated to a considerable extent in a fenced enclosure. While buffalo broke down his fence and destroyed his garden and flowers, he could not bring himself to kill them. He was a philosopher and, it must be conceded, a most useful person at a point so far distant from other sources of supplies.

The wagon shop of Mr. Johnson contained no seasoned wood suitable for an axle and so from the trees along Wood river was cut an ash from which was hewn and fitted an axle to the wagon and the family again took the trail, but ere ten miles had been traveled the green axle began to bend under the load, the wheels ceased to track, and the party could not proceed. In the family council which succeeded the father urged that they try to arrange with other emigrants to carry their movables (double teams) and thus continue their journey. [28]

The mother suggested that they return to the vicinity of Wood River Centre and arrange to spend the winter. To the suggestion of the mother all the children added their entreaties. The mother urged that it was a beautiful country, with an abundance of wood and water, grass for pasture, and hay in plenty could be made for their cattle, and she was sure crops could be raised. The wishes of the mother prevailed, the family returned to a point about a mile west of Wood River Centre, and on the banks of the river constructed a log hut with a sod roof in which they spent the winter. When springtime came, the father, zealous in the Mormon faith, urged that they continue their journey; to this neither the mother nor any of the children could be induced to consent and in the end the father journeyed to Utah, where he made his home and married a younger woman who had accompanied the family from England, which doubtless was the determining factor in the mother refusing to go.

The mother, Sarah Oliver, proved to be a woman of force and character. With her children she engaged in the raising of corn and vegetables, the surplus being sold to emigrants passing over the trail and at Fort Kearny, some twenty miles distant.

In those days there were many without means who traveled the trail and Sarah Oliver never turned a hungry emigrant from her door, and often divided with such the scanty store needed for her own family. When rumors came of Indians on the warpath the children took turns on the housetop as lookout for the dread savages. In 1863 two settlers were killed by Indians a few miles east of her

home. In the year 1864 occurred the memorable raid of the Cheyenne Indians in which horrible atrocities were committed and scores of settlers were massacred by these Indians only a few miles to the south. In 1865 William Storer, a near neighbor, was killed by the Indians.

Sarah Oliver had no framed diploma from a medical college which would entitle her to the prefix "Dr." to her name, possibly she was not entitled to be called a trained nurse, but she is entitled to be long remembered as one who ministered to the sick, to early travelers hungry and footsore along the trail, and to many families whose habitations were miles distant.

Sarah Oliver and her family endured all the toil and privation common to early settlers, without means, in a new country, far removed from access to what are deemed the barest necessities of life in more settled communities. [29]

She endured all the terrors incident to settlement in a sparsely settled locality, in which year after year Indian atrocities were committed and in which the coming of such savages was hourly expected and dreaded. She saw the building and completion of the Union Pacific railroad near her home in 1866; she saw Nebraska become a state in the year 1867. In 1870 when Buffalo county was organized her youngest son, John, was appointed sheriff, and was elected to that office at the first election thereafter. Her eldest son, James, was the first assessor in the county, and her son Edward was a member of the first board of county commissioners and later was elected and served with credit and fidelity as county treasurer.

When, in the year 1871, Sarah Oliver died, her son Robert inherited the claim whereon she first made a home for her family and which, in this year, 1915, is one of the most beautiful, fertile farm homes in the county and state.

A DREAM-LAND COMPLETE

Dreaming, I pictured a wonderful valley,
A home-making valley few known could compare;
When lo! from the bluffs to the north of Wood river
I saw my dream-picture—my valley lies there.

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

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

[30]

A PIONEER NEBRASKA TEACHER

BY MRS. ISABEL ROSCOE

In 1865, B. S. Roscoe, twenty-two years of age, returned to his home in Huron county, Ohio, after

two years' service in the civil war. He assisted his father on the farm until 1867, when he was visited by F. B. Barber, an army comrade, a homesteader in northwestern Nebraska. His accounts of the new country were so attractive that Mr. Roscoe, who had long desired a farm of his own, decided to go west.

He started in March, 1867, was delayed in Chicago by a snow blockade, but arrived in Omaha in due time. On March 24, 1867, Mr. Roscoe went to Decatur via the stage route, stopping for dinner at the Lippincott home, called the half-way house between Omaha and Decatur. He was advised to remain in Decatur for a day or two for the return of B. W. Everett from Maple Creek, Iowa, but being told that Logan creek, where he wished to settle, was only sixteen miles distant, he hired a horse and started alone. The snow was deep with a crust on top but not hard enough to bear the horse and rider. After going two miles through the deep snow he returned to Decatur. On March 26 he started with Mr. Everett, who had a load of oats and two dressed hogs on his sled, also two cows to drive. They took turns riding and driving the cows. The trail was hard to follow and when they reached the divide between Bell creek and the Blackbird, the wind was high and snow falling. They missed the road and the situation was serious. There was no house, tree, or landmark nearer than Josiah Everett's, who lived near the present site of Lyons, and was the only settler north of what is now Oakland, where John Oak resided. They abandoned the sled and each rode a horse, Mr. Everett trying to lead the way, but the horse kept turning around, so at last he let the animal have its way and they soon arrived at Josiah Everett's homestead shanty, the cows following.

The next day Mr. Roscoe located his homestead on the bank of Logan creek. A couple of trappers had a dugout near by which they had made by digging a hole ten feet square in the side of the creek bank and covering the opening with brush and grass. Their names were Asa Merritt and George Kirk. [31]

Mr. Roscoe then returned to Decatur and walked from there to Omaha, where he filed on his claim April 1, 1867. The ice on the Missouri river was breaking though drays and busses were still crossing. Mr. Roscoe walked across the river to Council Bluffs and then proceeded by train to Bartlett, Iowa, intending to spend the summer near Brownville, Nebraska. In August he returned to his homestead and erected a claim shanty. The following winter was spent working in the woods at Tietown. In the winter of 1869 fifty dollars was appropriated for school purposes in Everett precinct and Mr. Roscoe taught school for two months in his shanty and boarded around among the patrons. [32]

EXPERIENCES OF A PIONEER WOMAN

BY MRS. ELISE G. EVERETT

On December 31, 1866, in a bleak wind I crossed the Missouri river on the ice, carrying a nine months' old baby, now Mrs. Jas. Stiles, and my four and a half year old boy trudging along. My husband's brother, Josiah Everett, carried three-year-old Eleanor in one arm and drove the team and my husband was a little in advance with his team and wagon containing all our possessions. We drove to the town of Decatur, that place of many hopes and ambitions as yet unfulfilled. We were entertained by the Herrick family, who said we would probably remain on Logan creek, our proposed home site, because we would be too poor to move away.

On January 7, 1867, in threatening weather, we started on the last stage of our journey in quest of a home. Nestled deep in the prairie hay and covered with blankets, the babies and I did not suffer. The desolate, wind-swept prairie looked uninviting but when we came to the Logan Valley, it was

beautiful even in that weather. The trees along the winding stream, the grove, now known as Fritt's grove, gave a home-like look and I decided I could be content in that valley.

We lived with our brother until material for our shack could be brought from Decatur or Onawa, Iowa. Five grown people and seven children, ranging in ages from ten years down, lived in that small shack for three months. That our friendship was unimpaired is a lasting monument to our tact, politeness, and good nature.

The New Year snow was the forerunner of heavier ones, until the twenty-mile trip to Decatur took a whole day, but finally materials for the shack were on hand. The last trip extended to Onawa and a sled of provisions and two patient cows were brought over. In Decatur, B. S. Roscoe was waiting an opportunity to get to the Logan and was invited to "jump on." It was late, the load was heavy, and somewhere near Blackbird creek the team stuck in the drifts. The cows were given their liberty, the horses unhooked, and with some difficulty the half frozen men managed to mount and the horses did the rest—the cows keeping close to their heels; and so they arrived late in the night. Coffee and a hot supper warmed the men sufficiently to catch a few winks of sleep—on bedding on the floor. A breakfast before light and they were off to rescue the load. The two frozen and dressed porkers had not yet attracted the wolves, and next day they crossed the Logan to the new house.

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A few days more and the snowdrifts were a mighty river. B. W. was a sort of Crusoe, but as everything but the horses and cows—and the trifling additional human stock—was strewn around him, he suffered nothing but anxiety. Josiah drove to Decatur, procured a boat, and with the aid of two or three trappers who chanced to be here, we were all rowed over the mile-wide sea, and were at home!

Slowly the water subsided, and Nebraska had emerged from her territorial obscurity (March 1, 1867) before it was possible for teams to cross the bottom lands of the Logan.

One Sunday morning I caught sight of two moving figures emerging from the grove. The dread of Indian callers was ever with me, but as they came nearer my spirits mounted to the clouds—for I recognized my sister, Mrs. Andrew Everett, as the rider, and her son Frank leading the pony. Their claim had been located in March, but owing to the frequent and heavy rains we were not looking for them so soon. The evening before we had made out several covered wagons coming over the hills from Decatur, but we were not aware that they had already arrived at Josiah's. The wagons we had seen were those of E. R. Libby, Chas. Morton, Southwell, and Clements.

A boat had brought my sister and her son across the Logan—a pony being allowed to swim the stream but the teams were obliged to go eight miles south to Oakland, where John Oak and two or three others had already settled, and who had thrown a rough bridge across.

Before fall the Andrew Everett house (no shack) was habitable—also a number of other families had moved in on both sides of the Logan, and it began to be a real neighborhood.

One late afternoon I started out to make preparations for the night, as Mr. Everett was absent for a few days. As I opened the door two Indians stood on the step, one an elderly man, the other a much-bedecked young buck. I admitted them; the elder seated himself and spoke a few friendly words, but the smart young man began immediately to inspect the few furnishings of the room. Though quaking inwardly, I said nothing till he spied a revolver hanging in its leather case upon the wall and was reaching for it. I got there first, and taking it from the case I held it in my hands. At once his manner changed. He protested that he was a *good* Indian, and only wanted to *see* the gun, while the other immediately rose from his chair. In a voice I never would have recognized as my own, I informed him that it was time for him to *go*. The elder man at last escorted him outside with me as rear guard. Fancy my feelings when right at the door were ten or more husky fellows, who seemed to propose entering, but by this time the desperate courage of the arrant coward took possession of me, and I barred the way. It was plain that the gun in my hand was a surprise, and

[34]

the earnest entreaties of my five-year-old boy "not to shoot them" may also have given them pause. They said they were cold and hungry; I assured them that I had neither room nor food for them—little enough for my own babies. At last they all went on to the house of our brother, Andrew Everett. I knew that they were foraging for a large party which was encamped in the grove. Soon they came back laden with supplies which they had obtained, and now they insisted on coming in to *cook them*, and the smell of spirits was so unmistakable that I could readily see that Andrew had judged it best to get rid of them as soon as possible, thinking that they would be back in camp by dark, and the whiskey, which they had obtained between here and Fremont, would have evaporated. But it only made them more insistent in their demands and some were looking quite sullen. At last a young fellow, *not* an Indian—for he had long dark curls reaching to his shoulders—with a strategic smile asked in good English for a "drink of water." Instead of leaving the door, as he evidently calculated, I called to my little boy to bring it. A giggle ran through the crowd at the expense of the strategist but it was plain they were growing ugly. Now the older Indian took the opportunity to make them an earnest talk, and though it was against their wishes, he at last started them toward the grove. After a while Frank Everett, my nephew, who had come down to bolster up my courage, and the children went to bed and to sleep, but no sleep for me; as the gray dawn was showing in the east, a terrific pounding upon the door turned my blood to ice. Again and again it came, and at last I tiptoed to the door and stooped to look through the crack. A pair of very slim ankles was all that was visible and as I rose to my feet, the very sweetest music I had ever heard saluted me, the neigh of my pet colt Bonnie, who had failed to receive her accustomed drink of milk the previous evening and took this manner of reminding me. [35]

This was the only time we were ever menaced with actual danger, and many laughable false alarms at last cured me of my fears of a people among whom I now have valued friends. [36]

RECOLLECTIONS OF WEEPING WATER, NEBRASKA

BY I. N. HUNTER

Mr. and Mrs. L. D. Hunter were pioneer settlers of Nebraska and Weeping Water, coming from Illinois by team. Their first settlement in the state was near West Point in Cuming county where father staked out a claim in 1857. Things went well aside from the usual hardships of pioneer life, such as being out of flour and having to pound corn in an iron kettle with an iron wedge to obtain corn meal for bread. When the bottom of the kettle gave way as a result of the many thumpings of the wedge, a new plan was devised—that of chopping a hole in a log and making a crude wooden kettle which better stood the blows of the wedge. This method of grinding corn was used until a trip could be made with an ox team, to the nearest mill, forty miles distant; a long and tedious trip always but much more so in this particular instance because of the high water in the streams which were not bridged in those days. These were small hardships compared to what took place when the home was robbed by Indians. These treacherous savages stripped the premises of all the live stock, household and personal effects. Cattle and chickens were killed and eaten and what could not be disposed of in this way were wantonly destroyed and driven off. Clothing and household goods were destroyed so that little was saved except the clothing the members of the family had on. From the two feather beds that were ripped open, mother succeeded in gathering up enough feathers to make two pillows and these I now have in my home. They are more than a half century old. A friendly Indian had come in advance of the hostile band and warned the little settlement of the approach of the Indians with paint on their faces. His signs telling them to flee were speedily obeyed and in all probability this was all that saved many lives, as the six or seven families had to keep together and travel all night to keep out of the reach of the Indians until the [37]

people at Omaha could be notified and soldiers sent to the scene. On the arrival of the soldiers the Indians immediately hoisted a white flag and insisted that they were "good Indians."

As no one had been killed by the Indians, it was the desire of the soldiers to merely make the Indians return the stolen property and stock, but as much property was destroyed, the settlers received very little. A number of the Indians were arrested and tried for robbing the postoffice which was at our home. My parents were the principal witnesses and after the Indians were acquitted, it was feared they might take revenge, so they were advised to leave the country.

With an ox team and a few ragged articles of clothing they started east. When he reached Rock Bluffs, one of the early river towns of Cass county, father succeeded in obtaining work. His wages were seventy-five cents a day with the privilege of living in a small log cabin. There was practically no furniture for the cabin, corn husks and the few quilts that had been given them were placed on the floor in the corner to serve as a place to sleep. Father worked until after Christmas time without having a coat. At about this time, he was told to take his team and make a trip into Iowa. Just as he was about to start, his employer said to him: "Hunter, where's your coat?" The reply was, "I haven't any." "Well, that won't do; you can't make that trip without a coat; come with me to the store." Father came out of the store with a new under coat and overcoat, the first coat of any kind he had had since his home was invaded by the red men.

An explanation of the purpose of the trip into Iowa will be of interest. The man father worked for was a flour and meat freighter with a route to Denver, Colorado. In the winter he would go over into Iowa, buy hogs and drive them across the river on the ice, to Rock Bluffs, where they were slaughtered and salted down in large freight wagons. In the spring, from eight to ten yoke of oxen would be hitched to the wagon, and the meat, and often times an accompanying cargo of flour, would be started across the plains to attractive markets in Denver.

Father made a number of these trips to Denver as ox driver.

The writer was born at Rock Bluffs in 1860. We moved to Weeping Water in 1862 when four or five dwellings and the little old mill that stood near the falls, comprised what is now our beautiful little city of over 1,000 population.

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During the early sixties, many bands of Indians numbering from forty to seventy-five, visited Weeping Water. It was on one of their visits that the writer made the best record he has ever made, as a foot racer. The seven or eight year old boy of today would not think of running from an Indian, but half a century ago it was different. It was no fun in those days to be out hunting cattle and run onto a band of Indians all sitting around in a circle. In the morning the cattle were turned out to roam about at will except when they attempted to molest a field, and at night they were brought home if they could be found. If not the search was continued the next day. Some one was out hunting cattle all the time it seemed. With such a system of letting cattle run at large, it was really the fields that were herded and not the cattle. Several times a day some member of the family would go out around the fields to see if any cattle were molesting them. One of our neighbors owned two Shepherd dogs which would stay with the cattle all day, and take them home at night. It was very interesting to watch the dogs drive the cattle. One would go ahead to keep the cattle from turning into a field where there might be an opening in the rail fence, while the other would bring up the rear. They worked like two men would. But the family that had trained dogs of this kind was the exception; in most cases it was the boys that had to do the herding. It was on such a mission one day that the writer watched from under cover of some bushes, the passing of about seventy-five Indians all on horseback and traveling single file. They were strung out a distance of almost a mile. Of course they were supposed to be friendly, but there were so many things that pointed to their tendency to be otherwise at times, that we were not at all anxious to meet an Indian no matter how many times he would repeat the characteristic phrase, "Me good Injun." We were really afraid of them and moreover the story was fresh in our minds of the murder of the Hungate family in Colorado, Mrs. Hungate's parents being residents of our vicinity at that time. Her sister, Mrs. P. S. Barnes, now resides in Weeping Water.

Thus it will be seen that many Indian experiences and incidents have been woven into the early history of Weeping Water. In conclusion to this article it might be fitting to give the Indian legend which explains how the town received its name of Weeping Water. The poem was written by my son, Rev. A. V. Hunter, of Boston, and is founded on the most popular of the Indian legends that have been handed down. [39]

THE LEGEND OF WEEPING WATER

Long before the white man wandered
To these rich Nebraska lands,
Indians in their paint and feathers
Roamed in savage warlike bands.

They, the red men, feared no hardships;
Battles were their chief delights;
Victory was their great ambition
In their awful bloody fights.

Then one day the war cry sounded
Over valley, hill and plain.
From the North came dusky warriors,
From that vast unknown domain.

When the news had reached the valley
That the foe was near at hand,
Every brave was stirred to action
To defend his home, his land.

To the hills they quickly hastened
There to wait the coming foe.
Each one ready for the conflict
Each with arrow in his bow.

Awful was the scene that followed,
Yells and warwhoops echoed shrill.
But at last as night descended
Death had conquered; all was still.

Then the women in the wigwams
Hearing rumors of the fight,
Bearing flaming, flickering torches
Soon were wandering in the night.

There they found the loved ones lying
Calm in everlasting sleep.
Little wonder that the women,
Brokenhearted, all should weep.

Hours and hours they kept on weeping,
'Til their tears began to flow

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In many trickling streamlets
To the valley down below.

These together joined their forces
To produce a larger stream
Which has ever since been flowing
As you see it in this scene.

Indians christened it Nehawka
Crying Water means the same.
In this way the legend tells us
Weeping Water got its name.

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INCIDENTS AT PLATTSMOUTH

BY ELLA POLLOCK MINOR

Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Vallery were living in Glenwood, Iowa, in 1855, when they decided to purchase a store from some Indians in Plattsmouth. Mr. Vallery went over to transact the business, and Mrs. Vallery was to follow in a few days. Upon her arrival in Bethlehem, where she was to take the ferry, she learned that the crossing was unsafe on account of ice floating in the river. There were two young men there, who were very anxious to get across and decided to risk the trip. They took a letter to her husband telling of the trouble. The next day, accompanied by these two young men, Mr. Vallery came over after her in a rowboat, by taking a course farther north. The boat was well loaded when they started on the return trip. Some of the men had long poles, and by constantly pushing at the ice they kept the boat from being crushed or overturned.

Mrs. Vallery's oldest daughter was the third white child born in the vicinity of Plattsmouth. And this incident happened soon after her arrival in 1855. Mrs. Vallery had the baby in a cradle and was preparing dinner when she heard a knock at the door. Before she could reach it, an Indian had stepped in, and seeing some meat on the table asked for it. She nodded for him to take it, but he seemed to have misunderstood, and then asked for a drink of water. While Mrs. Vallery was getting the drink, he reached for the baby, but she was too quick for him and succeeded in reaching the baby first. He then departed without further trouble.

At one time the Vallerys had a sick cow, and every evening several Indians would come to find out how she was. She seemed to get no better and still they watched that cow. In the course of a week she died, evidently during the night, because the next morning the first thing they heard was the Indians skinning the cow, out by the shed, and planning a "big feed" for that night down by the river.

The late Mrs. Thomas Pollock used to tell us how the Indians came begging for things. Winnebago John, who came each year, couldn't be satisfied very easily, so my grandmother found an army coat of her brother's for him. He was perfectly delighted and disappeared with it behind the wood pile, where he remained for some time. The family wondered what he was doing, so after he had slipped away, they went out and hunted around for traces of what had kept him. They soon found the clue; he had stuffed the coat in under the wood, and when they pulled it out, they found it was minus all the brass buttons. [42]

Another time one of Mrs. Pollock's children, the late Mrs. Lillian Parmele, decided to play Indian and frighten her two brothers, who were going up on the hill to do some gardening. She wrapped

up in cloaks, blankets and everything she could find to make herself look big and fierce, then went up and hid in the hazel brush, where she knew they would have to pass. Pretty soon she peeked out and there was a band of Indians coming. Terrified, she ran down toward her home, dropping pieces of clothing and blankets as she went. The Indians seeing them, ran after her, each one anxious to pick up what she was dropping. The child thinking it was she they were after, let all her belongings go, so she could run the better and escape them. After that escapade quite a number of things were missing about the house, some of them being seen later at an Indian camp near by.

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FIRST THINGS IN CLAY COUNTY

BY MRS. CHARLES M. BROWN

The first settler of Clay county, Nebraska, was John B. Weston, who located on the Little Blue, built a log hut in 1857 and called the place Pawnee Ranch. It became a favorite stopping place of St. Joe and Denver mail carriers.

The first settler of Sutton was Luther French who came in March, 1870, and homesteaded eighty acres. Mr. French surveyed and laid out the original townsite which was named after Sutton, Massachusetts. His dugout and log house was built on the east bank of School creek, east of the park, and just south of the Kansas City and Omaha railroad bridge. Traces of the excavation are still visible. The house was lined with brick and had a tunnel outlet near the creek bottom for use in case of an Indian attack. Among his early callers were Miss Nellie Henderson and Capt. Charles White who rode in from the West Blue in pursuit of an antelope, which they captured.

Mrs. Wils Cumming was the first white woman in Sutton. She resided in the house now known as the Mrs. May Evans (deceased) place. Part of this residence is the original Cumming home.

At this time the population of Sutton consisted of thirty-four men and one woman. In the spring of 1871, F. M. Brown, who was born in Illinois in 1840, came to Nebraska and settled on a homestead in Clay county, four miles north of the present site of Sutton. At that time Clay county was unorganized territory, and the B. & M. railroad was being extended from Lincoln west.

September 11, 1871, Governor James issued a proclamation for the election of officers and the organization of Clay county fixing the date, October 14, 1871. The election was held at the home of Alexander Campbell, two miles east of Harvard, and fifty-four votes were cast. Sutton was chosen as the county-seat. F. M. Brown was elected county clerk; A. K. Marsh, P.O. Norman, and A. A. Corey were elected county commissioners. When it came to organizing and qualifying the officers, only one freeholder could be found capable of signing official bonds and as the law required two sureties, R. G. Brown bought a lot of Luther French and was able to sign with Luther French as surety on all official bonds. As the county had no money and no assessments had been made all county business was done on credit. There was no courthouse and county business was conducted in the office of R. G. Brown, until February, 1873, when a frame building to be used as a courthouse was completed at a cost of \$1,865. This was the first plastered building in the county and was built by F. M. Brown.

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In May, 1873, a petition for an election to relocate the county seat was filed, but the motion of Commissioner A. K. Marsh that the petition be "tabled, rejected and stricken from the files" ended the discussion temporarily. In 1879 the county-seat was removed to Clay Center. Several buildings were erected during the fall of 1873 and Sutton became the center of trade in the territory between the Little Blue and the Platte rivers.

Melvin Brothers opened the first store in 1873 south of the railroad tracks, now South Sanders avenue. At that time it was called "Scrabble Hill."

In 1874 the town was incorporated and a village government organized, with F. M. Brown as mayor.

Luther French was the first postmaster.

Thurlow Weed opened the first lumber yard.

William Shirley built and run the first hotel.

L. R. Grimes and J. B. Dinsmore opened the first bank.

Pyle and Eaton built and operated the first elevator.

Isaac N. Clark opened the first hardware store.

Dr. Martin V. B. Clark, a graduate of an Ohio medical college, was the first physician in the county and opened the first drug store in Sutton. In 1873, during the first term of district court, he was appointed one of the commissioners of insanity. In 1877 he was elected coroner.

The Odd Fellows hall was the first brick building erected.

The Congregational church, built in 1875, was the first church building in the county.

William L. Weed taught the first school, beginning January 20, 1872, with an enrollment of fourteen scholars.

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In 1876 the Evangelical Association of North America sent Rev. W. Schwerin to Sutton as a missionary.

In the early seventies the Burlington railroad company built and maintained an immigrant house on the corner south of the present Cottage hotel. This was a long frame building of one room with a cook stove in either end. Many of the immigrants were dependent upon a few friends who were located on the new land in the vicinity. Their food consisted largely of soup made with flour and water; any vegetables they were able to get were used. Meat was scarce with the immigrants. They had considerable milk, mostly sour, brought in by their friends. The immigrants remained here until they found work; most of them moved on to farms. The house burned about 1880.

In the early days Sutton was a lively business place with all the features of a frontier town. Now it is a city enjoying the comforts of modern improvements and refined society.

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REMINISCENCES OF CUSTER COUNTY

BY MRS. J. J. DOUGLAS

In July, 1888, I arrived at Broken Bow, which is situated geographically about the center of the state. That village looked strange to me with not a tree in sight excepting a few little cuttings of cottonwood and box elder here and there upon a lawn. After having lived all my life in a country where every home was surrounded by groves and ornamental shade trees, it seemed that I was in a desert.

I had just completed a course of study in a normal school prior to coming to Nebraska, and was worn out in mind and body, so naturally my first consideration was the climatic condition of the

country and its corresponding effect upon the vegetation. I wondered how the people stood the heat of the day but soon discovered that a light gentle breeze was blowing nearly all the time, so that the heat did not seem intense as it did at my Iowa home.

After I had been in Broken Bow about two weeks I was offered a position in the mortgage loan office of Trefren and Hewitt. The latter was the first county clerk of Custer county. I held this position a few weeks, then resigned to take charge of the Berwyn school at the request of Mr. Charles Randall, the county superintendent. Berwyn was a village situated about ten miles east of Broken Bow. It consisted of one general merchandise store, a postoffice, depot, and a blacksmith shop. I shall never forget my first impression on arriving at Berwyn very early on that September morning. It was not daylight when the train stopped at the little depot, and what a feeling of loneliness crept over me as I watched that train speed on its way behind the eastern hills! I found my way to the home of J. O. Taylor (who was then living in the back end of his store building) and informed him that I was the teacher who had come to teach the school and asked him to direct me to my boarding place. Being a member of the school board, Mr. Taylor gave me the necessary information and then sent his hired man with a team and buggy to take me a mile farther east to the home of Ben Talbot, where I was to stay. [47]

The Talbot home was a little sod house consisting of two small rooms. On entering I found Mrs. Talbot preparing breakfast for the family. I was given a cordial welcome, and after breakfast started in company with Mrs. Talbot's little girl for the schoolhouse. The sense of loneliness which had taken possession of me on my way to this place began to be dispelled. I found Mrs. Talbot to be a woman of kind heart and generous impulses. She had two little girls, the older one being of school age. I could see the schoolhouse up on the side of a hill. It was made of sod and was about twelve by fifteen feet. The roof was of brush and weeds, with some sod; but I could see the blue sky by gazing up through the roof at almost any part of it. I looked out upon the hills and down the valley and wondered where the pupils were to come from, as I saw no houses and no evidence of habitation anywhere excepting Mr. Talbot's home. But by nine o'clock about twelve children had arrived from some place, I knew not where.

I found in that little, obscure schoolhouse some of the brightest and best boys and girls it was ever my good fortune to meet. There soon sprang up between us a bond of sympathy. I sympathized with them in their almost total isolation from the world, and they in turn sympathized with me in my loneliness and homesickness.

On opening my school that first morning, great was my surprise to learn how well those children could sing. I had never been in a school where there were so many sweet voices. My attention was particularly directed to the voices of two little girls as they seemed remarkable for children of their years. I often recall one bright sunny evening after I had dismissed school and stood watching the pupils starting out in various directions for their homes, my attention was called to a path that led down the valley through the tall grass. I heard singing and at once recognized the voices of these two little girls. The song was a favorite of mine and I could hear those sweet tones long after the children were out of sight in the tall grass. I shall never forget how charmingly sweet that music seemed to me.

I soon loved every pupil in that school and felt a keen regret when the time came for me to leave them. I have the tenderest memory of my association with that district, though the school equipment was meager and primitive. After finishing my work there I returned to Broken Bow where I soon accepted a position in the office of J. J. Douglass, clerk of the district court. Mr. Douglass was one of the organizers of Custer county and was chosen the first clerk of the court, which position he held for four years. I began my work in this office on November 16, 1888, and held the position till the close of his term. [48]

During this time many noted criminal cases were tried in court, Judge Francis G. Hamer of Kearney being the judge. One case in which I was especially interested was the DeMerritt case, in which I listened to the testimony of several of my pupils from the Berwyn district. Another far-

famed case was the Haunstine case, in which Albert Haunstine received a death sentence. To hear a judge pronounce a death sentence is certainly the most solemn thing one can imagine. Perhaps the most trying ordeal I ever experienced was the day of the execution of Haunstine. It so happened that the scaffold was erected just beneath one of the windows of our office on the south side of the courthouse. As the nails were being driven into that structure how I shuddered as I thought that a human being was to be suspended from that great beam. Early in the morning on the day of the execution people from miles away began to arrive to witness the cruelest event that ever marred the fair name of our beloved state. Early in the day, in company with several others, I visited the cell of the condemned man. He was busy distributing little souvenirs he had made from wood to friends and members of his family. He was pale but calm and self-composed. My heart ached and my soul was stirred to its very depth in sympathy for a fellow being and yet I was utterly helpless so far as extending any aid or consolation. The thought recurred to me so often, why is it men are so cruel to each other—wolfish in nature, seeking to destroy their own kind? And now the thought still comes to me, will the day ever dawn when there will be no law in Nebraska permitting men to cruelly take the life of each other to avenge a wrong? I trust that the fair name of Nebraska may never be blotted again by another so-called *legal* execution.

It was during the time I was in that office the first commencement of the Broken Bow high school was held, the class consisting of two graduates, a boy and a girl. The boy is now Dr. Willis Talbot, a physician of Broken Bow, and the girl, who was Stella Brown, is now the wife of W. W. Waters, mayor of Broken Bow. [49]

We moved our office into the new courthouse in January, 1890. Soon after we saw the completion of the mammoth building extending the entire length of the block on the south side of the public square called the Realty block. The Ansley Cornet band was the first band to serenade us in the new courthouse.

Mr. Douglass completed his term of office as clerk of the district court on January 7, 1892, and two weeks later we were married and went for a visit to my old home in Iowa. Soon after returning to Broken Bow we moved to Callaway. I shall never forget my first view of the little city of which I had heard so much, the "Queen City of the Seven Valleys." After moving to Callaway I again taught school and had begun on my second year's work when I resigned to accept a position in the office of the state land commissioner, H. C. Russell, at Lincoln, where I remained for two years. During the time I was in that office Mr. Douglass was appointed postmaster at Callaway, so I resigned my work in Lincoln and returned home to work in the postoffice. We were in this office for seven years, after which I accepted a position in the Seven Valleys bank. After a year I again took up school work and have been engaged in that ever since. We have continued to reside at Callaway all these years and have learned to love the rugged hills and glorious sunshine. The winds continue to blow and the sands beat upon our pathway, but we would not exchange our little cottage in the grove for a palace in the far East. [50]

AN EXPERIENCE

BY MRS. HARMON BROSS

An experience through which I passed in northwestern Nebraska in the early days comes to my mind very frequently.

When the railroad first went through that region to Chadron, Mr. Bross was general missionary for the Northwest, including central Wyoming and the Black Hills country.

When we first visited Chadron it was a town of white tents, and we occupied a tent for several

days. Then the tent was needed for other purposes and Mr. Bross suggested that we find lodging in a building in process of erection for a hotel. The frame was up and enclosed, the floors laid, but no stairs and no division into rooms. The proprietor said we could have a bed in the upper room, where there were fifty beds side by side. He would put a curtain around the bed. As that was the only thing to do, we accepted the situation and later I climbed a ladder to the upper floor.

The bed in one corner was enclosed with a calico curtain just the size of the bed. I climbed on, and prepared the baby boy and myself for sleep. As I was the only woman in the room, and every bed was occupied before morning by two men, the situation was somewhat unique. However, I was soon asleep.

About three o'clock I was awakened by the stealthy footsteps of two men on the ladder. They came to the bed at the foot of the one we occupied, and after settling themselves to their satisfaction began discussing the incidents of the night. As they were gamblers, the conversation was a trifle strange to a woman.

Soon in the darkness below and close to the side of the building where we were, rang out several pistol shots with startling distinctness.

One man remarked, in a calm, impersonal tone, "I prefer to be on the ground floor when the shots fly around like that." The remark was not especially reassuring for a mother with a sleeping baby by her side.

As no one in the room seemed to be disturbed, and as the tumult below soon died away, I again slept, and awakened in the morning none the worse for the experience of the night.



**Mrs. Andrew K. Gault Third Vice-President General from Nebraska,
National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution. Elected 1913**

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LEGEND OF CROW BUTTE

BY DR. ANNA ROBINSON CROSS

The early history of Crawford and its environment is replete with tales of Indian scares; the pioneer settlers banding themselves together and arming for protection against possible Indian raids, all presenting lurid material for the most exciting stories, if one could gather the accurate data.

The legend of Crow Butte is one of the most thrilling, and at the same time the most important, of the many tales told by the old settlers around the winter fireside.

In the early history of the Sioux and Crow Indians, much strife and ill-feeling was engendered between the two tribes by the stealing of horses. As no satisfactory settlement could be arranged between them, it was declared, after a solemn pow-wow, that a decisive battle should be fought, and the field for the said conflict was chosen on the land east of the present site of Crawford. The final stand was taken on one of the peculiar clay formations known as buttes, found in northwestern Nebraska. These eminences, dividing this section of the country into valleys and ridges of hills, add very much to the beauty of the landscape, by their seeming likeness to a succession of battlements and old castles.

This particular butte, standing like a sentinel about five miles east of Crawford, rises to a height of nearly three hundred feet on the east side, and is possible of ascent by gradual elevation on the west side. It appears to stand distinct and alone, forming a landmark on the horizon that has guided many a settler and traveler to home and safety. The writer is one of the number of travelers who, from bitter experiences in long winter drives over the prairie, has learned to appreciate the landmark of the old Crow Butte.

The Sioux, having driven the Crows to the top of this butte, thought, by guarding the path, they could quickly conquer by starving them out. Under cover of night the Crows decided, after due deliberation, that the warriors could escape, if the old men of the tribe would remain and keep up a constant singing. This was done. The young and able-bodied men, making ropes of their blankets, were let down the steep side of the butte, while the poor old men kept up a constant wailing for days, until death, from lack of food and exhaustion, had stilled their voices. As the singing gradually ceased, the Sioux, while watching, saw white clouds passing over the butte, having the appearance of large, white birds with outstretched wings, on which they carried the old men to the "Happy Hunting Grounds." The Sioux, awed by the illusion, believed it an omen of peace and declared that forever after there should be no more wars between the Crows and the Sioux. [52]

Through Capt. James H. Cook, an early settler and pioneer of this section, who has served as scout and interpreter for the Indians for years, I have learned that it was near this Crow Butte that the last great treaty was made with the Indians, in which the whole of the Black Hills country was disposed of to the white people. According to his statement, the affair came very nearly ending in a battle in which many lives might have been lost. The bravery and quick action of a few men turned the tide in favor of the white people.

The following original poem by Pearl Shepherd Moses is quite appropriate in this connection:

TO CROW HEART BUTTE

Oh, lofty Crow Heart Butte, uprising toward the sun,
What is your message to the world below?
Or do you wait in silence, race outrun,
The march of ages in their onward flow?

Ye are so vast, so great, and yet so still,
That but a speck I seem in nature's plan;
Or but a drop without a way or will
In this mad rush miscalled the race of man.

In nature's poems you a period stand
Among her lessons we can never read;
But with high impulse and good motive found,

You help us toward the brave and kindly deed.

[53]

The winds and sunshine, dawns and throbbing star,
Yield you their message from the ether clear,
While moonlight crowns your brow so calm and fair
With homage kingly as their greatest peer.

A longing fills me as I nightly gaze;
Would I could break your spell of silence vast;
But centuries and years and months and days
Must add themselves again unto the past.

And I can only wish that I were as true,
Always found faithful and as firmly stand
For right as you since you were young and new,
A wondrous product from a mighty hand.

[54]

LIFE ON THE FRONTIER

BY JAMES AYRES

Prairie Covered with Indians

In July, 1867, a freight train left the old Plum Creek station late one night for the west. As the company was alarmed for the safety of the trains, Pat Delahunty, the section boss, sent out three men on a hand-car over his section in advance of this train. They had gone about three miles to the bend west of the station when they were attacked by Indians. This was at a point nearly north of the John Jacobson claim. There are still on the south side of the track some brickbats near the culvert. This is the place where the Indians built a fire on the south side of the track and took a position on the north side. When the hand-car came along, they fired upon it. They killed one man and wounded another, a cockney from London, England, and thinking him dead took his scalp. He flinched. They stuck a knife in his neck but even that did not kill him. He recovered consciousness and crawled into the high weeds. The freight came and fell into the trap. While the Indians were breaking into the cars of the wrecked freight, the Englishman made his escape, creeping a mile to the north. As soon as morning came, Patrick Delahunty with his men took a hand-car and went to investigate. Before they had gone half a mile they could see the Indians all around the wreck. Each one had a pony. They had found a lot of calico in one car and each Indian had taken a bolt and had broken one end loose and was unfolding it as he rode over the prairie. Yelling, they rode back and forth in front of one another with calico flying, like a Maypole dance gone mad. When they saw the section men with guns, they broke for the Platte river and crossed it due south of where Martin Peterson's house now stands. The section men kept shooting at them but got no game. They found that a squaw-man had probably had a hand in the wrecking of the train for the rails had been pried up just beyond the fire. The smoke blinded the engineer and he ran into the rails which were standing as high as the front of the boiler. The engineer and the fireman were killed. The engine ran off the track, but the cars remained on the rails. The Indians opened every car and set fire to two or three of the front ones. One car was loaded with brick. The writer got a load of these brick in 1872 and built a blacksmith forge. Among the bricks were found pocket knives, cutlery, and a Colt's revolver.

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The man who had been scalped came across the prairie toward the section men. They thought he was an Indian. His shirt was gone and his skin was covered with dried blood. They were about to

shoot when Delahunty said, "Stop, boys," for the man had his hands above his head. They let him come nearer and when he was a hundred yards away Delahunty said, "By gobs, it's Cockney!" They took him to the section house and cared for him. He told them these details. After this event he worked for the Union Pacific railroad at Omaha. Then he went back to England. The railroad had just been built and there was only one train a day.

Wild Turkeys and Wild Cats

Tom Mahum was the boss herder for Ewing of Texas and had brought his herd up that summer and had his cattle on Dilworth's islands until he could ship them to Chicago. He bantered me for a turkey hunt, and we went on horseback up Plum creek. He was a good shot and we knew we would get game of some kind. We followed the creek five miles, when we scared up a flock of turkeys. They were of the bronze kind, large and heavy. We got three, and as we did not find any more, we took the tableland for the Platte. As we came down a pocket we ran into a nest of wildcats. There were four of them. One cat jumped at a turkey that was tied to Tom's saddle. That scared his horse so that it nearly unseated him, but he took his pistol and killed the cat. I was afraid they would jump at me. They growled and spit, and I edged away until I could shoot from my pony, and when twenty-five yards away I slipped in two cartridges and shot two of the cats. The fourth one got away and we were glad to let it go. We took the three cats to town, skinned them, and sold the pelts to Peddler Charley for one dollar. Tom talked about that hunt when I met him in Oregon a few years ago.

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A Scare

On another occasion, Perley Wilson and I took a hunt on the big island south of the river where there were some buffalo. The snow was about eight inches deep and we crossed the main stream on the ice. Before we got over, I saw a moccasin track and showed it to Wilson. He said we had better get out. "No," said I, "let us trail it and find where it goes." It took us into a very brushy island. Wilson would go no further, but I took my shotgun, cocked both barrels, and went on but with caution for fear the Indian would see me first. I got just half way in, and I heard a "Ugh!" right behind me. The hair on my head went straight up. I was scared, but I managed to gasp, "Sioux?" "No, Pawnee. Heap good Indian." Then he laughed and I breathed again. I asked, "What are you doing here?" "Cooking beaver," he replied, and led the way to his fire. He had a beaver skinned hanging on a plum tree and he had a tin can over the fire, boiling the tail. I returned to Wilson and told him about it. He said, "It is no use to try to sneak up on an Indian in the brush, for he always sees you first." I could have shot the Indian, as he only had a revolver, but that would have been cowardly as he had the first drop on me and could have had my scalp. We got home with no game that day.

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PLUM CREEK (LEXINGTON), NEBRASKA

BY WM. M. BANCROFT, M.D.

On April 5, 1873, I arrived at Plum Creek, now Lexington, with what was called the second colony from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Captain F. J. Pearson, who was in charge, later became editor of the *Pioneer*. Judge Robert B. Pierce and the Tucker family were also with this colony. On our arrival the only town we found was a mile east of the present site of Lexington. It consisted of a section house, a small shanty called the Johnson restaurant, one story and a half log house run by Daniel Freeman as a general store, and a stockade built of ties used as a place of safety for the horses and cows. The upper story of the Freeman building was occupied by the Johnson family, who partitioned it off with blankets to accommodate the immigrants, and the

only lights we could depend on were candle dips from the Freeman store at twenty-five cents each. At this time bread sold at twenty-five cents per loaf.

There was also an immigrant house 20 by 40 feet located on the north side of the railroad nearly opposite the other buildings referred to. This house was divided into rooms 6 by 8 feet square with a hall between. The front room was used as Dawson county's first office by John H. MacColl, then county clerk. There was also a coal shed and a water tank on the south side of the track. The depot was a mile west on a railroad section where the town was finally built.

The reason for the change of townsite was a fight by Freeman against the Union Pacific company. Freeman owned the quarter section of government land, on which the buildings referred to were located.

The first house in Plum Creek was built by Robert Pierce, whose family got permission to live in a freight car on the side-track while the house was being built. While in the freight car the family was attacked by measles. In order to gain entrance to this temporary residence a step-ladder had to be used, and in visiting the family while in the car, I would find them first at one end of the switch and next at the other, and would have to transfer the ladder each time. Later on Robert Pierce was elected probate judge and served until by reason of his age he retired. [58]

Tudor Tucker built the first frame house on Buffalo creek five miles northeast of town. The first store building in Plum Creek was built by Mr. Betz. The first hotel was built by E. D. Johnson, who deserves much credit for his work in building up Dawson county. In 1873 the population numbered about 175. The old townsite was soon abandoned and the town of Plum Creek on its present site became a reality.

The completion of the Platte river bridge was celebrated July 4, 1873, by a big demonstration. It then became necessary to get the trade from the Republican Valley, Plum Creek being the nearest trading point for that locality. Since there were no roads from the south, a route had to be laid out. With this object in view, Judge Pierce, E. D. Johnson, Elleck Johnson, and I constituted ourselves a committee to do the work. We started across the country and laid up sod piles every mile, until we reached the Arapahoe, 48 miles southwest. Coming back we shortened up the curves. This was the first road from the south into Plum Creek, and we derived a great amount of trade from this territory. It was no uncommon thing for the Erwin & Powers Company, conducting a general store at this time, to take in from one thousand to twelve hundred dollars on Saturdays.

The first church and Sunday school was organized Sunday, April 13, 1873, three and one-half miles north of town at the farm of Widow Mullen. Those present, including myself, were: Mrs. Mullen and family, Captain John S. Stuckey, afterwards treasurer of Dawson county, Joseph Stuckey, Samuel Clay Stuckey and wife, Edgar Mellenger, and one negro servant. Joseph Stuckey was appointed leader, James Tipton, superintendent of the Sunday school, and I took charge of the music. The first regular sermon was preached by a Mr. Wilson who came to Overton to live on a homestead. He consented to preach for us until we could fill his place by an appointment at general conference. We held the first regular service both of the church and the Sunday school in the old frame schoolhouse located in the east ward. We also held revivals in the Hill hall where Smith's opera house now stands. [59]

On this Sunday afternoon about five o'clock the great April storm started with blizzard from the northwest. It was impossible for any of us to get away until Tuesday afternoon. On Monday night Captain Stuckey, Doc Mellenger, and I had to take the one bed. During the night the bed broke down and we lay until morning huddled together to keep from freezing. Mellenger and I left Tuesday afternoon, when the storm abated, and started back toward the old town. The storm again caught us and drifted us to Doc's old doby two and one-half miles north of the townsite. By this time the snow had drifted from four to five feet in depth. The horses took us to the dugout stable in which we put them. Then we had to dig our way to the doby where we remained from Tuesday evening until Thursday morning. We had nothing to eat during that time but a few hard biscuits, a

little bacon, and three frozen chickens, and nothing but melted snow to drink. The bedstead was a home-made affair built of pine boards. This we cut up and used for fuel and slept on the dirt floor. The storm was so terrific that it was impossible to get to the well, fifteen feet from the doby. We became so thirsty from the snow water that Doc thought he would try to get to the well. He took a rope and pistol, tied the rope around his waist and started for the well. His instructions were that if I heard the pistol I was to pull him in. After a very short time the pistol report came and I pulled and pulled and Doc came tumbling in without pistol or bucket. It was so cold he had nearly frozen his hands. Thursday was clear and beautiful. One of the persons from Mullen's, having gone to town, reported that we had left there Tuesday afternoon. On account of this report a searching party was sent out to look for us.

Another item of interest was the Pawnee and Sioux massacre on August 5, 1873. It was the custom of the Pawnees, who were friendly and were located on a reservation near Columbus, Nebraska, to go on a fall hunt for buffalo meat for their winter use. The Sioux, who were on the Pine Bluff reservation, had an old grudge against the Pawnees and knew when this hunt took place. The Pawnees made Plum Creek their starting point across the country southwest to the head of the Frenchman river. They camped about ten miles northwest of Culbertson, a town on the B. & M. railroad. The camp was in the head of a pocket which led from a tableland to the Republican river. The Sioux drove a herd of buffalo on the Pawnees while the latter were in camp. Not suspecting danger the Pawnees began to kill the buffalo, when the Sioux came up, taking them by surprise. The Pawnees, being outnumbered, fled down the cañon. The Sioux followed on either bank and cross-fired them, killing and wounding about a hundred. I was sent by the government with Mr. Longshore, the Indian agent of Columbus, and two guides to the scene of the massacre, which was about one hundred and forty miles southwest of Plum Creek, for the purpose of looking after the wounded who might have been left behind. We made this trip on horseback. The agent had the dead buried and we followed up the wounded. We found twenty-two at Arapahoe and ten or fifteen had left and started on the old Fort Kearny trail. We brought the twenty-two wounded to Plum Creek, attended to their wounds and then shipped them in a box car to the reservation at Columbus. [60]

My first trip to Wood river valley twenty miles north, was to attend James B. Mallott, one of the first settlers. They were afraid to let me go without a guard but I had no fear of the Indians, so they gave me a belt of cartridges and a Colt's revolver. Finally MacColl, the county clerk, handed me a needle gun and commanded me to get back before dark. I started on horseback with this arsenal for Wood river and made the visit, but on my return I stopped to let the horse rest and eat bluestem. Soon the horse became frightened and began to paw and snort. On looking back toward the divide, I saw three Indians on horseback were heading my way. We were not long in getting started. I beat them by a mile to the valley, arriving safely at Tucker's farm on Buffalo creek. The Indians did not follow but rode along the foothills to the west. A party of four or five from Tucker's was not long in giving chase, but the Indians had disappeared in the hills. A little later, Anton Abel, who lived a mile north of town, came in on the run and stated that a file of eight or ten Indians, with scalp sticks waving, were headed south a half mile west of town. A number mounted their horses and gave chase to the river where the Indians crossed and were lost sight of. We never suffered much loss or injury from the Indians. Many scares were reported, but like the buffalo after 1874-75, they were a thing of the past in our county. [61]

My practice for the first ten or twelve years among the sick and injured, covered a field almost unlimited. I was called as far north as Broken Bow in the Loup valley, fifty miles, east to Elm Creek, Buffalo county, twenty miles, west to Brady Island, Lincoln county, thirty-five miles, and south to the Republican river. Most of the time there were no roads or bridges. The valley of the Platte in Dawson county is now the garden spot of the state. As stated before the settlement of 1872 was on the extreme edge of the frontier. Now we have no frontier. It is progressive civilization from coast to coast. I have practiced my profession for over forty years continuously in this state, and am still in active practice. I have an abiding faith that I shall yet finish up with an airship in which to visit my patients. [62]

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

BY C. CHABOT

After repeated invitations from my old boyhood companion, Dr. Bancroft, to visit him in his new home in western Nebraska, I left Philadelphia and arrived in Omaha the early part of April, 1878. Omaha at that time did not impress me very favorably. After buying my ticket to Plum Creek (in those days you could only buy a ticket to Omaha) the next thing in order was to get in line and have my trunk checked, and witness baggage "smashers" demolish a few trunks, then coolly offer to rope them at twenty-five cents each. Our train left at 11 a. m. and arrived in Plum Creek at 11 p. m., good time for those days. The train left with all seats occupied and some passengers standing. Everybody was eager to see the great prairie country. We expected to see Indians and buffalo, but only a few jack rabbits appeared, which created quite a laugh, as it was the first time any of us had ever seen one run. After we had traveled about twenty miles, "U. P. Sam," as he called himself, came into our car and treated us to a song of his own composition. In his song he related all the wonders of the great Union Pacific railroad and the country between Omaha and Ogden. I saw him two years later in Dawson county, playing the violin at a country dance, and singing songs about different persons at the gathering. All you had to do was to give him a few points as to a man's disposition and habits with a few dimes and he would have the whole company laughing.

We stopped at Grand Island for supper, and in due time arrived in Plum Creek. Dr. Bancroft was waiting for me and after being introduced to many of his western friends, we retired for the night. Next morning feeling the necessity of visiting a barber shop, I asked the doctor if there was a barber shop in town. Judging from the accommodations at the hotel I had my doubts. "We have a good barber in town," he replied, "but I will go with you." On arriving at the corner of what is now Main and Depot streets we entered a building which I discovered to be a saloon. I protested, but before I had had time to say much, the doctor asked the barkeeper where Ed. (the barber) was. "Why, he has gone south of the river to plaster a house," was the reply. Then I thought "what kind of a country have I come to, barber and plasterer the same person." Then my mind wandered back to the far East where I saw a comfortable bath room, and I thought "What can the doctor see in this country to deny himself all the comforts of home?" Before I had time to recover from my reveries, I was surrounded by cowboys who insisted that I drink with them. I protested and if it had not been for Dr. Bancroft I suppose they would have made me dance to the music of their six shooters or drink, but as I was a friend of "Little Doc" (as they called him) that was sufficient and the tenderfoot was allowed to leave. Then and only then I saw in the northwest corner of the room the barber's chair. [63]

I accompanied Dr. Bancroft on many drives over the country going as far north as the Loup and Dismal rivers. We went several times south to Arapahoe; in fact it was but a short time before I was acquainted with most all the settlers in Dawson and adjacent counties. The population at that time was hardly 2,000 in Dawson county. In a very short time I began to feel more at home. The hospitality of the people was something I had never dreamed of; the climate and good fresh air so invigorating that I soon adjusted myself to surrounding conditions, and before I had been here a month I decided to cast my lot with the rest of the new settlers and became one of them.

While I have had many ups and downs I cannot say that I regret having done so. When I look back and think of the many friends I made in the early days and how we stood hand in hand in our adversities as well as in our good fortunes, I cannot help feeling that we are more than friends and belong to one big family. [64]

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE FIRST SETTLER OF DAWSON COUNTY

BY MRS. DANIEL FREEMAN

I came from Canada to Leavenworth, Kansas. Mr. Freeman was a freighter to Pike's Peak, but was not always successful. He spent \$4,000 on one train and came back with only a team of oxen and a team of ponies. The next spring, 1862, I bought a stage-coach and using the pony team, I took my three children, the youngest only two months old, and drove all the way to Nebraska. My husband was there and had started a little store just across from the pony express station on Plum creek. He bought buffalo hides of the Indians and shipped them east. The buffalo were in easy reach and we had fresh meat every day. We had a big sign with the word "Bakery" on it. I baked a hundred pounds of flour every day. I would make yeast bread over night and bake it in the forenoon, and make salt-rising in the morning and bake it in the afternoon. We got St. Louis flour that the freighters brought from Denver when they came back. I sold my bread for fifty cents a loaf and made as much as thirty dollars a day. I made cheese, too. We had seventy-five head of cows and milked twenty-five. We would take a young calf and let it fill its stomach with its mother's milk, then kill it. Then we took the stomach and washed and wiped it and hung it up on a nail to dry. When it was perfectly dry we would put it away carefully in a cloth and used it for rennet to make the cheese. I would put a little piece of it in new milk and it would form a solid curd. My husband made me a press and a mold. I got twenty-five cents a pound for my cheese, and sold lots of it. I got up fine meals and charged two dollars a meal. The people were glad to pay it. There was plenty of firewood. The trees drifted down the river and we piled the wood up on the islands, but after the settlers came they would steal it. There was no need of anybody going hungry those days, for anyone could kill a buffalo. One day a herd of thirty came within ten feet of our door, and our cows went away with them. The children and I walked three miles before we came up to the cows and could get them back home. We were near the river and it was not far down to water. We dug holes in the ground and sunk five salt barrels. The water came up in these and we always had plenty of water. Sometimes we dipped the barrels dry, but they would be full the next morning. There wasn't a pump in the country for years.

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The people who kept the Pony Express station were named Humphries. These stations were about fifty miles apart. There would be lots of people at the station every night, for after the Indians became troublesome, the people went in trains of about a hundred wagons. There were many six oxen teams. The Indians never troubled anybody until the whites killed so many buffalo and wasted so much. There were carcasses all over the prairies. The Indians used every part, and they knew this great slaughter of the buffalo meant starvation for them, so they went on the warpath in self-defense. They would skulk on the river bank where the trail came close, and would rush up and attack the travelers. The soldiers were sent out as escorts and their families often went with them. One night at Plum Creek Pony Express station twin babies were born to the lieutenant and wife. I went over in the morning to see if I could help them, but they were all cared for by the lieutenant. He had washed the babies and had the tent in order. I do not remember his name now. We often saw tiny babies with their mothers lying in the wagons that came by. They would be wrapped up, and looked very comfortable. Water was so scarce that they had to pay for enough to wash the babies.

Brigham Young made trip after trip with foreign people of all kinds but blacks. Most of these could not speak English, and I don't think Brigham bought any water for them, as they were filthy dirty. Brigham was a great big fat man, and he kept himself pretty neat. He made just about one trip a year. One company of these immigrants was walking through, and the train was a couple of

miles long. They went south of the river on the Oregon trail. There was no other road then.

On August 8, 1864, the Sioux people killed eleven men at 11:00 o'clock in the morning, on Elm creek. I was afraid to stay on our ranch, so I took the children and started to Fort Kearny. On the way we came to the place of the massacre. The dead men were lying side by side in a long trench, their faces were covered with blood and their boots were on. Three women were taken prisoners. I heard that there were two children in the party, and that they were thrown in the grass, but I looked all around for them and didn't find any signs of them. Friends of these people wrote to Mr. E. M. F. Leflang, to know if he could locate them. The Indians never troubled us except to take one team during this war, but I was always afraid when I saw the soldiers coming. They would come in the store and help themselves to tobacco, cookies, or anything. Then the teamsters would swing their long black-snake whips and bring them down across my chicken's heads, then pick them up and carry them to camp. I think the officers were the most to blame, for they sold the soldiers' rations, and the men were hungry. [66]

When the Union Pacific railroad was first built we lived on our homestead north of the river and the town was started on our land. We had the contract to supply the wood for the engines. They didn't use any other fuel then. We hired men to cut the wood on Wood river where Eddyville and Sumner are now. I boarded the men in our new big house across from the depot in old Plum Creek. The store was below and there was an outside stairway for the men to go up. That summer Mr. Freeman was in Washington, Philadelphia, and New York talking up this country. Mr. Freeman was the first county clerk and his office was upstairs over the store. We rented some of the rooms to newcomers. We did a big business until the railroad moved the town to their section, a mile west. Mr. Freeman kept on trapping, and finally was drowned near Deadwood, South Dakota. I stayed by Dawson county and raised my family and they all are settled near me and have good homes. [67]

EARLY DAYS IN DAWSON COUNTY

BY LUCY R. HEWITT

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas J. Hewitt, in June, 1873, journeyed from Forresteron, Illinois, to Plum Creek, Nebraska. Their object was to take advantage of the offer the government was making to civil war soldiers, whereby each soldier could obtain one hundred and sixty acres of land. They stopped at Grand Island and Kearney, but at neither place could they find two adjoining quarter sections, not yet filed on. They wanted two, for my grandfather, Rockwood, who lived with us was also a soldier. At Plum Creek, now Lexington, they were able to obtain what they wanted but it was six miles northwest of the station.

Plum Creek at that early date consisted of the depot. The town was a mile east and when my parents arrived at Plum Creek, they were obliged to walk back to the town, in order to find lodging for the night. Rooms seem to have been scarce for they had to share theirs with another man and his wife. They found a place to eat in the restaurant owned by Mr. and Mrs. E. D. Johnson.

In August of the same year, they made a second trip to Nebraska, this time with wagon and carriage, bringing with others a carpenter who built their house upon the dividing line of the two homesteads. This house had the distinction of being the first two-story house in the neighborhood. All the others were one-story, because the settlers feared the high winds that occasionally swept over the prairies. For a few months it was the farthest away from town.

In the three months between the two trips the town had moved to the depot, and had grown from

nothing to a village of sixty houses and stores. The Johnsons had brought their restaurant and placed it upon the site where a little later they built a hotel called the Johnson house. Mr. T. Martin had built the first hotel which he named the Alhambra. I have a very faint recollection of being in this hotel when the third trip brought the household goods and the family to the new home. It was in December when this last journey was taken, and great was the astonishment of the older members of the family to see the ground covered with a foot of snow. They had been told that there was practically no winter in Nebraska, and they had believed the statement. They found that the thermometer could drop almost out of sight with the cold, and yet the greater part of many winters was very pleasant. [68]

My father opened a law office in the town and T. L. Warrington, who taught the first school in the village, read law with him, and kept the office open when the farm required attention. The fields were small at first and did not require so very much time.

The first exciting event was a prairie fire. A neighbor's family was spending the day at our farm and some other friends also came to call. The day was warm, no wind was stirring until about 4 o'clock, when it suddenly and with much force blew from the north and brought the fire, which had been smoldering for some days in the bluffs to the north of the farm, down into the valley with the speed of a racing automobile. We children were very much frightened, and grandmother who was sick with a headache, was so startled she forgot her pain—did not have any in fact. Mother and Mrs. Fagot, the neighbor's wife, were outside loosening the tumble weeds and sending them along with the wind before the fire could catch them. In that way they saved the house from catching fire. My father, who had seen the fire come over the hills, as he was driving from town, had unhitched the horses and riding one of them as fast as possible, reached home in time to watch the hay stacks. Three times they caught fire and each time he beat it out with a wet gunny sack. I think this happened in March, 1874.

That same year about harvest time the country was visited by grasshoppers. They did considerable damage by nipping off the oat heads before the farmers could finish the reaping. My aunt who was visiting us suggested that the whole family walk through the potato field and send the hoppers into the grass beyond. It was a happy thought, for the insects ate grass that night and the next day a favorable wind sent them all away.

The worst grasshopper visitation we had was in July, 1876. One Sunday morning father and mother and I went to town to church. The small grain had been harvested and the corn all along the way was a most beautiful, dark green. When we were about a mile from town a slight shade seemed to come over the sun; when we looked up for the cause, we saw millions of grasshoppers slowly dropping to the ground. They came down in such numbers that they clung two or three deep to every green thing. The people knew that nothing in the way of corn or gardens could escape such devastating hordes and they were very much discouraged. To add to their troubles, the Presbyterian minister that morning announced his intention to resign. He, no doubt, thought he was justified. [69]

I was pretty small at that time and did not understand what it all meant, but I do know that as we drove home that afternoon, the cornfields looked as they would in December after the cattle had fed on them—not a green shred left. The asparagus stems, too, were equally bare. The onions were eaten down to the very roots. Of the whole garden, there was, in fact, nothing left but a double petunia, which grandmother had put a tub over. So ravenous were the pests that they even ate the cotton mosquito netting that covered the windows.

In a day or two when nothing remained to eat, the grasshoppers spread their wings and whirred away. Then grandfather said, "We will plant some beans and turnips, there is plenty of time for them to mature before frost." Accordingly, he put in the seeds and a timely rain wet them so that in a very few days they had sprouted and were well up, when on Monday morning, just two weeks and one day from the time of the first visitation, a second lot dropped down and breakfasted off grandfather's beans. It was too late in the season then to plant more.

My mother had quite a flock of turkeys and a number of chickens. They were almost dazed at the sight of so many perfectly good insects. They tried to eat them all but had to give up the task. They ate enough, however, to make themselves sick.

This time I believe the grasshoppers stayed several days. They seemed to be hunting some good hard ground in which to lay their eggs. The following spring the warm days brought out millions of little ones, which a prairie fire later destroyed.

The corn crop having been eaten green and the wheat acreage being rather small, left many people with nothing to live on during the winter. Many moved away and many of those who could not get away had to be helped. It was then that Dawson county people learned that they had good friends in the neighboring states for they sent carloads of food and clothing to their less fortunate neighbors. [70]

A good many homesteaders were well-educated, refined people from Pennsylvania, New York, and elsewhere. They were a very congenial company and often had social times together. They were for the most part young people, some with families of young children, others just married, and some unmarried. I remember hearing my mother tell of a wedding that she and father attended. The ceremony was performed at a private house and then the whole company adjourned to a large hall where everybody who wanted to, danced and the rest watched until the supper was served by Mr. and Mrs. Johnson in their new hotel. The bride on this occasion was Miss Addie Bradley and the groom was W. H. Lingle, at one time county superintendent of public instruction.

For some time after the starting of the town of Plum Creek there was no church edifice but there was a good sized schoolhouse, and here each Sunday morning the people for miles around gathered. One Sunday the Methodist preacher talked to all the people and the next week the Presbyterian minister preached to the same congregation, until the courthouse was built, and then the Presbyterians used the courtroom. I have heard the members say that they received more real good from those union services than they ever did when each denomination had a church of its own. The Episcopalians in the community were the most enterprising for they built the first church, a little brick building that seated one hundred people. It was very plainly furnished, but it cost fifteen hundred dollars, due to the fact that the brick was brought from Kearney and freight rates were high. It stood on the site of the present modern building and was built in 1874. My grandfather, an ardent Churchman, often read the service when there was no rector in town.

Speaking of the courthouse reminds me that it was not always put to the best use. I cannot remember when the following incident occurred, but I do remember hearing it talked of. A man who lived on the south side of the Platte river was accused of poisoning some flour that belonged to another man. He was ordered arrested and two or three men, among them Charles Mayes, the deputy sheriff, were sent after him. He resisted arrest and using his gun, killed Mayes. He was finally taken and brought to town and put into the county jail in the basement of the courthouse. Mayes had been a very popular man and the feeling was very high against his slayer, so high, indeed, that some time between night and morning the man was taken from the jail, and the next morning his lifeless body was found hanging at the back door of the courthouse. [71]

One of the pleasures of the pioneer is hunting. In the early days there was plenty of game in Dawson county, buffalo, elk, deer, antelope, jack rabbits, and several game birds, such as plover, prairie hen, ducks, geese, and cranes. By the time we arrived, however, the buffalo had been driven so far away that they were seldom seen. There was plenty of buffalo meat in the market, however, for hunters followed them and shot them, mostly for their hides. The meat was very good, always tender and of fine flavor. My father rushed into the house one day and called for his revolver. A herd of buffalo was racing across the fields towards the bluffs on the north. Father and some of the men with him, thought possibly they might get near enough to shoot one. But although he rode as fast as his pony could carry him, he could not get close enough and the herd, once it reached the hills was safe. The poor beasts had been chased for miles and were weary, but

they did not give up. The cows huddled the calves together and pushed them along and the bulls led the way. Father learned afterward that his pony had been trained by the Indians to hunt; and if he had given him the rein and allowed him to go at it in his own way, he would have gone so close that father could have shot one. But he did not know this until the buffalo were far away. [72]

PIONEER JUSTICE

BY B. F. KRIER

In the early history of Lexington, Nebraska, as in all western states, there was no crime committed more reprehensible than that of stealing a horse. One might kill a man and it would be overlooked or excused, but the offense of stealing a horse was a crime that nothing could atone for but the "wiping out" of the thief. And generally when the horse thief was caught the nearest tree or the upraised end of a wagon tongue was immediately brought into use as a gallows upon which the criminal was duly hanged without the formalities of courts or juries. It was amply sufficient to know that the accused had stolen a horse, and it mattered but little to whom the horse belonged or whether the owner was present to take a hand in the execution. The culprit was dealt with in such manner that he never stole another animal.

This sentiment prevailed among the first settlers of Dawson county, as was shown in 1871, shortly after the organization of the county. Among the officials of the county at that time was a justice of the peace, a sturdy, honest man, who had been a resident of the county several years before it was organized. One day in 1871 a half-breed Sioux came riding from the east into Plum Creek (as Lexington was then called). The Indian stopped in the town and secured a meal for himself and feed for his horse.

While he was eating, two Pawnee warriors arrived at the station on a freight train, from the east. They at once hunted up the sheriff, a broad-shouldered Irishman named John Kehoe, and made complaint that the half-breed Sioux had stolen a horse from one of them and had the animal in his possession. Complaint was formally made and a warrant issued for the half-breed's arrest upon the charge of horse-stealing, the warrant being issued by the aforesaid justice of the peace.

The Sioux was at once taken in custody by the sheriff and brought before the justice. One of the Pawnees swore the horse the half-breed rode when he entered the town was his property, and the other Pawnee upon oath declared he knew it was. The prisoner denied the statement made by the Pawnees and vehemently declared the animal was his property; that he came by it honestly, and that the Pawnee had no title whatever in the horse. [73]

There was no jury to hear and judge the evidence, and the justice was compelled to decide the case. He had had some experience with redskins, and entertained but small regard for any of them, but as the preponderance of the evidence was against the Sioux, he decided the latter was guilty, and after a short study of the matter sentenced the culprit to be hanged.

There were no lawyers in Plum Creek at that time, a condition that has not existed since, and each side did its own talking. The Sioux at once filed a vigorous complaint against the sentence, but was ordered by the court to keep still.

Realizing he had no chance, he became silent, but some of the citizens who were present and listening to the trial, interposed objections to the strenuous sentence, and informed the court that "as we are now organized into a county and have to go by law, you can't sentence a man to hang fer stealin' a hoss."

This staggered the justice somewhat and he again took the matter under advisement, and shortly after made the following change in the sentence, addressing the prisoner as follows "——, Dem laws don't let you get hanged, vich iss not right. You iss one teef; dat iss a sure ting, and I shust gif you fifteen minutes to git out of dis state of Newbrasky."

The Pawnee secured possession of the horse, but whether it belonged to them or not is questionable, and hit the eastern trail for the "Pawnee house," while the Sioux warrior hastily got himself together and made a swift hike toward the setting sun and safety.

[74]

A GOOD INDIAN

BY MRS. CLIFFORD WHITTAKER

The late John H. MacColl came to Dawson county in 1869 to benefit his health, but shortly after reaching here he had an attack of mountain fever, that left his lower limbs paralyzed. The nearest medical aid he could get was from the army surgeon at Fort McPherson, forty miles to the west. He made a number of trips to attend Mr. MacColl, and finally told him that he would never be any better. An old Indian medicine man happened along about that time and he went to see Mr. MacColl. By curious signs, gesticulations, and grunts, he made Mr. MacColl understand that he could cure him and that he would be back the next day at the rising of the sun. True to his word, he came, bringing with him an interpreter who explained to Mr. MacColl that the medicine man could cure him if he would submit to his treatment. Mr. MacColl was desperate and willing to do almost anything, so he agreed. The patient was stripped and laid flat on a plank. The medicine man then took a saw-edged knife and made no less than a hundred tiny gashes all over his patient's body. This done he produced a queer herb, and began chewing it. Then he spit it in his hand, as needed, and rubbed it into each tiny wound. That was all, and in three days Mr. MacColl could stand alone, and in a week he could walk.

This incident was told to me in 1910 by the sister, Laura MacColl.

[75]

FROM MISSOURI TO DAWSON COUNTY IN 1872

BY A. J. PORTER

I left southwest Missouri late in October, 1872, accompanied by my sister, and journeyed by team via Topeka, Kansas, to Nebraska. We spent our first night in Nebraska at Fairbury, November 8, 1872. Trains on the St. Joe and Grand Island railroad had just reached that point.

After visiting a few days with the Carney families near Fairmont we took the train for Plum Creek (now Lexington) and reached Kearney at 10 o'clock P. M. All rooms being occupied we sat in the office of the hotel till morning. None of the Union Pacific trains stopped at that place except to take mail. At 10 o'clock that night we got a train to Plum Creek, which place we reached at 12 o'clock. There being no hotel we stayed in the depot until morning, when we found our brother living on a homestead.

During our stay I filed on land six miles northeast of Plum Creek. The next April I brought my family by wagon over the same route and reached Dawson county a month after the noted Easter storm of 1873. At that time we saw hundreds of hides of Texas cattle, that had perished in the

storm, hanging on fences surrounding the stockyards at Elm Creek.

We remained on our homestead until August, 1876, at which time we came to Fillmore county and bought the southwest quarter of section eleven in Madison township, which place we now own. [76]

THE ERICKSON FAMILY

BY MRS. W. M. STEBBINS

Charles J. Erickson left Sweden in 1864 and for two years lived in New York, Indiana, and Illinois. In 1866 he moved to Fort McPherson, Nebraska. He worked around the Fort until 1871 when he took a homestead nine miles east. The next year, he sent to Sweden for his family. They arrived at McPherson station—now Maxwell—on September 1, 1872. Mr. Erickson died in April, 1877. The family resided on the old homestead until 1910, when they moved to Gothenburg, Nebraska. The sons, Frank and John Erickson, who still reside in Nebraska, unite in the following statement:

"Coming to this part of the state at so early a date we have been eye witnesses to the development and transformation of the country from a bleak, wild prairie covered with blue stem grasses, upon which fed thousands of buffalo, deer, antelope, and elk. The Indians still controlled the country and caused us to have many sleepless nights.

"In those early days we always took our guns with us when we went away from home, or into the field to work. Several times we were forced to seek shelter in the Fort, or in some home, saving our scalps from the Indians by the fleetness of our ponies. But how changed now.

"One of our early recollections is the blackened posts and poles along the old Oregon trail. As we gazed down the trail these looked like sentinels guarding the way, but we soon learned they were the poles of the first telegraph line built across Nebraska. It extended from Nebraska City to Fort Laramie, Wyoming. When the Union Pacific railroad was built through here—on the north side of the river—in 1866, the telegraph line followed and the old line on the south side of the Platte was abandoned. The old poles were of red cedar taken from the cañons and were all burned black by the prairie fires. They soon disappeared, being used by the Indians and the emigrants for firewood. The old trail and telegraph line crossed our farm and only a few years ago we dug out of the ground one of the stubs of a cedar telegraph pole about two feet in diameter and six feet long, and there are still more of these old stubs in our fields. [77]

"In the early seventies the most prominent ranches in this section were Upper 96 and Lower 96. These ranches had first been the relay stations of the old Wells Fargo Express Company. At each of these may be seen well preserved cedar log buildings still in use built by this company when they first established their express business across the plains in the middle of the last century. On the advent of the Union Pacific, the Wells Fargo Express Company abandoned these stations and they became the property of the 96 Ranch. Although they have passed through the hands of several different owners they have always retained their names of Upper 96 ranch and Lower 96 ranch.

"The cañons leading into the hills from the south side of the river are named from the early ranches along the valley near the mouths of the cañons; Conroy from Conroy's ranch, Jeffrie from Jeffrie's ranch, Gilman from Gilman's ranch, and Hiles from Hiles' ranch. An exception to the above is the Dan Smith cañon which is named after Dan Smith in memory of the tragedy with which his name is connected. Dan Smith and wife were working at the Lower 96 ranch in 1871. Mrs. Smith wished to attend a ball to be given by the officers at Fort McPherson and wanted her

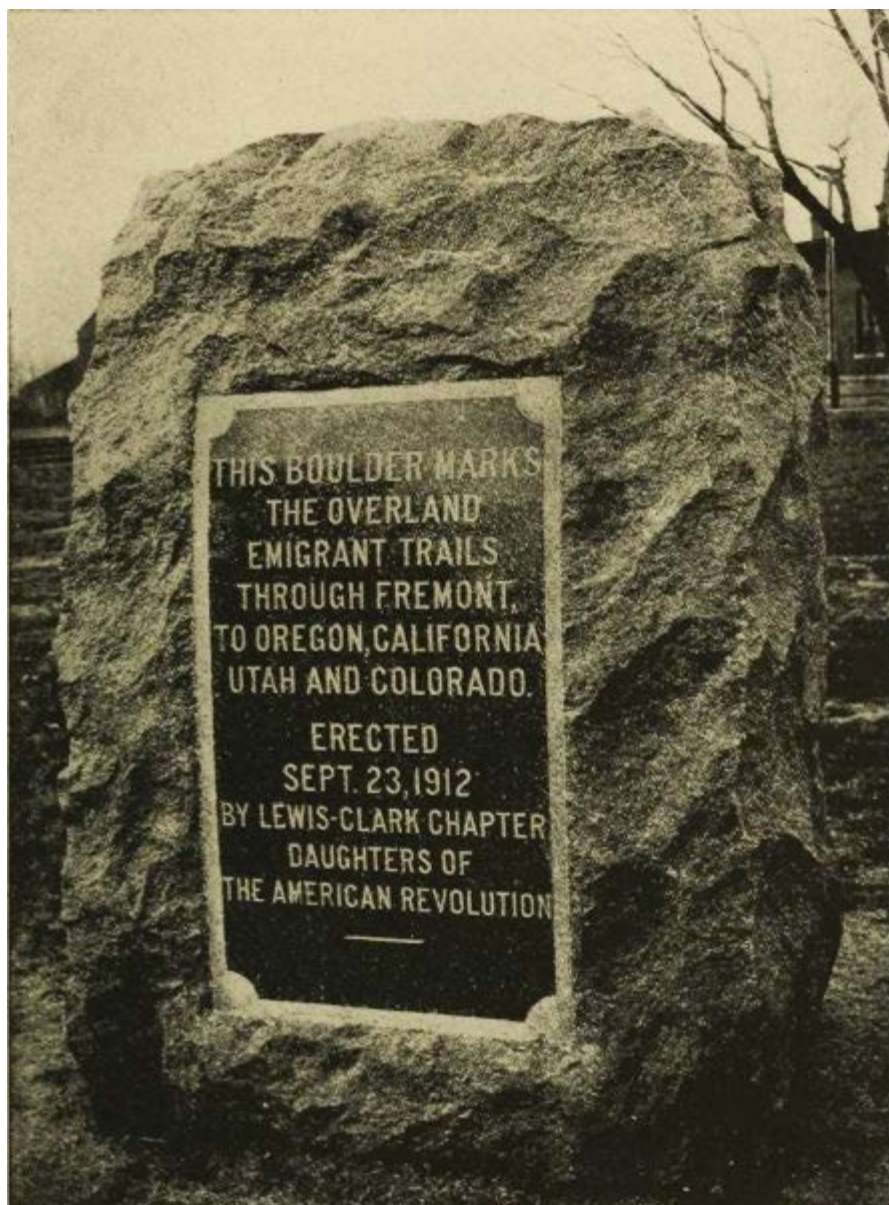
husband to go with her, but he being of a jealous disposition refused to go. She mounted her horse and started to go alone when he called to her to come back and take his gun to protect herself from the Indians. She turned around and started back toward him. He drew his gun and fired, killing her instantly. She was buried at the Lower 96 ranch and until a few years ago her grave was kept green. After shooting his wife, Dan Smith mounted her horse and rode away into the hills to the south. The soldiers at the Fort twenty-five miles away were notified and the next day they came to hunt for the murderer. They surrounded him in a cañon in the hills and there shot him to death leaving his body a prey for buzzards and wolves. The cañon to this day is called Dan Smith Cañon and through it is the main road leading from Gothenburg to Farnam, Nebraska." [78]

THE BEGINNINGS OF FREMONT

BY SADIE IRENE MOORE

Fremont was named for John C. Fremont, who was a candidate against Buchanan for president. The first stakes were set August 23, 1856, the boundaries being finished three days later. "The first habitation of any sort, was constructed of poles surrounded by prairie grass. It was built and owned by E. H. Barnard and J. Koontz, in 1856, and stood upon the site of the present Congregational church." In the autumn of 1856, Robert Kittle built and owned the first house. A few weeks later his house was occupied by Rev. Isaac E. Heaton, wife and two daughters, who were the first family to keep house in Fremont. Alice Flor, born in the fall of 1857, was the first child born in Fremont. She is now Mrs. Gilkerson, of Wahoo. The first male child born in Fremont was Fred Kittle. He was born in March, 1858, and died in 1890. On August 23, 1858, occurred the first marriage. The couple were Luther Wilson and Eliza Turner. The first death was that of Seth P. Marvin, who was accidentally drowned in April, 1857, while crossing the Elkhorn seven miles northeast of Fremont. The Marvin home was a mile and a quarter west of Fremont and this house was the rendezvous of the parties who laid out Fremont. Mr. Marvin was one of the town company.

The first celebration of the Fourth of July was in 1857. Robert Kittle sold the first goods. J. G. and Towner Smith conducted the first regular store. In 1860, the first district school was opened with Miss McNeil teacher. Then came Mary Heaton, now Mrs. Hawthorne. Mrs. Margaret Turner, followed by James G. Smith, conducted the first hotel situated where the First National bank now is. This was also the "stage house," and here all the traders stopped en route from Omaha to Denver. In the evening the old hotel resounded with the music of violin and the sound of merry dancing. Charles Smith conducted a drug store where Holloway and Fowler now are. A telegraph line was established in 1860. The first public school was held in a building owned by the Congregational church at the corner of Eighth and D streets. Miss Sarah Pneuman, now Mrs. Harrington, of Fremont, was the teacher. When court convened, school adjourned, there being no courthouse. In three years the school had grown from sixteen to one hundred pupils, with three teachers. The first public schoolhouse was built at the corner of Fifth and D streets. In 1866 the Union Pacific was built. The first bank was established in 1867. The *Tribune*, the first newspaper, was published July 24, 1868. "The Central School" was built in 1869 and the teacher, in search of truant boys, would ascend to the top, where with the aid of field glass, she could see from the Platte to the Elkhorn. Today, can be seen on the foundations of this old landmark, the marks of slate pencils, which were sharpened by some of our middle aged business men of today. [79]



Monument at Fremont, Nebraska, marking the Overland Emigrant Trails or California Road Erected by Lewis-Clark Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution

Mrs. Cynthia Hamilton, of Fremont, gives an interesting account of the early days. In June, 1857, she, with her husband, Mr. West, their daughter, Julia, Mrs. West's brother, the late Wilson Reynolds, and Mrs. Reynolds, reached the few dwellings then comprising Fremont, after an eighteen or nineteen days trip in moving wagons from Racine, Wisconsin. They first stopped at the house of Robert Kittle, corner Military and Broad streets. This house was made from trees grown on the bluffs southwest of town, and had a red cedar shingle roof, the shingles shaved from logs floated down the Platte. After two days, they all moved to a log house in "Pierce's Grove." While living here, Mrs. Hamilton tells of hearing a great commotion among the tinware and upon investigation, found it was caused by a huge snake. In August of the same year they moved to their homestead, northwest of town, on the Rawhide. It is now known as the Rohr place. Here they remained two years. In winter the men made trips to the river for wood, and the women must either accompany them or remain at home, alone, far from another house. Thus, alone one day, she saw a large band of Indians approaching. The chief, picking up an axe from the wood pile, placed it under the window where she sat, indicating that she must take care of it, else some one

might steal it. He then led his band northward. During all the residence on the homestead the three members of the family suffered continually from ague. In the fall of 1859, Mrs. West and her child returned to Wisconsin, where they remained ten months. During her absence, Mr. West became a trader with the Indians and once in Saunders county as he was selling a quantity of meat on a temporary counter, the Indians became rather unruly. His white companions fled, and Mr. West seizing a club, went among the Indians, striking them right and left. For this, they called him a brave and ever afterwards called him "Buck Skadaway," meaning curly hair. When Mrs. West returned from Wisconsin, she came down the Mississippi and up the Missouri to Omaha, then a small town. From there they drove to Fremont, with horse and buggy, via Florence. Mr. West now bought a cottonwood house, battened up and down. It consisted of two rooms, and stood on the site of the present residence of Thad Quinn. Wilson Reynolds bought two lots on the south side of Sixth street near the West home for twenty-five cents. Here he built a house made partly of black walnut taken from the banks of the Platte. In this house, was born our present postmaster, B. W. Reynolds. Mrs. Hamilton relates that the Indians were frequent callers at her home, one even teaching her to make "corn coffee," "by taking a whole ear of corn, burning it black and then putting it in the coffee pot." Food consisted of vegetables, which were grown on the prairie sod, prairie chickens, small game, and corn bread. Butter was twenty-five cents a pound. Syrup was made by boiling down watermelon. Boiled beans were mashed to a pulp and used as butter. "Everything was high and when the money and supplies which we bought were exhausted it was hard to get more." Screens were unknown and the flies and mosquitoes were terrible. In the evenings everyone would build a smudge so that they could sleep. Not a tree was to be seen except those on the banks of the streams. Tall prairie grass waved like the ocean and prairie fires were greatly feared. Everyone began setting out trees at once. [80]

"In those days Broad street was noted as a racing road for the Indians and now it is a boulevard for automobiles," says Mrs. Hamilton. "Yes," she continued, "I well remember the Fourth of July celebration in 1857. There were about one hundred people in attendance. Miss McNeil was my little girl's first teacher and Dr. Rhustrat was our first physician." In 1861, after a short illness, Mr. West died. He was buried beside his infant daughter in the cemetery, which at that time stood near the present brewery. The bodies were afterward removed to Barnard's cemetery and later to Ridge. The following year, Mrs. West, with her daughter, Julia, returned to her parents at Racine, Wisconsin, where she remained for many years. In 1876, as the wife of William Hamilton she returned and made her home on one of her farms near the stockyards. Twenty-five years ago this place was sold for \$100 per acre while the old homestead northwest of town brought \$25 per acre in 1875. After selling the south farm she and Mr. Hamilton, who died a few years ago, bought the present home on Broad street. Everyone should honor the early settlers, who left their eastern homes, endured hardships and privations that a beautiful land might be developed for posterity. They should be pensioned as well as our soldiers. And we, of the younger generation, should respect and reverence their memory. [81]

A GRASSHOPPER STORY

BY MARGARET F. KELLY

I came to Fremont, Nebraska, in May, 1870, and settled on a farm on Maple creek. In 1874 or 1875 we were visited by grasshoppers. I had never formed an idea of anything so disastrous. When the "hoppers" were flying the air was full of them. As one looked up, they seemed like a severe snow storm. It must have been like one of the plagues of Egypt. They were so bad one day that the passenger train on the Union Pacific was stalled here. I went to see the train and the odor from the crushed insects was nauseating. I think the train was kept here for three hours. The [82]

engine was besmeared with them. It was a very wonderful sight. The rails and ground were covered with the pests. They came into the houses and one lady went into her parlor one day and found her lace curtains on the floor, almost entirely eaten. Mrs. George Turner said that she came home from town one day when the "hoppers" were flying and they were so thick that the horses could not find the barn. Mrs. Turner's son had a field of corn. W. R. Wilson offered him fifty dollars for it. When he began to husk it, there was no corn there. A hired man of Mrs. Turner's threw his vest on the ground. When he had finished his work and picked up the vest it was completely riddled by the grasshoppers. I heard one man say that he was out riding with his wife and they stopped by a field of wheat where the "hoppers" were working and they could hear their mandibles working on the wheat. When they flew it sounded like a train of cars in motion. Horses would not face them unless compelled. One year I had an eighty acre field of corn which was being cultivated. The men came in and said the "hoppers" were taking the corn. They did not stay long, but when they left no one would have known that there had ever been any corn in that field. My brother from California came in 1876. On the way to the farm a thunder storm came up and we stopped at a friend's until it was over. My brother said, "I would not go through the experience again for \$10,000, and I would not lose the experience for the same amount." The "hoppers" came before the storm and were thick on the ground. It was a wonderful experience. In those days we cut our small grain with "headers." The grain head was cut and fell into boxes on wagons. After dinner one day, the men went out to find the grasshoppers in full possession. A coat which had been left hanging was completely destroyed. Gardens and field crops were their delight. They would eat an onion entirely out of the hard outer skin. I had a thirty acre field of oats which looked fine on Saturday. We could not harvest it then and on Monday it looked like an inverted whisk broom. Some of the "hoppers" were three inches long. The backs were between brown and slate color and underneath was white. I think we received visits from them for five years.

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EARLY DAYS IN FREMONT

BY MRS. THERON NYE

From the year 1856 until the beginning of the civil war in 1861 the early settlers of Nebraska experienced nearly all of the ills and hardships incidental to a pioneer life. Fifty years have passed since then and to one having lived through those trying days—or to a stranger who merely listens to the almost incredulous tales of a past generation—there arises a question as to why any sane person or persons should desire to leave a land of comparative comfort and plenty for one of deprivation and possible starvation.

The early settlers of Fremont were for the most part young people from the eastern states, full of ambition and hope. There is in the youthful heart a spirit of energy, of doing and daring in order to realize, if possible, dreams of a perhaps glorious future in which may be won honor and fame and wealth. Then again the forces of nature are never at rest and man, being a part of the great whole, must inevitably keep in step with the universal law. A few lines written for a paper several years ago give the first impression of the landscape which greeted the eyes of a stranger on entering the valley of the Elkhorn river in 1858, April 26:

"This is the picture as I see it plainly in retrospect—a country, and it was all a country, with a smooth, level, gray surface which appeared to go on toward the west forever and forever. On the north were the bluffs of the Elkhorn river, but the great Elkhorn Valley was a part of an unknown world. South of the little townsite of Fremont the Platte river moved sluggishly along to meet and be swallowed up in the great Missouri. Ten or twelve log cabins broke the monotony of the treeless expanse that stretched far away, apparently to a leaden sky. My heart sank within me as I thought but did not say, 'How can I ever live in a place like this?'" And yet the writer of the above

lines has lived in Fremont for forty-seven years.

The histories of the world are chiefly men's histories. They are stories of governments, of religions, of wars, and only in exceptional instances has woman appeared to hold any important place in the affairs of nations. From the earliest settlement of the colonies in the new world until the present time, women have not only borne with bravery and fortitude the greater trials of the pioneer life, but from their peculiar organization and temperament suffered more from the small annoyances than their stronger companions of the other sex. The experiences of the home and family life of the early settlers of the great West have never entered into the annals of history nor can a truthful story be told without them, but thus far no doubt the apparent neglect has been due to woman herself, who until quite recently has felt that she was a small factor in the world's affairs. [85]

In the beginning of the new life in Fremont women had their first introduction to the log cabin which was to be their home for many years. It was not as comfortable as it looks picturesque and romantic printed on paper. It was a story and a half high, sixteen by twenty feet in size. The logs were hewn on two sides, but the work performed by the volunteer carpenters of that time was not altogether satisfactory, consequently the logs did not fit closely but the open spaces between were filled with a sort of mortar that had a faculty of gradually dropping off as it dried, leaving the original holes and openings through which the winter winds whistled and Nebraska breezes blew the dirt.

The houses were made of cottonwood logs and finished with cottonwood lumber. The shingles warped so the roof somewhat resembled a sieve. The rain dripped through it in summer and snow sifted through it in winter. The floors were made of wide rough boards, the planing and polishing given by the broom, the old-fashioned mop, and the scrubbing brush. The boards warped and shrunk so that the edges turned up, making wide cracks in the floor through which many small articles dropped down into a large hole in the ground miscalled a cellar. It was hardly possible to keep from freezing in these houses in winter. Snow sifted through the roof, covering beds and floors. The piercing winds blew through every crack and crevice. Green cottonwood was the only fuel obtainable and that would sizzle and fry in the stove while water froze standing under the stove. This is no fairy tale. [86]

The summers were not much more pleasant. It must be remembered that there were no trees in Fremont, nothing that afforded the least protection from the hot rays of a Nebraska sun. Mosquitoes and flies were in abundance, and door screens were unknown at that time. The cotton netting nailed over windows and hung over and around the beds was a slight protection from the pests, although as the doors must necessarily be opened more or less no remedy could be devised that would make any perceptible improvement. To submit was the rule and the law in those days, but many, many times it was done under protest.

The first floor was divided or partitioned off, by the use of quilts or blankets, into a kitchen, bedroom, and pantry. The chamber, or what might be called attic, was also partitioned in the same way, giving as many rooms as it would hold beds. The main articles of food for the first two years consisted of potatoes, corn meal, and bacon. The meal was made from a variety of corn raised by the Indians and called Pawnee corn. It was very soft, white, and palatable. Wheat flour was not very plentiful the first year. Bacon was the only available meat. Occasionally a piece of buffalo meat was obtained, but it being very hard to masticate only served to make a slight change in the gravy, which was otherwise made with lard and flour browned together in an iron frying pan, adding boiling water until it was of the right consistency, salt and pepper to suit the taste. This mixture was used for potatoes and bread of all kinds. Lard was a necessity. Biscuits were made of flour, using a little corn meal for shortening and saleratus for raising. Much of the corn was ground in an ordinary coffee mill or in some instances rubbed on a large grater or over a tin pan with a perforated bottom, made so by driving nails through it. The nearest flouring mill was at Fort Calhoun, over forty miles away, which was then a three days' journey, taking more time than

a trip to California at the present day. Nothing, however, could be substituted for butter. The lack of meat, sugar, eggs and fruit, tea and coffee, was borne patiently, but wheat flour and corn meal bread with its everlasting lard gravy accompaniment was more than human nature could bear, yet most of the people waxed strong and flourished on bread and grease. Oh, where are the students of scientific research and domestic economy? There were possibly three or four cows in the settlement, and if there was ever an aristocracy in Fremont, it was represented by the owners of said cows. [87]

In 1858 a little sorghum was raised. "Hope springs eternal in the human breast." Men, women, and children helped to prepare the stalks when at the right stage for crushing, which was done with a very primitive home-made machine. The juice obtained was boiled down to syrup, but alas, the dreams of a surfeit of sweetness vanished into thin air, for the result of all the toil and trouble expended was a production so nauseous that it could not be used even for vinegar.

Wild plums and grapes grew in profusion on the banks of the rivers. There was much more enjoyment in gathering the fruit than in eating or cooking it. The plums were bitter and sour, the grapes were sour and mostly seeds, and sugar was not plentiful.

The climate was the finest in the world for throat and lung troubles, but on the breaking up of the soil malaria made its appearance and many of the inhabitants suffered from ague and fever. Quinine was the only remedy. There were neither physicians nor trained nurses here, but all were neighbors and friends, always ready to help each other when the occasion required.

In 1856, the year in which Fremont was born, the Pawnee Indians were living four miles south across the Platte river on the bluffs in Saunders county. They numbered about four thousand and were a constant source of annoyance and fear. In winter they easily crossed the river on the ice and in summer the water most of the time was so low they could swim and wade over, consequently there were few days in the year that they did not visit Fremont by the hundred. Weeks and months passed before women and children became accustomed to them and they could never feel quite sure that they were harmless. Stealing was their forte. Eyes sharp and keen were ever on the alert when they were present, yet when they left almost invariably some little article would be missed. They owned buffalo robes and blankets for which the settlers exchanged clothing which they did not need, jewelry, beads, and ornaments, with a little silver coin intermixed. The blankets and robes were utilized for bedding and many were the shivering forms they served to protect from the icy cold of the Nebraska winters. In 1859 the government moved them to another home on the Loup river and in 1876 they were removed to Indian territory. [88]

Snakes of many kinds abounded, but rattlesnakes were the most numerous. They appeared to have a taste for domestic life, as many were found in houses and cellars. A little four-year-old boy one sunny summer day ran out of the house bare-footed, and stepping on the threshold outside the door felt something soft and cold to his feet. An exclamation of surprise caused a member of the household to hasten to the door just in time to see a young rattlesnake gliding swiftly away. In several instances they were found snugly ensconced under pillows, on lounges, and very frequently were they found in cellars.

For more than two years there was no way of receiving or sending mail only as one or another would make a trip to Omaha, which was usually once a week. In 1859 a stage line was put on between Omaha and Fort Kearny. No one can tell with what thankfulness and rejoicing each and every improvement in the condition and surroundings was greeted by the settlers. Dating from the discovery of gold in Colorado the pioneer was no more an object of pity or sympathy. Those who had planted their stakes and made their claims along the old military and California trail were independent. Many of the emigrants became discouraged and turned their faces homeward before getting a glimpse of the Rocky Mountains. On their way home they sold loads of provisions for a song. The same fall the fertile soil of the Platte Valley, after two years of cultivation, responded to the demand of civilization. There was a market west for every bushel of grain and every pound of vegetables grown. So at least the patient and persevering ones received their reward.

The sources of amusement were few, and yet all enjoyed the strange new life. A pleasant ride over the level prairie dotted with wild flowers, in any sort of vehicle drawn by a pair of oxen, was as enjoyable to the young people then as a drive over the country would now be in the finest turnout that Fremont possesses. A dance in a room twelve by sixteen feet in a log cabin, to the music of the Arkansas Traveler played on one violin, was "just delightful." A trip to Omaha once or twice a year was a rare event in the woman's life particularly. Three days were taken, two to drive in and out, and one to do a little trading (not shopping) and look around to view the sights. A span of horses, a lumber wagon with a spring seat in front high up in the air, was the conveyance. Women always wore sunbonnets on these occasions to keep their complexion fair. [89]

Several times in the earlier years the Mormons passed through here with long trains of emigrants journeying to the promised land, and a sorry lot they were, for the most of them were footsore and weary, as they all walked. The train was made up of emigrant covered wagons drawn by oxen, and hand carts drawn by cows, men and women, and dogs. It was a sight never to be forgotten.

This is merely a short description of some of the trials and sufferings endured by the majority of the early settlers of this state. Many of the actors in the drama have passed away, a few only now remaining, and soon the stories of their lives will be to the coming generation like forgotten dreams. [90]

PIONEER WOMEN OF OMAHA

BY MRS. CHARLES H. FISETTE

Very few of those now living in Omaha can have any realization of the privations, not to say hardships, that were endured by the pioneer women who came here at an early date. A few claim shanties were scattered at distant intervals over this beautiful plateau, and were eagerly taken by those who were fortunate enough to secure them. There was seldom more than one room in them, so that no servants could be kept, even if there were any to be had. Many an amusing scene could have been witnessed if the friends who had been left behind could have peeped in at the door and have seen the attempts made at cooking by those who never had cooked before.

A description of one of the homes might be of interest. A friend of ours owned a claim shanty that stood on the hill west of what is now Saunders, or Twenty-fourth street, and he very kindly offered it to us, saying he would have it plastered and fixed up. We, of course, accepted it at once and as soon as possible it was made ready and we moved into it late one evening, very happy to have a home. The house consisted of upstairs, downstairs, and a cellar, the upstairs being just high enough for one to stand erect in the center of the room, provided one was not very tall. The stairs were nothing but a ladder, home-made at that, in one corner of the room, held in place by a trunk. It was some time before I succeeded in going up and down gracefully. I happened to be upstairs when our first caller came and in my effort to get down quickly caught my feet in one of the rungs of the ladder and landed on the aforementioned trunk so suddenly that it brought everyone in the room to their feet. It took away all the formality of an introduction.

Mr. and Mrs. Hanscom lived half a mile north of the cottage just described, and had what seemed to others a house that was almost palatial. It contained three rooms, besides a kitchen, and had many comforts that few had in those days, including a cradle, which held a rosy-cheeked, curly-headed baby girl, who has long since grown to womanhood and had babies of her own. Another home, standing where Creighton College now stands, was built by a nephew of the late Rev. Reuben Gaylord, but was afterwards occupied by Mr. and Mrs. W. N. Byers, who have for many years resided in Colorado. The Gaylords moved from there to a new home at Eleventh and [91]

Jackson streets. Their family consisted of three children: Mrs. S. C. Brewster, of Irvington, who is still living at the age of 77 years; a son, Ralph Gaylord; and an adopted daughter, Georgia, who has since died.



**Mrs. Charlotte F. Palmer First State Regent, Nebraska Society,
Daughters of the American Revolution. 1894-1895**

A one story house built just in the rear of Tootle and Mauls' store on Farnam, between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets, was kept as a boarding house by Kentucky Wood and his wife. It was considered a high-toned boarding house, although the partitions were made of unbleached cloth and the floor of the dining room was covered with sawdust. Judges Lockwood and Bradley, two of our territorial judges, boarded there and a dinner was given in their honor by the landlord. The invited guests included Governor and Mrs. Cuming, Colonel and Mrs. C. B. Smith, and Dr. Geo. L. Miller. That was the first dinner party ever given in Omaha. Governor and Mrs. Cuming then boarded at the Douglas house, Thirteenth and Harney streets, and their rooms were often filled with the elite of this young and growing city. Mrs. Cuming was very popular in the little gatherings which were frequently held. She was the leading light and was always ready and willing to assist in any good work. Wherever there was sickness she was sure to be found. Mrs.

Thomas Davis was another who was always doing little acts of kindness. She was the mother of the late Mrs. Herman Kountze, who, at that time, was the only white little girl in Omaha. Still another who never turned anyone away from her door who needed help was Mrs. E. Estabrook.

Mrs. A. D. Jones, our first postmaster's wife, lived at that time at what was called Park Wild, in a one story log and frame house, which was afterwards occupied by General G. M. Dodge, the distinguished soldier, so well and widely known to the whole country as the chief engineer of the Union Pacific railroad. Among others who were here were Mrs. Edwin Patrick and Mrs. Allen Root, also Mrs. T. G. Goodwill, who lived in the Kentucky Wood house that I have already mentioned. She afterwards built the brick house that still stands near the northwest corner of Davenport street, facing south. It is an old landmark near Fifteenth street. [92]

One of the most prominent women of that day was Mrs. John M. Thayer, whose home at that time was said to have been the first civilized appearing home. It was plastered, clapboarded, and shingled. The entire community envied Mrs. Thayer her somewhat imposing residence. It was in very strong contrast, however, with the beautiful brick house which General Thayer afterwards built and occupied for several years, on the northeast corner of Sixteenth and Davenport streets.

Mrs. Samuel Rogers, Mrs. William Snowden, Mrs. Thomas O'Conner, Mrs. O. B. Selden, Mrs. Hadley Johnson, and Mrs. Harrison Johnson were among the first women who lived in Omaha. Mrs. A. J. Poppleton may be classed among the number, although at that time she was living in Council Bluffs, then called Kanessville, where she was one of the leading young ladies.

The first hotel in Omaha, a log house, eighteen by twenty feet, one story high, was named the St. Nicholas. It was first occupied by the family of Wm. P. Snowden, and stood on the corner of Twelfth and Jackson streets in 1855. The Douglas house, a two story frame building, was erected at the southwest corner of Thirteenth and Harney streets. The rear part was made of cottonwood slabs, and in the winter time it was said to have been very cold. It was the leading hotel and all the high-toned people stopped there. The Tremont house, between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets, was built in 1856, and opened by Wm. F. Sweezy and Aaron Root. Mr. Sweezy is still living in Omaha. The Farnham, between Thirteenth and Fourteenth on Harney, was built in 1858. The famous Herndon house was built in 1856 by Dr. Geo. L. Miller and Lyman Richardson. The Hamilton, a brick building, was erected in 1856 by C. W. Hamilton, C. B. Smith, and H. M. Judson. The proprietors bought their furniture in St. Louis and brought it to Omaha by steamboat. The upper part of the house was one large bedroom with beds ranged against the walls. About once a week the furniture was all removed from this room and it was temporarily converted into a ballroom. [93]

A PIONEER FAMILY

BY EDITH ERMA PURVIANCE

Dr. Wm. Washington Wiley, with his wife, Gertrude Miranda Wiley, and their children, came to Nebraska July 6, 1857, and lived at Saratoga (now in Omaha) a year and a half. They came from Ohio in covered wagons, driving their cows along. It took two months to make the trip.

They caught up with a company of Mormon emigrants when they reached Iowa City, Iowa, three or four hundred of whom camped along about five miles ahead of the Wiley family. They stopped at Florence a few weeks to buy provisions and teams to carry them across the plains to Utah. These Mormons had two-wheeled carts. These carts were provision carts drawn by both men and women.

Mrs. Wiley was of Holland Dutch descent, and inherited the thrift and capability of her ancestors. She deserved great credit for her quick action in saving one victim from the Claim Club. This Claim Club was an organization of prominent Omaha business men. John Kelly, a nephew of Mrs. Wiley's sister, had a claim of one hundred sixty acres near Omaha. There were four wagonloads of men out looking for him to compel him to give them the papers showing his right to the land. The late Joseph Redman, of Omaha, lived near Mrs. Wiley, and when he saw the men coming for John Kelly he went to Mrs. Wiley and requested her to warn young Kelly, as she could get past the men, but he could not. Mrs. Redman went to Mrs. Wiley's house and took care of the three months' old baby and five other children. John Kelly was working at the carpenter's trade in Omaha, about three miles south of Mrs. Wiley's. All she had to ride was a stallion, of which she was afraid, and which had never been ridden by a woman. She rode slowly until out of sight of the wagonloads of men and then hit the horse every other jump. She made him run all the way, passing some Indians on the way, who looked at her wonderingly but did not try to stop her. After going to several places she finally located John Kelly. He wanted to go to the ferry, but her judgment was better and she said they would look for him there the first thing, which they did. She took him on behind her and rode to the home of Jane Beeson, his aunt, who put him down cellar and then spread a piece of rag carpet over the trap door. The Claim Club men were there several times that day to look for him, but did not search the house. After dark he walked to Bellevue, twelve miles, and the next morning crossed the Missouri river on the ferry boat and went to Missouri. When his claim papers were returned from Washington he returned and lived on his land without any further trouble. He would have been badly beaten and probably killed had it not been for Mrs. Wiley's nerve and decision in riding a fractious horse to warn him of his danger. [94]

While Dr. and Mrs. Wiley resided at Omaha the territorial law-makers disagreed, part of them going to Florence to make laws and part of them to Omaha, each party feeling it was the rightful law-making body of the territory.

In December, 1859, the family crossed the Platte river on the ice and located on a farm in Cass county, three miles west of the Missouri river, about three miles southwest of the present town of Murray, although the old town of Rock Bluffs was their nearest town at that time. Dr. Wiley and the older children went on ahead with the household goods and live stock. Mrs. Wiley, with the small children, rode in a one-horse buggy. She did not know the way and there were no fences or landmarks to guide her. She had the ague so badly she could hardly drive the horse. A sack containing \$1,800 in gold was tied around her waist. This was all the money they had, and they intended to use it to build a house and barn on their new farm. She objected to carrying so much money, but Dr. Wiley said it was safer from robbers with her than with him. In spite of her illness and the difficulty in traveling in an unknown country a distance of thirty-five or forty miles, she reached the new home safely. She took off the sack of gold, threw it in a corner, and fell on the bed exhausted. They lived all winter in a log house of two rooms. There was a floor and roof, but no ceiling, and the snow drifted in on the beds. Most of the family were sick all winter.

The next summer they built a frame house, the first in that locality, which caused the neighbors to call them "high toned." Mrs. Wiley bought a parlor set of walnut furniture, upholstered in green. [95]

General Worth, who had been a congressman, wrote to Washington, D. C., and got the commission, signed by Abraham Lincoln, appointing Dr. Wiley postmaster, the name of the postoffice being Three Groves. They kept the postoffice eleven years.

They kept the stage station five years. It was the main stop between St. Joseph and Omaha before the railroad went through. They had from ten to fifteen people to dinner one coach load. The stage coach was drawn by four horses, and carried both mail and passengers. The horses were changed for fresh ones at the Wiley farm. At first the meals were twenty-five cents; the last two years, fifty cents. This was paid by the passengers and not included in the stage fare.

Shortly after the discovery of Pike's Peak and gold in Colorado, freighters, with big freight

wagons of provisions drawn by six or eight oxen, stopped there over night. There were usually twelve men, who slept on the floor, paying eighteen dollars for supper, breakfast, and lodging. Mr. McComas and Mr. Majors (father of Col. Thomas J. Majors) each had freight wagons starting at Nebraska City and taking the supplies to Denver and Pike's Peak via Fort Kearny, Nebraska. When the Union Pacific railroad was completed in 1869 the freighters had to sell their oxen and wagons, as they could not compete with the railroad in hauling freight.

The Omaha, Pawnee, and Otoe Indians, when visiting other Indians, would stop at Dr. Wiley's and ask for things to eat. Sometimes there would be fifty of them. An old Indian would peer in. If the shade was pulled down while he was looking in he would call the party vile names. If food was given him a dozen more Indians would come and ask for something. If chickens were not given them they helped themselves to all they found straying around. It would make either tribe angry to ask if they were going to visit any other tribe. The Pawnees would say, "Omaha no good"; the Omahas would say, "Pawnee no good."

Mrs. Wiley kept a copy of the *Omaha Republican*, published November 30, 1859. The paper is yellow with age, but well preserved, and a few years ago she presented it to the State Historical Society. It is a four-page paper, the second and third pages being nearly all advertisements. It contains a letter written by Robert W. Furnas, ex-governor of Nebraska, and a long article about the late J. Sterling Morton. This was about the time Mr. Morton tried to claim the salt basin at Lincoln as a preëmption, and wanted to locate salt works there. [96]

Mrs. Wiley always took a great interest in the development of the state; she attended the State Fair almost every year, spending a great deal of time looking over the new machinery.

Dr. Wiley died in 1887 and Mrs. Wiley in 1914. Mrs. Wiley lived to the age of 87 years.

Little Erma Purviance, daughter of Dr. W. E. and Edith E. Purviance, of Omaha, is a great-granddaughter of Mrs. Wiley, and also a namesake. May she possess some of the virtue and intelligence of her ancestor.

NOTE: Mrs. Wiley's two daughters, Araminta and Hattie, were students in the early years at Brownell Hall, then the only means of obtaining an education, as there were very few public schools. Some of the children and grandchildren still live on the lands taken by Dr. and Mrs. Wiley, and have always been among the well-to-do citizens of Cass county.

Mrs. Edith Erma Purviance, the writer of the foregoing article, spent most of her girlhood with her grandmother, who sent her to the State University, where she made good use of her advantages. Other children of Mrs. Wiley were also university students or identified with the various schools of the state. Mrs. A. Dove Wiley Asche, youngest daughter of Mrs. Wiley, now occupies the old home, out of which so recently went the brave pioneer who made it of note among the early homes of the territory.—HARRIETT S. MACMURPHY.

[97]

THE BADGER FAMILY

Lewis H. Badger drove with his parents, Henry L. and Mary A. Badger, from their home in Livingston county, Illinois, to Fillmore county, Nebraska. They had a covered emigrant wagon and a buggy tied behind. Lewis was twelve years old October 5, 1868, the day they crossed the Missouri river at Nebraska City, the nearest railroad station to their future home. The family stayed with friends near Saltillo while H. L. Badger came on with the horse and buggy and picked out his claim on the north side of Fillmore county, it being the northwest quarter of section 2,

township 8, range 3, west of the sixth principal meridian.

At that time the claims were taken near the river in order that water might be obtained more easily, and also to be near the railroad which had been surveyed and staked out in the southern edge of York county near the West Blue river.

The Badger family came on to Lincoln, then a mere village, and stopped there. They bought a log chain, and lumber for a door; the window frames were hewed from logs. When they reached the claim they did not know where to ford the river so they went on farther west to Whitaker's and stayed all night. There they forded the river and came on to the claim the next morning, October 20, 1868. There they camped while Mr. Badger made a dugout in the banks of the West Blue river, where the family lived for more than two years. The hollow in the ground made by this dugout can still be seen.

In 1870 H. L. Badger kept the postoffice in the dugout. He received his commission from Postmaster General Creswell. The postoffice was known as West Blue. About the same time E. L. Martin was appointed postmaster at Fillmore. Those were the first postoffices in Fillmore county. Before that time the settlers got their mail at McFadden in York county. Mr. Badger kept the postoffice for some time after moving into the log house and after the establishment of the postoffice at Fairmont.

In 1867 the Indians were all on reservations but by permission of the agents were allowed to go on hunting trips. If they made trouble for the settlers they were taken back to the reservations. While the Badgers were living in the dugout a party of about one thousand Omaha Indians came up the river on a hunting trip. Some of their ponies got away and ate some corn belonging to a man named Dean, who lived farther down the river. The man loved trouble and decided to report them to the agent. The Indians were afraid of being sent back to the reservation so the chief, Prairie Chicken, his brother, Sammy White, and seventeen of the other Indians came into the dugout and asked Mr. Badger to write a letter to the agent for them stating their side of the case. This he did and read it to Sammy White, the interpreter, who translated it for the other eighteen. It proved satisfactory to both Indians and agent. [98]

In August, 1869, while Mr. Badger was away helping a family named Whitaker, who lived up the river, to do some breaking, the son, Lewis, walked to where his father was at work, leaving Mrs. Badger at home alone with her four-year-old daughter. About four o'clock it began to rain very hard and continued all night. The river raised until the water came within eighteen inches of the dugout door. The roof leaked so that it was almost as wet inside as out. Mr. Badger and Lewis stayed at the Whitaker dugout. They fixed the canvas that had been the cover of the wagon over the bed to keep Grandmother Whitaker dry and the others sat by the stove and tried to keep warm, but could not. The next morning the men paddled down the river to the Badger dugout in a wagon box. The wagon box was a product of their own making and was all wood, so it served the purpose of a boat.

It should be explained that the reason the roofs of the dugouts and log houses leaked was because of the material used in their construction. Shingles were out of the question to these settlers of small means living one hundred miles from the railroad. There were plenty of trees near the river, so the settlers hewed out logs for ridge poles, then placed willow poles and brush across for a support. On top of that they put dirt and sod. When it rained the water naturally soaked through. The roof would leak for several days after a big rain.

The next dwelling place of the Badger family was a log house built on the south half of the quarter section. For some time they lived in the log house and kept their stock in the dugout stable on the river bank. Thus they were living during the great April storm of 1873, which lasted for three days. All of the draws and ravines, even the river, were packed full of snow that was solid enough to hold a man up. There was very little snow on the level, it all being in drifts in the low places. The Badgers had a corn field between the log house and the river. While the storm raged Lewis [99]

wrapped himself in a blanket, and by following the rows of corn made his way to the dugout stable and fed the horses corn once each day. It was impossible to give them water.

Henry L. Badger was commissioned by Governor Butler the first notary public in Fillmore county. Later he was appointed by acting Governor James, registrar of voters for the election to be held April 21, 1871, to elect officers for the new county. At that election he was elected both county clerk and county surveyor.

In the late sixties when the county was first settled the country abounded in buffalo, deer, antelope, elk, prairie chickens, wild geese, ducks, and turkeys. The muddy stream known as West Blue river was clear and the fish found in it were not of the same variety as those caught now. Wild plums grew in abundance along the river bank and were much larger and of finer quality than the wild plums of today. In those days glass jars for canning were not as plentiful as now, so they picked the plums late in the fall, put them in a barrel and poured water over them and kept them for winter use.

Lewis Badger tells of going on buffalo hunts with his father and seeing herds of thousands of the big animals, and driving for ten hours through the herd. He has now an old silver half dime that he found in an abandoned stage station on the Oregon trail, when on a buffalo hunt.

In early days the settlers did lots of trapping. The Indians were frequent visitors and one time an Indian went with Mr. Badger and his son to look at their traps. In one trap they found a mink. Mr. Badger remarked that they got a mink in that same trap the day before. The Indian said, "Him lucky trap." The Indian would not steal but he wanted the lucky trap, so the next day that trap was gone and another in its place. The Indian seemed to get the best of the bargain for it is a fact that they never caught a thing in the trap he left. [100]

Sammy and Luke White, brothers of chief Prairie Chicken of the Omahas, frequently visited the early settlers. Sammy could talk English and was a good interpreter. He told of a big Indian battle in the western part of the state wherein the Sioux and Cheyenne, and Omahas, Otoes, Poncas, and Pawnees all took part and fought for two days and only killed two Indians. His brother, Prairie Chicken, killed one of the Indians and scalped him in the midst of the battle. For that act of bravery he was made a chief. After telling the story of his brother, when asked about himself, Sammy very modestly said, "Me 'fraid, me run."

On one of Mr. Badger's hunting trips he killed a deer. When it was dressed Lewis was sent to the Whitaker dugout with a quarter of the meat. An Indian, Pawnee Jack, happened to be there at the time and it stormed so they had to keep him all night, much to their disgust. Evidently he enjoyed their hospitality, especially the venison, for when they started him on the next morning he inquired where the "papoose" lived that brought the "buckskin," meaning the venison. They told him and he made straight for the Badger dugout and the "buckskin." It stormed so they were forced to keep him there two nights before sending him on.

Although most painfully familiar to every early settler, no pioneer story is complete without the grasshoppers. They came in herds and droves and ate every green thing. For days great clouds of them passed over. The next year they hatched out in great numbers and flew away without hurting anything. Mr. Badger had a nice young orchard that he had planted and tended. The grasshoppers ate the leaves off the trees and as it was early in August they leaved out again and were frozen so they died. Snakes feasted on the hoppers. Since seeing a garter snake at that time just as full of grasshoppers as it could possibly be, Lewis Badger has never killed a snake or permitted one to be killed on his farm. He declared that anything that could make away with so many grasshoppers should be allowed to live. Many people asked for and received the so-called "aid for grasshopper sufferers." In this section of the country it seemed absolutely unnecessary as there had been harvested a good crop of wheat, previous to the coming of the hoppers. [101]

In 1871 the railroad was built through the county. That season Lewis Badger sold watermelons,

that he had raised, to the construction gang at work on the road. The town of Fairmont was started the same year. In those days the settlers would walk to town. It was nothing unusual for Mr. and Mrs. Badger and Lewis to walk to Fairmont, a distance of six miles.

When the Badger family settled on their claim, they planted a row of cottonwood trees around it. These trees have made a wonderful growth. In 1911 part of them were sawed into lumber. There are two especially large cottonwood trees on the farm. One measures twenty-six feet in circumference at the base and nineteen feet around five feet above the ground and runs up forty feet before it begins to branch out. The other is thirty-three feet around the base but branches into three trees four feet above the ground.

Mrs. H. L. Badger was a witness of the first wedding in the county, that of Wm. Whitaker and Sabra Brumsey, which took place June 28, 1871. The ceremony was performed by the first county judge, Wm. H. Blaine, who stayed all night at the Badger home and attended the wedding the next day.

Mrs. H. L. Badger died January 11, 1894, and Mr. Badger July 21, 1905. The son Lewis and family still own and farm the old homestead.

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FIRST WHITE SETTLER IN FILLMORE COUNTY

The first settlement in Fillmore county, Nebraska, was made in 1866 by Nimrod J. Dixon, a native of Pennsylvania. He was married to Lydia Gilmore, who had previously filed on a homestead adjoining his. Mr. and Mrs. Dixon continued to reside on their homestead until they moved to Fairmont, Nebraska, where they are now living, having lived on the farm forty years.

Mr. and Mrs. Dixon were married February 28, 1867, at the home of Mrs. Dixon's father, Elias Gilmore, near Blue Vale. Mr. Dixon got the license at Nebraska City. From that time until the summer of 1868 they were the only settlers in the county and were seven or eight miles from the nearest neighbor.

In relating her experiences Mrs. Dixon said: "I was afraid to stay alone, so when Mr. Dixon had to go away I went with him or my sisters stayed with me. At that time we had to go to Milford for flour and twenty-five miles to get a plow-lay sharpened. At such times Mr. Dixon would stay at my father's home near Blue Vale and help them two or three days with their breaking, in return for which one of the boys would come and help him.

"The Indians visited us frequently and I was afraid of them. One time a number of them came and two entered the dugout and asked for flour. We gave them as much as we could spare, but they could see the flour sitting on a bench behind the door and wanted more. We refused, but they became very insistent, so much so that Mr. Dixon grabbed a black-snake whip that hung on the wall and started toward them. This show of resistance was all that was necessary. It proved to the Indians that Mr. Dixon was not afraid of them, so they gave him powder and shot to regain his friendship.

"An Indian came in one day and gave me a lot of beads, then he wanted flour, which we gave him. He took it and held it out to me, saying, 'Squaw cook it, squaw cook it!' This I refused to do, so he said, 'Give me the beads, give me the beads.'

"My baby, Arthur, born January 9, 1869, was the first white child born in Fillmore county. I recall one time that I was home alone with the baby. An Indian came in and handed me a paper that said he had lost a pony. I assured him that we had seen nothing of the pony. He saw a new butcher knife that was lying on the table, picked it up, and finally drew out his old knife and held it

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toward me, saying, 'Swap, swap!' I said, 'Yes,' so he went away with my good knife.

"The worst fright I ever did have was not from Indians. My sister Minnie was with me and we were out of salt. Mr. Dixon said he would go across the river to Whitaker's and borrow some. We thought that he wouldn't be gone long so we stayed at home. While he was away a cloud came up and it began to rain. I never did see it rain harder. The river raised, and the water in the ravine in front of the dugout came nearly to the door. The roof leaked so we were nearly as wet indoors as we would have been out. The rain began about four o'clock in the afternoon. It grew dark and Mr. Dixon did not return. We thought that he would certainly be drowned in trying to cross the river. While we were in this state of suspense, the door burst open and a half-clad woman rushed in, saying, 'Don't let me scare you to death.' I was never so frightened in my life, and it was some time before I recognized her as my neighbor, Mrs. Fairbanks.

"Mr. and Mrs. Fairbanks had gone to Whitaker's, who were coopers, to get some barrels fixed for sorghum, and left the children at home. When it rained they thought they must try to cross the river and get to their children. Mr. Dixon came with them. At first they tried to ride horses across, but the one Mrs. Fairbanks was riding refused to swim and threw her into the water, so she had to swim back. They were all excellent swimmers, so they started again in a wagon box which those on land tried to guide by means of a line. With the aid of the wagon box and by swimming they succeeded in getting across. That was in the fall of 1869.

"The only time I ever saw a buffalo skinned was when a big herd stayed a week or more on the south side of the river. Kate Bussard and I stood on the top of the dugout and watched the chase, and after they killed one we went nearer and watched them skin it."

Mr. Dixon took his claim without seeing it. In October, 1866, he went to the land office and learned that he could then take a homestead of one hundred and sixty acres but the new law would soon go into effect providing that settlers could only homestead eighty acres. Mr. Dixon was afraid that he could not go and see the claim and get back to Nebraska City and file on it in time to get one hundred and sixty acres. In telling about it Mr. Dixon says, "I thought it would, indeed, be a poor quarter section that would not have eighty acres of farm land, so I took my chances. [104]

"In the year 1868, the first year that we had any crops planted, it almost forgot to rain at all. The barley was so short that it fell through the cradle. There were no bridges so we had to ford the river. It was hard to haul much of a load across because the wagon would cut into the mud on the two banks while the sandy river bottom would stand a pretty good load. That difficulty I overcame by making bundles or sheaves of willow poles and placing them at the two banks and covering them with sand. Later the settlers made a bridge across the river near the homestead of H. L. Badger. This has ever since been known as the 'Badger Bridge.' The first bridge was made of logs which we procured along the river.

"I was making a hayrack of willow poles at the time of the total eclipse of the sun. It began to grow dark, the chickens went to roost, and it seemed that night was coming on.

"The year 1869 was rainy and we raised good crops and fine potatoes that season. That was the year they were driving Texas cattle up to eat the northern grass and then ship them east over the Union Pacific railroad. The cattle stampeded, so they lost many of them and we saw them around for a year or more.

"My first buffalo hunt was in 1867. The country seemed to be covered with great herds and the Indians were hunting them. Twenty of us started out with five wagons. There were Jake and Boss Gilmore, Jim Johnson, and myself in one wagon. We had only about three days' supplies with us, expecting to get buffalo before these were exhausted, but the Indians were ahead of us and kept the buffalo out of our range. Our party crossed the Little Blue at Deweese. Beyond there we found carcasses of buffalo and a fire where the Indians had burned out a ranch. Realizing that it

was necessary for us to take precautions, we chose Colonel Bifkin our leader and decided to strike another trail and thus avoid the Indians if possible. We traveled toward the Republican river but found no track of either buffalo or Indians, so we turned around and followed the Indians. By that time our food supply was exhausted, but by good luck we shot two wild turkeys. [105]

"We were soon following the Indians so closely that we ate dinner where they ate breakfast and by night we were almost in sight of them. We thought it best to put out a guard at night. My station was under a cottonwood tree near a foot-log that crossed a branch of the Little Blue. I was to be relieved at eleven o'clock. I heard something coming on the foot-log. I listened and watched but it was so dark that I could see nothing, but could hear it coming closer; so I shot and heard something drop. Colonel Bifkin, who was near, coming to relieve me, asked what I was shooting at. 'I don't know, perhaps an Indian; it dropped,' I replied. We looked and found merely a coon, but it did good service as wagon grease, for we had forgotten that very necessary article.

"The Indians kept the main herd ahead of them so we were only able to see a few buffalo that had strayed away. We went farther west and got two or three and then went into camp on the Little Blue. We always left a guard at camp and all of the fun came when Boss Gilmore and I were on guard so we missed it. The others rounded up and killed about twenty buffalo. One fell over the bluff into the river and it fell to our lot to get it out and skin it, but by the time we got it out the meat had spoiled. The water there was so full of alkali that we could not drink it and neither could the horses, so we started back, struck the freight road and followed it until we came to Deep Well ranch on the Platte bottom. We had driven without stopping from ten o'clock in the forenoon till two o'clock in the morning. We lay down and slept then, but I was awakened early by chickens crowing. I roused the others of our party and we went in search of something to eat. It had been eight days since we had had any bread and I was never so bread-hungry as then. We came to the Martin home about three miles west of Grand Island and although we could not buy bread, the girls baked biscuits for us and I ate eleven biscuits. That was the home of the two Martin boys who were pinned together by an arrow that the Indians shot through both of them while riding on one pony. [106]

"That morning I saw the first construction train that came into Grand Island over the Union Pacific railroad. If I remember correctly it was in November, 1867.

"We took home with us five wagonloads of buffalo meat. I did not keep any of the hides because I could not get them tanned. Mr. Gilmore got Indian women to tan a hide for him by giving them sugar and flour. They would keep asking for it and finally got all that was coming to them before the hide was done, so they quit tanning, and Mr. Gilmore had to keep baiting them by giving them more sugar and flour in order to get it done."

Mr. and Mrs. Dixon have eight children, all living. They still own the original homestead that was their home for so many years. [107]

PIONEERING IN FILLMORE COUNTY

BY JOHN R. McCASHLAND

In the fall of 1870, with Mrs. McCashland and two children, Addie and Sammy, I left Livingston county, Illinois, and drove to Fillmore county, Nebraska. We started with two wagons and teams. I had three good horses and one old plug. I drove one team and had a man drive the other until I became indignant because he abused the horses and let him go. Mrs. McCashland drove the second team the rest of the way.

A family of neighbors, Thomas Roe's, were going west at the same time, so we were together throughout the journey until we got lost in the western part of Iowa. The road forked and we were so far behind we did not see which way Roe turned and so went the other way. It rained that night and a dog ate our supplies so we were forced to procure food from a settler. We found the Roe family the next evening just before we crossed the Missouri river, October 15, 1870.

East of Lincoln we met a prairie schooner and team of oxen. An old lady came ahead and said to us, "Go back, good friends, go back!" When questioned about how long she had lived here, she said, "I've wintered here and I've summered here, and God knows I've been here long enough."

When Mrs. McCashland saw the first dugout that she had ever seen, she cried. It did not seem that she could bear to live in a place like that. It looked like merely a hole in the ground.

We finally reached the settlement in Fillmore county and lived in a dugout with two other families until I could build a dugout that we could live in through the winter. That done, I picked out my claim and went to Lincoln to file on it and bought lumber for a door and for window frames.

I looked the claim over, chose the site for buildings, and when home drew the plans of where I wanted the house, stable, well, etc., on the dirt hearth for Mrs. McCashland to see. She felt so bad because she had to live in such a place that I gave it up and went to the West Blue river, which was near, felled trees, and with the help of other settlers hewed them into logs and erected a log house on the homestead. While living in the dugout Indian women visited Mrs. McCashland and wanted to trade her a papoose for her quilts. When she refused, they wanted her to give them the quilts. [108]

I had just forty-two dollars when we reached Fillmore county, and to look back now one would hardly think it possible to live as long as we did on forty-two dollars. There were times that we had nothing but meal to eat and many days we sent the children to school with only bread for lunch.

I was a civil war veteran, which fact entitled me to a homestead of one hundred and sixty acres. I still own that homestead, which is farmed by my son. After visiting in the East a few years ago I decided that I would not trade my quarter section in Fillmore county for several times that much eastern land. [109]

FILLMORE COUNTY IN THE SEVENTIES

BY WILLIAM SPADE

We came to Nebraska in October of 1870 by wagon and wintered a mile east of what now is the Red Lion mill. We made several trips to Lincoln during the fall and winter and one to Nebraska City, where brother Dan and I shucked corn for a farmer for a dollar a day with team.

I moved on the William Bussard claim, later the Elof Lindgren farm, in March, 1871, and raised a crop, then moved on our homestead in section 24, town 8, range 3 west. We built part dugout and part sodup for a house and slept in it the first night with only the blue sky for a roof. Then we put on poles, brush, hay, dirt, and sod for a roof. This was in October, and we lived in this dugout until 1874, then built a sod house.

In April, 1873, we had a three days' snow storm called a blizzard. In the spring of 1871 I attended the election for the organization of the county of Fillmore. I followed farming as an occupation and in the fall of 1872 William Howell and I bought a threshing machine, which we ran for four seasons. Some of the accounts are still due and unpaid. Our lodging place generally was the straw

stack or under the machine and our teams were tied to a wagon, but the meals we got were good. Aside from farming and threshing I put in some of the time at carpentry, walking sometimes six miles back and forth, night and morning.

In July or August, 1874, we had a visit from the grasshoppers, the like of which had never been seen before nor since. They came in black clouds and dropped down by the bushel and ate every green thing on earth and some things in the earth. We had visits from the Indians too but they mostly wanted "hogy" meat or something to fill their empty stomachs. Well, I said we built a sodup of two rooms with a board floor and three windows and two doors, plastered with Nebraska mud. We thought it a palace, for some time, and were comfortable.

In June, 1877, I took a foolish notion to make a fortune and in company with ten others, supplied with six months' provisions, started for the Black Hills. We drove ox teams and were nearly all summer on the road; at least we did not reach the mining places till August. In the meantime the water had played out in the placer mining district so there was "nothing doing." We prospected for quartz but that did not pan out satisfactorily, so we traded our grub that we did not need for gold dust and returned to our homes no richer than when we left. However, we had all of the fresh venison we could use both coming and going, besides seeing a good many Indians and lots of wild country that now is mostly settled up. [110]

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EARLY DAYS IN NEBRASKA

BY J. A. CARPENTER

I came to Gage county, Nebraska, in the fall of 1865, and homesteaded 160 acres of land, four miles from the village of Beatrice, in the Blue River valley. I built a log house 12x14 feet with one door and two windows. The floor was made of native lumber in the rough, that we had sawed at a mill operated by water power.

With my little family I settled down to make my fortune. Though drouth and grasshoppers made it discouraging at times, we managed to live on what little we raised, supplemented by wild game—that was plentiful. Wild turkeys and prairie chickens could be had by going a short distance and further west there were plenty of buffalo and antelope.

Our first mail was carried from Nebraska City on horseback. The first paper published in Gage county was in 1867 and was called the *Blue Valley Record*. In 1872 a postoffice was established in the settlement where we lived, which was an improvement over going four miles for mail. For the first schoolhouse built in the district where I lived I helped haul the lumber from Brownville, Nebraska, on the Missouri river, sixty-five miles from the village of Beatrice. The first few crops of wheat we raised were hauled to Nebraska City, as there was no market at home for it. On the return trip we hauled merchandise for the settlement. Every fall as long as wild game was near us we would spend a week or two hunting; to lay in our winter supply of meat. I remember when I came through where the city of Superior now is, first in 1866 and again in 1867, nothing was to be seen but buffalo grass and a few large cottonwood trees. I killed a buffalo near the present town of Hardy.

We have lived in Nebraska continuously since 1865 and it is hard to believe the progress that it has made in these few years. [112]

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REMINISCENCES OF GAGE COUNTY

BY ALBERT L. GREEN

The writer has in his possession an old map of the North American continent published in London in 1796, twelve years after the close of the American Revolution, whereon the region now comprising the state of Nebraska is shown as a part of Quivera; that supposed kingdom of fabulous riches in quest of which Coronado pursued his tedious wanderings more than three hundred years ago. At the time this map was published the French had visited Indian tribes as far west as the Missouri, and it must have been from French and Spanish sources that the geographer and map-maker gathered the information that enabled him to compile that part of his map covering the vast unknown regions of the west. Guess-work and supposition resulted in elongations and abbreviations of territory and rivers that made it possible for him to show our own Blue river as emptying into the Gulf of California, and the great kingdoms of Quivera and Teguayo as extending from the Missouri river to the Pacific coast. The greater part of what is now Mexico is shown as "New Biscay" and "New Navarre," while Mexico or "New Spain" is crowded down towards Central America. The existence of the Rocky Mountains, at the time this map was made, was unknown; and the whole region covered by them is shown as a vast plain. While spending leisure hours among some rare old books in the library of the Union League of Philadelphia, I came across the chronicles of Coronado's wanderings and adventures, as detailed by his monkish chaplain and preserved in the Spanish archives. A careful perusal of these fully convinced me that the route traversed was through eastern Nebraska as far northward as the present site of Lincoln, and possibly as far as the Platte. The great salt marsh was referred to, and the particulars of a disastrous encounter with the warlike Otoes are given. Mention is made of the Missouri nation and its bold warriors, as well as of other tribes whose habitat and hunting grounds were the plains or prairies of eastern Nebraska. In prehistoric times the Indian trails led along the level river bottoms where both wood and water could be obtained and where game was usually most abundant, and also in the direction of salt springs or licks where salt might be obtainable and the larger kinds of game be more plentiful. At the time of its settlement by white people the bottom lands of the Blue were threaded by many deeply worn trails that had evidently been traveled for centuries and a careful consideration of happenings, as recorded by the monkish chronicler, and the fact I have just stated in regard to the prehistoric routes of travel, forces the conclusion that Coronado's weary cavalcade must undoubtedly have followed the course of the Blue river to a point where the well worn trail diverged towards the great salt basin. Possibly the party may have encamped on the site of Beatrice and there can be little doubt that one of the Indian cities mentioned by the faithful monkish historian, occupied the present site of Blue Springs, where evidences of an ancient Indian town can still be seen, and the outlines of ancient fortifications be traced. Fragments of Indian pottery and stone knives and implements, of both the paleolithic and the neolithic ages, are frequently turned up by the plowshare in that vicinity, all indicating a long established occupancy that must have continued for centuries. As late as the early part of the last century the Pawnees occupied the site; and when the writer as United States government agent took charge of the Otoes and Missouris, in the summer of 1869, there were still old warriors living who remembered hearing their fathers tell of deeds of bloody warfare done in this very vicinity, and who pointed out to the writer the very spot, in a deep draw or ravine on the prairie a few miles east of Blue Springs, where a war party of thirty Otoes met a well-deserved, but terrible death. At the time of this occurrence the Otoes were living at the mouth of the Nemaha and were on very bad terms with the Pawnees, many of whose scalps the writer has seen adorning Otoe medicine bags or hanging in their wigwams. The Pawnees had started on a buffalo hunt, leaving at home only the old and decrepit and a few children, and the Otoes, knowing that the defenders of the village had started on the hunt, made an attack at daybreak the next morning, murdering and scalping old and young alike and after loading themselves with plunder, hastened on their homeward trip. Unfortunately for the Otoes the Pawnee hunters had encamped only eight miles up Indian creek and one of them that morning had returned to the village on some errand

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and arrived just in time to discover what was going on. The Otoes wounded him severely, but he succeeded in escaping to the Pawnee camp and giving the alarm. The enraged Pawnee warriors, mounted on their freshest and fastest ponies, were not long in reaching the village, nor were they long in discovering the trail of the Otoe war party, which they followed until they overtook it at the place pointed out to the writer. Here a fierce battle took place which resulted in the complete extermination of the Otoe party; the tall slough grass, in which they took shelter, having been set on fire, the wounded all perished in the conflagration. This is probably one of the most tragic incidents of which we have any knowledge as having happened within the limits of Gage county.

The first store established within the county was located in a log house on Plum creek near the present site of the village of Liberty. It was established, primarily as an Indian trading place, by a Mr. MacDonald, of St. Joseph, Missouri, but was under the management of Mrs. Palmer, who with her husband, David, were the first white settlers within the limits of the county, having arrived in 1857 a few weeks prior to the coming of the founders of Beatrice. David was drowned a few years ago while bathing in the Blue. The store on Plum creek, on one occasion, was raided by a party of Pawnees who, loaded with plunder, were pursued by a large party of Otoes, who overtook them on the Little Blue some distance above the present site of Fairbury, and killed them all. The site of this battle was pointed out to the writer by the Otoes while accompanying them on a buffalo hunt in 1870. The skulls and bones of the slain were still in evidence at that time, being concealed in the dense thicket in which the battle had taken place.

About the year 1868 a war party of Osages made a raid on the aboriginal inhabitants of the county and murdered and scalped several squaws who were chopping wood near the Blue. The trail of the Osages was followed, by a war party of Otoes, to the reservation of the former and satisfaction exacted in the shape of a gift of forty head of ponies. On their way back the Otoes concluded that they had settled too cheaply and feared they might be censured by the kindred of the murdered women. They halted, and leaving the forty head of ponies under guard, made a flying raid on the Osage pony herds and succeeded in stealing and getting safely away with another forty head. In due time, with eighty head of Osage ponies, they made a triumphal daylight entry into their home village. If they had been unsuccessful they would have stolen in one by one during the darkness of the night. [115]

The last Indian war party to traverse the soil of Gage county consisted of thirty naked and painted Omahas. It transpired that a party of Kickapoos had raided the pony herds of the Omahas and stolen thirty head of ponies, and in order to throw suspicion on the Otoes, had cunningly directed their trail towards the Otoe reservation, passing in the night as near to the Otoe village as possible without being discovered. The Otoes at this time were expecting, and trying to guard against, a raid from the Osages, whom they had great reason to fear, as it was fully expected that they would exact satisfaction, sooner or later, for that extra forty head of ponies that the Otoes had stolen. As a protection from the Osages, the Otoes had constructed a sort of a stockade of poles tied together with withes and strips of bark, in front of each wigwam, where they kept their nearly eight hundred head of ponies under careful watch every night. The Omaha war party stealthily approached under cover of the darkness and finding sentinels posted and watching, they hid in the tall weeds and sunflowers as close to the stockades as they could safely get, until daybreak, when the sleepy sentinels, thinking all danger over, entered the wigwams for something to eat and a nap, then emerging from their hiding places the Omahas made quick work of cutting the lashings that bound the poles and selecting thirty of the best ponies they could get hold of. The noise of the ponies' hoof-beats, as the Omahas rode swiftly away, aroused the Otoes, and in a very few minutes the whole village was in a commotion. Fierce war whoops resounded; the heralds went about calling the braves into action and soon there was mounting in hot haste. The writer, awakened by the tumult, stepped out upon a balcony in front of the agency building and beheld a sight such as no historian of the county will ever again record. In the far distance the naked Omahas were riding for their very lives, while perhaps a hundred or more Otoes were lashing their ponies in a wild frenzy of pursuit. In the village the greatest commotion prevailed, the women wailed, the heralds shouted, and the dogs barked; scores of women stood on the tops of [116]

their wigwams shrieking and gesticulating and the temper of the community closely resembled that of a nest of hornets when aroused by the rude thrust of a pole. It was nearly noon when the distant war whoops, announcing the return of the pursuers, were heard; as they drew near it was apparent that they were wildly triumphant and were bringing with them the thirty hideously painted Omahas. The prisoners were delivered to the agent who directed his police to disarm them, and cause them to be seated on the floor of the council room where they formed a dejected looking group with their naked bodies and shaved and vermilion painted heads. It was then that their leader explained that their seizure of ponies was honestly intended as a reprisal for ponies which they had lost. Old Medicine Horse, an Otoe chief, assured them that his braves would have killed every one of them if the agent had not talked so much about the wickedness of killing, and it was only their fear of displeasing him that caused them to take prisoners instead of scalps. After much speech-making, the agent adjourned the council and suggested that the Otoes take the Omahas to their wigwams, feed them, and allow them to depart in peace; and this was done. The only blood shed during the campaign was in the shooting of one of Elijah Filley's hogs by the Omahas. The first notification I had of this atrocious and bloody affair was when Elijah, then quite a young man, came to see me and file a complaint, bringing with him the blood-stained arrow that had pierced the vitals of his innocent hog.

Perhaps one of the saddest tragedies of those early days occurred in 1870 when two homesteaders, returning to their families from a trip to Brownville for provisions, were brutally murdered by a half-breed named Jim Whitewater. Jim was just returning from a buffalo hunt and had secured a supply of whiskey from a man named Wehn, at Fairbury. Being more than half drunk, he conceived the idea that the bravest thing he could do would be to kill some white people; and it happened that he came across the poor homesteaders just at that time. It was about dusk and the poor fellows had halted for the night, by the side of a draw where the grass was tall enough to cut for their horses. They had unharnessed their teams, tied them to the wagons and were in the act of mowing grass for them when a pistol shot rang out and one of them fell mortally wounded; the other, being attacked, and though mortally hurt, tried to defend himself with the scythe that he had been using, and in doing so cut the Indian's hand, almost severing the thumb. The scene of this terrible affair was just over the Gage county line in Jefferson county and consequently it devolved on the sheriff of that county to discover and arrest the murderer. As Whitewater had been seen in the vicinity, suspicion pointed to him and his arrest followed. He soon escaped from the officers and was hidden for two weeks, when the Indian police discovered his place of concealment in the timber on Wolf creek. His own brother, assisted by other Indians, captured him by strategy, bound him securely with their lariats and delivered him at the agency. The writer had gone to Beatrice on business and was not expected back until the next day, but in his absence his wife, then a young woman of about twenty, took energetic measures to insure the safety of the prisoner by ordering him placed in irons, and kept under a strong guard until the agent's return. In the meantime, having finished the business at Beatrice and there being a full moon, the writer decided to drive the twenty miles to the agency between sundown and midnight, which he did, arriving there shortly after midnight. Of course, until his arrival, he had no intimation that Whitewater had been captured. Before leaving home the Indians had reported that they had reason to believe that he was hiding somewhere on Wolf creek, as his wife had taken dried buffalo meat to that locality, and as the writer, in returning, had to drive for about forty rods through the heavy timber bordering that creek and cross it at a deep and rather dangerous ford, and knowing that Whitewater had declared that he would take both the agent and the sheriff with him to the other world, and that he was heavily armed, the writer is not ashamed to confess to a feeling of nervousness almost akin to fear, as he was about to enter that stretch of timber shaded road dimly lighted by the full moon. He first carefully let down the curtains of the carriage and then made his team dash at full speed through the long stretch of timber, plunge and flounder through the ford, and out once more upon the open prairie, the driver expecting at almost any moment to hear the crack of a pistol. On arriving within sight of the agency building, instead of finding it dark and silent as he had expected, the writer was greatly surprised to see it well lighted and many Indian police standing about it as if on guard. The next morning the writer with several Indian chiefs and

the Indian police started for Fairbury with the prisoner; the Indians riding two abreast and carrying a large United States flag at the head of the procession. The trip was made via Beatrice and the distance traveled was about fifty miles. The Indians feared an attack from the Rose creek settlers; neighbors and friends of the murdered men, and as they approached Fairbury the entire line of Indians commenced a melodious chant which the interpreter explained as nothing less than an appeal to the Great Spirit asking him to incline the hearts of the people to treat the Indians kindly and fairly. On arriving at Fairbury the cavalcade halted in the public square and was soon surrounded by the entire population of the hamlet. It was nearly dark, but the good ladies of the place set about preparing a bountiful meal for the hungry Indians, to which they did ample justice. There being no jail in the place, we waived a hearing and started the next morning for Pawnee City, where prison accommodations could be had. Shortly after leaving Fairbury the interpreter told the Indians that evidently the Great Spirit had heard their appeal, to which they all vociferously assented. Jim was kept at Pawnee City until his trial, which took place at Fairbury before Judge O. P. Mason, who sentenced him to imprisonment for life. Whitewater was one of three individuals among the Otoes who could read and write, the other two being Battiste Barneby and Battiste Deroin, both of whom were very capable interpreters. Polygamy being allowable among the Otoes, Deroin was one who had availed himself of its privileges, his two wives being sisters. On learning that Whitewater had been imprisoned for life, his wife soon found another husband, greatly to his sorrow and chagrin. It was during Whitewater's imprisonment that the reservation was sold and the Indians removed. Eighteen years after his conviction he received a pardon and left the penitentiary to rejoin the tribe. What retribution he meted out to those who aided in his capture or to his wife's second husband, the writer has never learned.

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A year before the writer took charge of the Otoes and Missouris, a delegation of their chiefs had accompanied their agent Major Smith, to Washington and made a treaty under which the whole reservation of 160,000 acres was to be sold at \$1.50 per acre. The writer was informed by Major Smith that a railroad company would become the ultimate beneficiary, provided the treaty was ratified by the senate, and that he had been promised a section of land if the scheme proved successful. Smith urged the writer to use all the influence possible to secure the ratification of the treaty and before the writer had taken any steps to secure its defeat, he also received an intimation, if not an absolute promise, from interested parties, that in the event of its ratification, he should have his choice of any section of land on the domain. Believing that such a treaty was adverse to the interests and welfare of the Indians, the writer at once set about to accomplish its defeat, in which, through the aid of eastern friends, he was finally successful.

Coronado's chronicler mentions, among other nations with whom the expedition came in contact, the *Missourias* as being very fierce and warlike, and it may be a matter of local historical interest to state that the Missouri "nation" with which Coronado became acquainted, and from which one of the world's largest rivers and one of the largest and richest states take their names, reduced to a remnant of less than one hundred individuals, found an abiding place within the limits of Gage county for more than a generation. Placed on a reservation with the Otoes and under the care of the same agent, they still retained their own chief and their own language, though circumstances gradually induced the adoption of the Otoe tongue. The old chief of the Missouris was called Eagle and was known as a war chief. It was his province to command and direct all hunting operations. He was a man of very striking appearance, over six feet in height, straight as an arrow, with fine features and apparently about seventy-five years of age in 1869. He was an hereditary chief, and probably a lineal descendant of one of the kings of the Missouri nation that Coronado and his followers met. Old Eagle was the only chief of the Missouris, and was respected and highly esteemed by both the Missouris and the Otoes. During a buffalo hunt, in which the writer participated with the Indians, Eagle chief was the highest authority in regard to all matters pertaining to the chase and attack on the herd. In 1869 the head chief of the Otoes was Arkeketah who was said to have been appointed to that position by Major Daily. He was a polygamist and very much opposed to the ways of the white man. In fact he was such a reactionary and

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stumbling-block to the progress of the tribe that the writer finally deposed him and advanced Medicine Horse to the position of head chief.

The number of Indians living within the borders of Gage county in 1869 was probably not far from eight hundred. The reservation, comprising two hundred and fifty square miles, extended some distance into Kansas and also took in a part of Jefferson county in this state, but the Indians were all domiciled in Gage county. Their principal village was situated close to the site now occupied by the town of Barnston and where a fine spring afforded an ample supply of water. The wigwams were of a type adopted by the Indians long before the discovery of America, and most of them were large enough to accommodate several families. It was a custom of the Otoes to vacate the wigwams and live during the winter in tipis which were pitched in the timber where fuel was close at hand. In 1869 only three persons in the confederated tribes wore citizens clothes, the rest were all blanket Indians, who, during warm weather, went almost naked, and habitually painted their faces and shaved heads, with vermilion and indigo.

The principal burial place of the Otoes was on a bluff overlooking the river bottoms, and within a short distance of where Barnston now stands. For years it was visited, as one of the curiosities of the reservation, by the white settlers and strangers, chiefly on account of the weird and ghostly funeral oaks that stood on the brink of the bluff, bearing, lashed to their gnarled and crooked limbs, gruesome burdens of dead Indians, wrapped in bark and partly mummified by the sun and wind; there was probably a score of these interesting objects resting peacefully on the boughs of these three oaks; they had been there for many years, and might possibly have remained to this day had not a great prairie fire during the summer of 1871 destroyed the oaks and their ghastly burden, leaving only an assortment of charred bones and skulls to mark the site.

A strange and pathetic tragedy, in connection with this old burial place, transpired shortly before the writer took charge of the agency and its affairs; and it was from the interpreter, Battiste Deroin, that the particulars were obtained. The incident may be worth preserving by the local historian, as illustrating the absolute faith of the Indians in a continued existence of the spirit beyond the grave. Dogs were frequently strangled at children's funerals in order that the dog's spirit might accompany that of the child, and it was a common sight to see a dog's body sitting upright with its back to a stake and securely tied in that position, in the vicinity of the old burial place. The man who figured in this tragedy was very aged and feeble, and the little child was very dear to him; he doubtless knew that he had not long to live and that he very soon would have to travel over the same lonely trail that the little child was about to take. Doubtless he realized fully what a comfort it would be to each, if they could take the long journey together. The Otoes always buried their dead in a sitting posture; and the old man, when seated in the grave, held the body of the child in his arms. The relatives took a last farewell of both the dead child and its living caretaker; the grave was covered with a buffalo robe supported on poles or heavy sticks, and the mass of earth taken from the grave was piled thereon; this being their usual mode of burial. [121]

The custom of strangling a horse or pony at the burial of an Indian brave was a common occurrence among the Otoes prior to 1870 and the old burial place on the bluff was somewhat decorated with horses' skulls laid upon the graves of warriors who are supposed to have gone to heaven on horseback. The tail of the horse sacrificed was usually fastened to a pole that stood at the head of the grave.

The first school established within the limits of the county was a mission school under the care of the Rev. Mr. Murdock, and the old stone building, built for it on Mission creek, was the first stone building in the county. It was a ruin in 1869.

In 1869 there were still some beavers to be found along the Blue; and at that time the river abounded with large gars, some of which were three or four feet in length; a fish which has since become entirely extinct in the Blue, probably because the water is no longer clear. The gar was one of the primitive fishes of the silurian age; it was very destructive of all other fish. White [122]

people never ate it, but the Indians thought it fairly good. The Indians obtained most of their fish by shooting with arrows from the river banks. They often succeeded in shooting very large fish owing to the clearness of the water. This could not be done now that the prairies have been put into cultivation, as that has destroyed the clearness of the water.

As late as 1869 there were some wild deer in the county and little spotted fawns were occasionally caught. The writer procured two of the latter from the Indians and gave them to Ford Roper's family in Beatrice; they became very tame and were frequently seen on the streets of the town. In 1870 the writer, while driving from Blue Springs to Beatrice, met a large buck with antlers, as it emerged from an opening in the bluffs.

Among the first settlers of the county were some families from Tennessee who settled near the present town of Liberty on Plum creek. They did their own spinning and weaving, and having been accustomed to raising cotton and mixing it with the wool for spinning, they undertook to raise it here. The writer remembers seeing their cotton patches, but never saw them gathering cotton.

The first bridge built in the county to cross the river, was built on Market street, Beatrice, about the year 1870. It was a very narrow wooden structure, only wide enough for one wagon at a time to pass over. The firm of Peavy and Curtiss of Pawnee City were the contractors and the contract price was \$4,000. It was regarded as a public improvement of very great importance to the town. [123]

RANCHING IN GAGE AND JEFFERSON COUNTIES

BY PETER JANSEN

I came to Beatrice, Nebraska, in 1874, after having been through Minnesota, Dakota, and Kansas, looking for a place where a settlement of our people, the Mennonites, could be established. Of all the land I had looked over, I liked southeastern Nebraska best, and the little town of Beatrice on the banks of the Big Blue, then consisting of maybe fifty dwellings and a few stores on lower Court street, seemed very picturesque and attractive. After forty years I have not changed my opinion. We found a suitable tract of prairie just across the line in Jefferson county, which we bought of the Burlington and Missouri River railroad at \$3.50 per acre on easy payments. Beatrice remained our chief place of business. Smith Brothers had just started a banking business in one-half of a little shack, the other half being occupied by a watchmaker carrying a small stock of jewelry. Klein & Lang had a general store on the corner of Second and Court streets, and here we did nearly all of our trading. The "Pacific House" on Second street was the only hotel. Here I made headquarters for some time. Mr. and Mrs. Randall, the hosts, were very kind to me. The latter died a few years later in the prime of her life.

We soon commenced to build up what was for years known as "Jansen's Ranch," about twenty miles southwest of Beatrice, and stock it with sheep, which we brought from Wisconsin. The first summer I had a temporary sheep corral about where the West Side schoolhouse now stands. We used to drive from the ranch to Beatrice diagonally across the prairie; very few section lines had been established, and there was only one house between the two points.

Major Wheeler, of stage route fame, lived at the Pacific house and took a kindly interest in the young emigrant boy. I remember on one occasion I had brought in a carload of valuable breeding sheep and quartered them for the night in the corral of the livery stable across the street from the hotel, run then by S. P. Lester. I was afraid of strange dogs attacking them, and sat up all night on the porch watching. In the morning, while washing up in the primitive wash-room, I overheard the major telling Mr. Randall about it. He concluded by saying: "That young fellow is all right; a [124]

boy who sits up all night with a few sheep will certainly succeed." I felt proud over the praise, and it encouraged me very much.

We were told by the few settlers who had preceded us that the upland prairie would not grow anything and that the bottom land was the only place where crops could be raised with any assurance of success. However, we were going to try farming, anyway. I bought a yoke of young oxen and a breaking plow and started in. The oxen were not well broken, and the plow was new and would not scour. Besides, I did not know anything about breaking prairie or driving oxen. The latter finally became impatient and ran away, dragging the plow with them. It was a hot day in May, and they headed for a nearby slough, going into the water up to their sides. I had by that time discarded my shoes and followed them as fast as I could. When I reached the slough, quite out of breath and thoroughly disgusted, I sat down and nearly cried and wished I were back in Russia where I did not have to drive oxen myself. About this time the nearest neighbor, a Mr. Babcock, living four miles away, happened along driving a team of old, well broken oxen. He asked what my trouble was, and after I told him in broken English, he said: "Well, Pete, take off your trousers and go in and get your oxen and plow out, and I will help you lay off the land and get your plow agoing," which he did, and so started me farming.

My younger brother, John, and I bached it for two years. One of us would herd the sheep and the other stay at home and do the chores and cooking. We took turns about every week. We had a room partitioned off in the end of the sheep shed, where we lived.

Game was plentiful those days, and during the fall and winter we never lacked for meat.

I had by that time, I regret to say, acquired the filthy American habit of chewing (I have quit it long since), and enjoyed it very much while doing the lonely stunt of herding the flock.

One day we had gotten a new supply of groceries and also a big plug of what was known as "Star" chewing tobacco. Next morning I started out on my pony with the sheep, the plug in my pocket, and anticipating a good time. Soon a severe thunder storm came up, and lightning was striking all around me. I felt sure I would be hit and they would find me dead with the big plug of tobacco in my pocket. My mother knew nothing of my bad habit, and I also knew that it would nearly kill her to find out, so I threw the plug far away and felt better—for awhile. The clouds soon passed away, however, and the sun came out brightly and soon found me hunting for that plug, which, to my great disappointment, I never recovered. [125]

Those early winters, seems to me, were severer than they are now, and the snow storms or blizzards much fiercer, probably because the wind had an unrestricted sweep over the vast prairies.

In a few years our flocks had increased, so that we built a corral and shed a mile and a half away, where we kept our band of wethers and a herder.

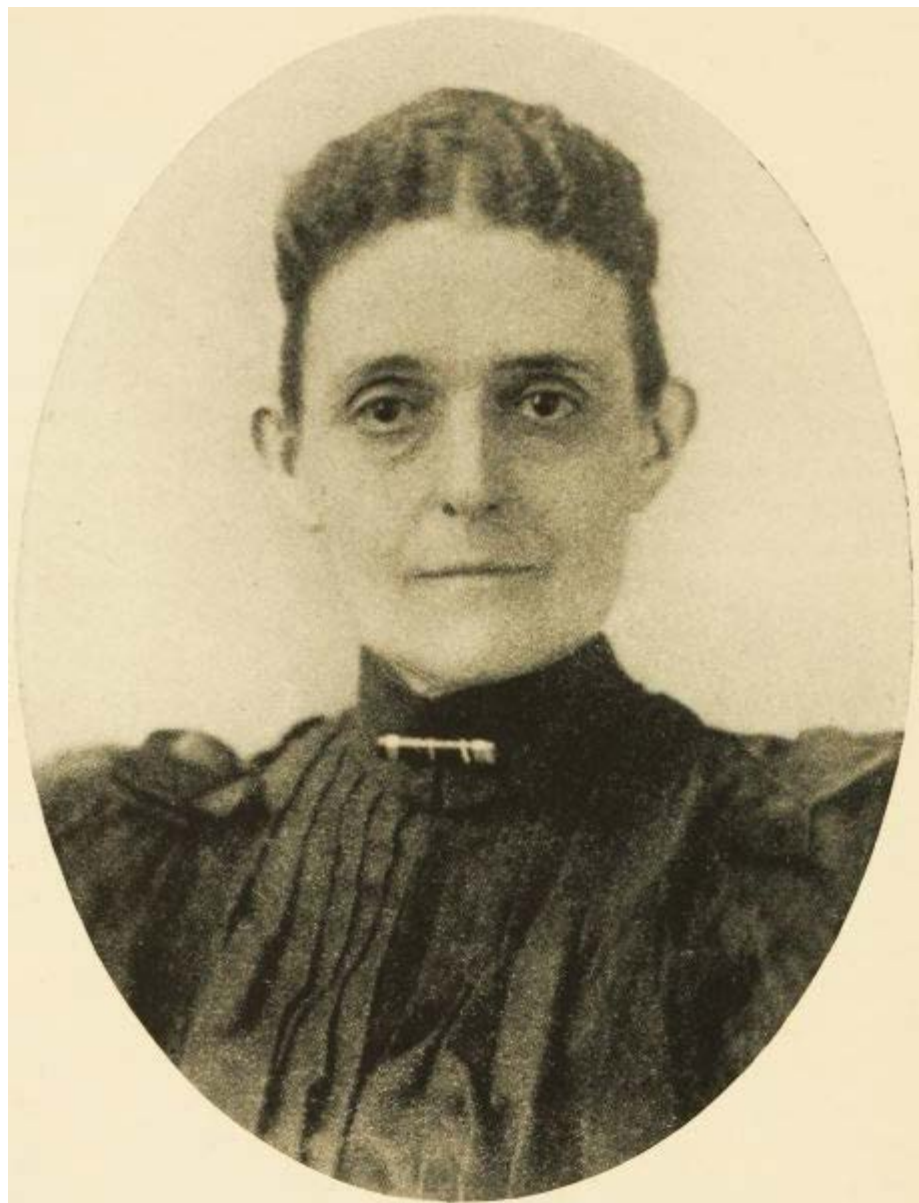
About Christmas, I think it was in 1880, a blizzard started, as they usually did, with a gentle fall of snow, which lasted the first day. During the night the wind veered to the north, and in the morning we could not see three rods; it seemed like a sea of milk! We were very anxious to know the fate of our herder and his band of sheep, and towards noon I attempted to reach them, hitching a pair of horses to a sleigh and taking a man along. We soon got lost and drove around in a circle, blinded by the snow, for hours, my companion giving up and resigning himself to death. We probably would have both perished had it not been for the sagacity of my near horse, to which I finally gave the reins, being benumbed myself. He brought us home, and you may believe the barking of the shepherd dogs sounded very musical to me as we neared the barn.

We got our fuel from the Indian reservation about eight miles south of us on the creek, where now stands the thriving town of Diller. The Indians were not allowed to sell any timber, but a generous gift of tobacco was too tempting to them to resist.

Rattlesnakes were found frequently in those days, and their venomous bites caused great agony and sometimes death. One Sunday afternoon, wife and myself were sitting on the porch of our small frame house, while our baby was playing a few feet away in a pile of sand. Our attention was attracted by her loud and gleeful crooning. Looking up, we saw her poking a stick at a big rattler, coiled, ready to spring, about three feet away. I have always detested snakes and would give even a harmless bull-snake a wide berth. However, I took one big jump and landed on Mr. Rattler with both feet, while my wife snatched the baby out of harm's way. [126]

The next ten years made a great change. We had proven that farming on the tablelands could be made a success, railroads had been built, and towns and villages had sprung up like mushrooms. We even got a telephone. The wilderness had been conquered.

When I look back upon those first years of early settlement, with their privations and hardships, I cannot refrain from thinking they were the happiest ones of my life, especially after I got married in 1877 and my dear wife came to share joy and sorrow with me. To her I attribute to a very large extent what little I may have achieved in the way of helping to build up this great commonwealth.



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Mrs. Frances Avery Haggard Third State Regent, Nebraska Society, Daughters of the American Revolution. 1898

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS OF GAGE COUNTY

BY MRS. E. JOHNSON

Emerson aptly said, "America is another word for opportunity." We realize this most truly when we compare present prosperity with early day living in the middle West.

In 1878 my brother, A. M. McMaster, and family, arrived in Nebraska City. They came overland to Gage county and settled on section 15, two and a half miles northeast of Filley and one mile south of what was then known as Melroy postoffice, so-called in honor of two little boys born the same year the postoffice was established, Mell Gale and Roy Tinklepaugh, whose parents were among the earliest settlers in this neighborhood.

My brother built his house of lumber he had shipped to Nebraska City. Beatrice was our market place. We sold all our grain, hogs, and produce there. Eggs were five cents a dozen and butter six cents a pound. The first year we came we bought five hundred bushels of corn at twelve cents a bushel delivered, and cribbed it.

There was an Indian trail across the farm, and often the Indians would pass going from the Omaha reservation to the Otoe reservation at Barnston; the children would become frightened and hide under the bed; the Indians would often call and ask for flour and meat.

There was not a house between Elijah Filley's stone barn and Beatrice on the Scott street road, and no bridges. The trail we followed going to Beatrice led us north to Melroy, making the traveling distance one and a half miles farther than in these times of well preserved section lines and graded country roads. This stone barn of Elijah Filley's was an early landmark. I have heard Mr. Filley tell interesting anecdotes of his early years here, one of an Indian battle near the present site of Virginia.

Before the town of Filley was in existence, there was a postoffice called "Cottage Hill," which is shown on old time maps of the state.

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One of the curiosities of the early times was a cow with a wooden leg, running with a herd of cattle. The hind leg was off at the knee joint. She was furnishing milk for the family of her owner, a Mr. Scott living on Mud creek, near the town of Filley.

Mr. Scott often told of pounding their corn to pulverize it. The nearest mill was at Nebraska City. This difficult traffic continued until 1883, when the Burlington came through Filley.

Two or three years after we had located here, two young men came along from Kansas looking for work. My brother was away from home, working at carpentry, and his wife, fearing to be alone, would lock the stair door after they retired and unlock it in the morning before they appeared. They gathered the corn and then remained and worked for their board. One day, one of the young men was taken sick. The other was sent for Dr. Boggs. He lost his way in a raging blizzard and came out five miles north of where he intended to, but reached the doctor and secured medicine, the doctor not being able to go. The next day Dr. Boggs, with his son to shovel through the drifts, succeeded in getting there. The young man grew worse, they sent for his mother, and she came by stage. The storm was so fierce the stage was left there for a week; the horses were taken to Melroy postoffice. The young man died and was taken in the stage to Beatrice to be shipped home, men going with shovels to dig a road. Arriving there it was found that the railroad was blocked. As they could not ship the body, they secured a casket and the next day brought it back to our house. My brother was not at home, and they took the corpse to a neighbor's house. The

next day they buried him four miles east, at what is now known as Crab Orchard.

True, life in those days tended to make our people sturdy, independent and ingenious, but for real comfort it is not strange that we prefer present day living, with good mail service, easy modes of transportation, modern houses, and well equipped educational institutions.

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BIOGRAPHY OF FORD LEWIS

BY (MRS. D. S.) H. VIRGINIA LEWIS DALBEY

As my father, Ford Lewis, was one of the pioneer land owners in Nebraska and assisted actively in settling the southeast part of the state, I have been requested to give a brief sketch of his life and early experiences in this state. My only regret in writing this is that he is not here to speak for himself. Ford Lewis was born in Deckertown, New Jersey, July 25, 1829, son of Phoebe and Levi Lewis, the latter engaged in mercantile business both in Hamburg and Hackettstown, New Jersey.

After finishing his education at William Rankin's Classical School and studying under Chris Marsh, author of double entry bookkeeping, he assisted his father in the mercantile business for some time. However, he preferred other pursuits and after a successful test of his judgment in real estate, started west. At Syracuse, New York, he was induced to engage in partnership under the name of Chapman & Lewis, watch case manufacturers and importers of watch movements; keeping standard time for the New York Central and other roads and supplying railroad officials, conductors, and engineers with the highest grade of watches.

Selling his interest in 1856, he accepted the general agency of the Morse Publishing House, New York, making his headquarters at Charleston, South Carolina, in winter and at Cleveland, Ohio, in summer, until 1859, when he went to Jerseyville, Illinois, with his parents and sister, buying and selling real estate in that city and Jersey county until 1867, when, with Congressman Robert M. Knapp, he visited Nebraska, and made his first investment in government land, many of his United States patents being signed by Presidents Grant and Johnson.

Ford Lewis was in pioneer days one of the largest owners of farm lands in Nebraska, his holdings being chiefly in Pawnee, Otoe, Gage, Johnson, and Lancaster counties. On one of his advertising cards he states that, "occupied for eighteen years past in the purchase and sale of over 80,000 acres of other lands, these, on account of their well known intrinsic value have been reserved intact."

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Mr. Lewis founded the towns of Lewiston in Pawnee county and Virginia in Gage county, naming the latter in honor of his daughter.

At a meeting of the Nebraska legislature held at Omaha in 1867, Mr. Lewis was an interested spectator, and before the capital of the state was changed he predicted its location in the salt basin, almost on the spot where Lincoln now stands. He accordingly purchased property in the vicinity of what is now Beatrice, making a comfortable fortune as the result of his wisdom and foresight. By Ford Lewis' liberality to those purchasing land from him, in selling at reasonable prices, and extending their contracts during hard times, instead of making purchasers forfeit their land because of inability to meet their payments, he encouraged and assisted many settlers who are now some of Nebraska's most prosperous farmers to keep their land, which is now the source of their prosperity. During the period when he was borrowing money for his investments in Nebraska land, many Illinois people remarked that Ford Lewis was "land crazy," but have since wished they had had his vision, and courage to hold their purchases through the crop failures and drouths which are sometimes the portion of every community: those who followed his advice

now "rise up and call him blessed."

That he was not alone in his judgment is evidenced by the large land holdings of the late Lord Scully of England and the late John W. Bookwalter of Springfield, Ohio, who recently died in Italy, and was a warm personal friend of my father's, having purchased some of his land from him.

Mr. Lewis married Miss Elizabeth Davis of Jerseyville, Illinois, in 1864. She was the first girl baby born in that town, her parents being among the earliest pioneers there from New Jersey; so her childhood memories of bears, Indians, and slave refugees during the civil war, and roaming the woods surrounding their home prepared her to be a capable and sympathetic helpmate for my father during his many pioneer trips to Nebraska.

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A BUFFALO HUNT

BY W. H. AVERY

In the fall of 1866, about the last of October, a party of nine men, myself included, started out from Rose creek for a buffalo hunt. At Whiterock, Kansas, we were joined by another party of four men with "Old Martin Fisher," an early Whiterock settler, as official guide. Our equipment consisted of four wagons, one of which was drawn by a double ox team. There were numerous firearms and plenty of provisions for the trip. The party was much elated over the first day's experiences as night found us in possession of four fine buffalo. That evening while we were riding out after one of the buffalo our ears were greeted by the Indian yell. Looking back up a draw we saw five redmen galloping toward us. At the time we did not know they were friendly, but that was proven later. They came up to us and wanted powder or "bullet" and also wanted to swap guns. All they succeeded in getting was a necktie which one of the men gave them. After a short parley among themselves they left, going back to our camp where we had left one man to guard the camp and prepare supper. There they helped themselves to the loaf of bread the guard had just baked, a \$12 coat, a \$22 revolver, and one good bridle; away they went and that was the last seen of them. The night was passed in safety and the next day we hunted without any exciting experiences. The following day we met with only fair success so thought we had better start for home. In the morning the party divided, our guide, Fisher, and two men going on and leaving the rest of us to hunt as we went along. We succeeded in getting only one buffalo, but Fisher's men had done better and were ready to make tracks for home. That night they had suspicions that there were Indians near so built no fire and in the morning soon after breaking camp a party of Indians came upon them. There was considerable parleying about a number of things which the Indians wanted but the men were unwilling to make any bargains whatever. All the Indians but one started off and this one still wanted to parley and suddenly drew his revolver and shot Fisher in the shoulder. The Indian then rode off at breakneck speed and that was the last seen of them. Fisher warned the men not to shoot as he was uncertain as to how many redmen might be in their vicinity and he did not want to take any great risk of them all being killed. Our party did not know of the accident until we returned home and we had no encounter with the party of Indians. We were thankful to be safely home after a ten days hunt.

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A GRASSHOPPER RAID

BY EDNA M. BOYLE ALLEN

Perhaps children who live in a pioneer country remember incidents in their early life better than children living in older settled countries. These impressions stand out clearly and in prominence all the rest of their lives.

At least there are several things which happened before I was six years old that are as vivid in my memory as if they had happened but yesterday. Such was the coming of the grasshoppers in 1874, when I was two years old.

My father, Judge Boyle, then owned the block on the north side of Fifth street between I and J streets, in the village of Fairbury. Our house stood where J. A. Westling's house now stands. Near our place passed the stage road to Beatrice. A common remark then was, "We are almost to Fairbury, there is Boyle's house."

Father always had a big garden of sweet corn, tomatoes, cabbage, etc., and that year it was especially fine.

One day he came rushing home from his office saying, "The grasshoppers are coming." Mother and he hurried to the garden to save all the vegetables possible before the grasshoppers arrived. I put on a little pink sunbonnet of which I was very proud, and went out to watch my parents gather the garden truck as fast as they could and run to the cellar door and toss it down. I jumped up and down thoroughly enjoying the excitement. Finally, the grasshoppers, which were coming from the northwest like a dark cloud, seeming so close, father shut the cellar door before he and mother returned to the garden for another load. They had just filled their arms when the grasshoppers began to drop and not wishing to let any down cellar they threw what vegetables they had on the ground and turned a big wooden wash tub over them. By this time my little pink sunbonnet was covered with big grasshoppers. Mother picked me up in her arms and we hurried into the house. From the north kitchen window we watched every stalk of that garden disappear, even the onions were eaten from the ground. [134]

When father went to get the vegetables from under the wooden tub there wasn't a thing there. The grasshoppers had managed to crawl and dig their way under the edge of that tub.

The only time an Indian ever frightened me was in the fall of 1875. I was used to having the Otoe Indians come to our house. Mother was not afraid of them so of course I was not. Among them was a big fellow called John Little Pipe. The door in the hall of our house had glass in the upper half. One afternoon mother being nearly sick was lying down on the couch and I took my doll trying to keep quiet playing in the hall. Looking up suddenly I saw John stooping and looking in through the glass in the door. I screamed and ran to mother. He didn't like my screaming but followed me into the sitting room and upon seeing mother lying down said, "White lady sick?" Mother was on her feet in a moment. He sat down and after grumbling a while about my screaming he began to beg for a suit of clothes. Mother said, "John, you know well enough you are too large to wear my husband's clothes." Then he wanted something for his squaw and children. Finally mother gave him an old dress of hers. He looked it over critically and asked for goods to patch it where it was worn thin. Grabbing his blanket where it lay across his knees he shook it saying, "Wind, whew, whew." After receiving the patches, he wanted food but mother told him he could not have a thing more and for him to go. He started, but toward the closet he had seen her take the dress from. She said, "You know better than to go to that door. You go out the way you came in." He meekly obeyed. I had seen him many times before and saw him several times afterward but that was the only time I was frightened. [135]

EARLY DAYS IN PAWNEE COUNTY

BY DANIEL B. CROPSEY

In March, 1868, I left Fairbury, Illinois, with my two brothers and a boy friend in a covered wagon drawn by two mules. We landed at Nebraska City after swimming the mules to get to the ferry on which we crossed the Big Muddy. We then drove to Lincoln the first week in April. My father had purchased a home there on the site where the Capital hotel now stands. Lincoln then was but a hamlet of a few hundred people. There were no shade trees nor sidewalks and no railroad. Later father built a larger house, out a considerable distance in those days, but today it faces the capitol building. The house is a brick structure, and all the bricks were hauled from Nebraska City. Afterwards father sold the home to Chancellor Fairfield of the State University.

The year before we came father had come to Nebraska and had bought a large body of land, about ten thousand acres, in Pawnee county. I being the oldest boy in our family, it devolved upon me to go to Pawnee county to look after the land, which was upland and considered by the older inhabitants of little value; but the tract is now worth about a million dollars. Among other duties I superintended the opening up of the lines and plowing out fifty-two miles of hedge rows around and through this land. I am sorry to say that most of the money and labor were lost for prairie fires almost completely destroyed the hedge.

I had many experiences during my two years' sojourn in Pawnee county. The work was hard and tedious. Shelter and drinking-water were scarce—we drank water from the buffalo wallows or went thirsty, and at times had to brave the storms in the open. The people were poor and many lived in sod houses or "dugouts," and the living was very plain. Meat and fruit were rarities. The good people I lived with did their best to provide, but they were up against it. Grasshoppers and the drouth were things they had to contend with. At times our meals consisted of bread and butter and pumpkin, with pumpkin pie for Sunday dinner. The barn we usually carried with us. It consisted of a rope from sixty to a hundred feet long for each mule or horse and was called the lariat. I put the pony one night in the barn across the ravine, I well remember, and in the morning I found a river between the barn and me. A rain had fallen in the night and I had to wait nearly a day before I could get to the pony.

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Our only amusement was running down young deer and rabbits and killing rattlesnakes.

We often met the red man with his paint and feathers. He was ever ready to greet you with "How!" and also ready to trade ponies, and never backward about asking for "tobac." As I was neither brave nor well acquainted with the Indians I was always ready to divide my "tobac." Later I found out I was easy, for the boys told me whenever they met the beggar Indian they told him to "puckachee," which they said meant for him to move on.

We had no banks, and we cashed our drafts with the merchants. David Butler was governor at that time. He was a merchant as well, and made his home in Pawnee, so he was my banker. On two occasions I had the pleasure of riding with him in his buggy from Pawnee to Lincoln. It was indeed a privilege to ride in a buggy, for we all rode ponies those days, and I think I was envied by most of the boys and girls of Pawnee. On one of my return trips with the governor my good mother had baked a nice cake for me to take with me, which I put under the seat along with a lot of wines of several kinds and grades which the governor's friends had given him. Of course mother didn't know about the liquids. I'll never forget that trip. We grew very sociable and the Nemaha valley grew wider and wider as we drove along; and when we arrived at Pawnee the next day the cake was all gone, our faces were like full moons, and it was fully a week before I had any feeling in my flesh.

I also well remember the first train which ran between Lincoln and Plattsmouth. That was a great day, and the Burlington excursion was made up of box cars and flat cars with ties for seats.

Crowds of young people took advantage of the excursion and we enjoyed it much more than we would today in a well-equipped pullman.

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EARLY EVENTS IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

BY GEORGE CROSS

Along in the seventies, when everyone was interested in the project of the erection of a United Brethren college in Fairbury, the leading promoter of that enterprise held a revival in the Baptist church. The weather was warm and as his zeal in expounding the gospel increased he would remove his coat, vest, and collar, keeping up meantime a vigorous chewing of tobacco. The house was usually crowded and among the late-comers one night was W. A. Gould, who was obliged to take a seat in front close to the pulpit. The next day some one offered congratulations at seeing him in church, as it was the first time he had ever been seen at such a place in Fairbury. "Yes," said Gould, "I used to attend church, but that was the first time I ever sat under the actual drippings of the sanctuary, for the minister spit all over me."

The most closely contested election ever held in Jefferson county was that in 1879 on the question of voting bonds to the Burlington and Missouri railroad to secure the passing through Fairbury of the line being built east from Red Cloud. The proposition was virtually to indirectly relieve the road from taxation for ten years. As bonding propositions were submitted in those days this was considered a very liberal one, as the taxes were supposed to offset the bonds and if the road was not built there would be neither bonds nor taxes. It required a two-thirds vote to carry the bonds and as the northern and southern portions of the county were always jealous of Fairbury the contest was a bitter one. Some of the stakes of the old Brownville & Ft. Kearny survey were yet standing and some still hoped that road would be built. The people of Fairbury resorted to all known devices to gain votes, some of which have not yet been revealed. It was long before the days of the Australian ballot and more or less bogus tickets were in circulation at every election. On this occasion a few tickets containing a double negative were secretly circulated in a precinct bitterly opposed to the bonds. Several of these were found in the ballot box and of course rejected, which left on the face of the returns a majority of one in favor of the bonds. It has always been believed that Fairbury lost the road because the officials of the road, who also comprised the townsite company, thought they could make more by building up new towns of their own.

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Monument on the Oregon Trail, three miles north of Fairbury Erected by Quivira Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution. Dedicated October 29, 1912. Cost \$200

EARLY DAYS OF FAIRBURY AND JEFFERSON COUNTY

BY GEORGE W. HANSEN

The first white settler in what is now Jefferson county was Daniel Patterson, who established a ranch in 1856 where the Overland, or Oregon trail crosses the Big Sandy. Newton Glenn located the same year at the trail crossing on Rock creek. The first government survey of land in this county was made in 1857, and the plat and field notes show the location of "Patterson's Trading Post" on the southeast quarter of section 16, town 3 north, range 1 east.

Early in May, 1859, D. C. Jenkins, disappointed in his search for gold at Pike's Peak, returned on foot pushing a wheelbarrow with all his possessions the entire distance. He stopped at the Big Sandy and established a ranch a short distance below Patterson's place. A few weeks later, on May 25, 1859, Joel Helvey and his family, enroute for Pike's Peak, discouraged by the reports of Mr. Jenkins and other returning gold hunters, settled on the Little Sandy at the crossing of the trail. About the same time came George Weisel, who now lives in Alexandria, James Blair, whose son Grant now lives near Powell, on the land where his father first located, and D. C. McCanles, who bought the Glenn ranch on Rock creek. The Helvey family have made this county their home ever since. One of Joel Helvey's sons, Frank, then a boy of nineteen, is now living in Fairbury. He knew Daniel Patterson and D. C. McCanles, and with his brothers Thomas and Jasper, buried McCanles, Jim Woods, and Jim Gordon, Wild Bill's victims of the Rock creek tragedy of 1861.

He drove the Overland stage, rode the pony express, was the first sheriff of this county, and forms a connecting link between the days of Indian raids and the present. Alexander Majors, one of the proprietors of the Overland stage line, presented each of the drivers with a bible, and Frank Helvey's copy is now loaned to the Nebraska State Historical Society. Thomas Helvey and wife settled on Little Sandy, a short distance above his father's ranch, and there on July 4, 1860, their son Orlando, the first white child in the present limits of Jefferson and Thayer counties, was born. [140]

During the civil war a number of families came, settling along the Little Blue and in the fertile valleys of Rose, Cub, and Swan creeks. In 1862 Ives Marks settled on Rose creek, near the present town of Reynolds, and built a small sawmill and church. He organized the first Sunday school at Big Sandy.

The first election for county officers was held in 1863. D. L. Marks was elected county clerk, T. J. Holt, county treasurer, Ed. Farrell, county judge. In November, 1868, Ives Marks was elected county treasurer. If a person was unable to pay his entire tax, he would accept a part, issue a receipt, and take a note for the balance. Sometimes he would give the note back so that the party would know when it fell due. He drove around the county collecting taxes, and kept his funds in a candle box. He drove to Lincoln in his one-horse cart, telling everyone he met that he was Rev. Ives Marks, treasurer of Jefferson county, and that he had five hundred dollars in that box which he was taking to the state treasurer.

Fairbury was laid out in August, 1869, by W. G. McDowell and J. B. Mattingly. Immediately after the survey Sidney Mason built the first house upon the townsite of Fairbury, on the corner northwest of the public square, where now stands the U. S. postoffice. Mrs. Mason kept boarders, and advertised that her table was loaded with all the delicacies the market afforded, and I can testify from personal experience that the common food our market did afford was transformed into delicacies by the magic of her cooking. Mrs. Mason has lived in Fairbury ever since the town was staked out, and now (1915), in her ninety-sixth year, is keeping her own house and performing all the duties of the home cheerfully and happily.

Mrs. Mason's grandson, Claiborn L. Shader, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Shader, now of Lincoln, was the first child born in Fairbury.

One of the most vivid and pleasant memories that comes to me after the lapse of forty-five years is that of a boy, tired and footsore from a hundred-mile walk from the Missouri river, standing on the hill where the traveler from the east first sees the valley of the Little Blue, looking down on a little group of about a dozen houses—the village of Fairbury. This was in the summer of 1870, and was my first view of the town that was ever after to be my home. [141]

On the second floor of Thomas & Champlin's store I found George Cross and my brother, Harry Hansen, running off the *Fairbury Gazette*, alternating in inking the types with the old-fashioned roller and yanking the lever of the old-fashioned hand press. This was about the first issue of the *Gazette* entirely printed at home. The first issues were set up at home, hauled to Beatrice in a lumber wagon, and printed in the office of the *Beatrice Express*, until the press arrived in Fairbury.

When subscriptions were mostly paid in wood, butter, squash, and turnips, you can imagine what a time Mr. Cross had in skirmishing around for cash to pay for paper and ink, and the wages of a printer; so he decided if the paper was to survive and build up the country, he must have a printer for a partner, and he sold a half interest in the *Gazette* to my brother and me. The principal source of our revenue was from printing the commissioners' proceedings and the delinquent tax list, taking our pay in county warrants. These warrants drew ten per cent interest, were paid in a year, and we sold them to Editor Cramb's grandfather for seventy-five cents on the dollar. On that basis they yielded him forty per cent per annum—too low a rate, we thought, to justify holding.

Prairie grass grew luxuriantly in the streets. There were not enough buildings around the public

square to mark it. On the west side were three one-story buildings, the best one still standing, now owned by Wm. Christian and used as a confectionery; it was then the office of the county clerk and board of county commissioners. The second was the pioneer store of John Brown, his office as justice of the peace, and his home; the third was a shanty covered with tarred paper, the office and home of Dr. Showalter, physician, surgeon, politician, and sometimes exhorter; and a past master he was in them all. On the north side were two of the same class of buildings, one occupied by Mr. McCaffery, whose principal business was selling a vile brand of whiskey labeled Hostetter's Bitters, and the other was Wesley Bailey's drug store and postoffice. George Cross had the honor of being postmaster, but Wes drew the entire salary of four dollars and sixteen cents per month, for services as deputy and rent for the office. On the east side there was but one building, Thomas & Champlin's Farmers' store. On the south side there was nothing. On the south half of the square was our ball ground. Men were at work on the foundation of the Methodist church, the first church in Fairbury. We were short on church buildings but long on religious discussions. [142]

Where the city hall now stands were the ruins of the dugout in which Judge Boyle and family had lived the previous winter. He had built a more stately mansion of native cottonwood lumber—his home, law and real-estate office. M. H. Weeks had for sale a few loads of lumber in his yard on the corner northeast of the square, hauled from Waterville by team, a distance of forty-five miles. All supplies were hauled from Waterville, the nearest railroad station, and it took nearly a week to make the round trip. Judge Mattingly was running a sawmill near the river, cutting the native cottonwoods into dimension lumber and common boards.

The Otoe Indians, whose reservation was on the east line of the county, camped on the public square going out on their annual buffalo hunts. The boys spent the evenings with them in their tents playing seven-up, penny a game, always letting the Indians win. They went out on their last hunt in the fall of 1874, and traveled four hundred miles before finding any buffalo. The animals were scarce by reason of their indiscriminate slaughter by hunters, and the Otoes returned in February, 1875, with the "jerked" meat and hides of only fifteen buffalo.

The Western Stage Company ran daily to and from Beatrice, connecting there by stage with Brownville and Nebraska City. The arrival of the stage was the great and exciting event of each day; it brought our mail and daily newspaper, an exchange to the *Gazette*; and occasionally it brought a passenger.

After resting from my long walk I decided to go on to Republic county, Kansas, and take a homestead. There were no roads on the prairie beyond Marks' mill, and I used a pocket compass to keep the general direction, and by the notches on the government stones determined my location. I found so much vacant government land that it was difficult to make a choice, and after two trips to the government land office at Junction City, located four miles east of the present town of Belleville. I built a dugout, and to prevent my claim being jumped, tacked a notice on the door, "Gone to hunt a wife." Returning to Fairbury, I stopped over night with Rev. Ives Marks at Marks' mill. He put me to bed with a stranger, and in the morning when settling my bill, he said: "I'll charge you the regular price, fifteen cents a meal, but this other man must pay twenty cents, he was so lavish with the sugar." On this trip I walked four hundred and forty miles. Two years later I traded my homestead to Mr. Alfred Kelley for a shotgun, and at that time met his daughter Mary. Mary and I celebrated our fortieth anniversary last May, with our children and grandchildren. [143]

The first schoolhouse in Fairbury was completed in December, 1870, and for some time was used for church services, dances, and public gatherings. The first term of school began January 9, 1871, with P. L. Chapman for teacher.

In December, 1871, I was employed to teach the winter and spring terms of school at a salary of fifty dollars a month, and taught in one room all the pupils of Fairbury and surrounding country.

Mr. Cross announced in the *Gazette* that no town of its size in the state was so badly in need of a

shoemaker as Fairbury, and he hoped some wandering son of St. Crispin would come this way. Just such a wandering shoemaker came in the person of Robert Christian, with all his clothes and tools in a satchel, and twenty-five cents in his pocket. He managed to get enough leather from worn-out boots given him to patch and halfsole others, and was soon prosperous.

During the summer of 1871 C. F. Steele built a two-story building on the lot now occupied by the First National bank, the first floor for a furniture store, the second floor for a home. When nearly completed a hurricane demolished it and scattered the lumber over the prairie for two miles south. It was a hard blow on Mr. Steele. He gathered together the wind-swept boards and, undismayed, began again the building of his store and business.

In the fall of 1871, William Allen and I built the Star hotel, a two-story building, on the east side, with accommodations for ten transient guests—large enough, we thought, for all time.

In the early days of my hotel experience, I was offered some cabbages by a farmer boy—rather a reserved and studious looking lad. He raised good cabbages on his father's homestead a few miles north of town. After dickering awhile over the price, I took his entire load. He afterwards said that I beat him down below cost of production, and then cleaned him out, while I insisted that he had a monopoly and the price of cabbages should have been regulated by law. Soon after, I was surprised to find him in my room taking an examination for a teacher's certificate, my room-mate being the county superintendent, and rather astonished, I said, "What! you teach school?"—a remark he never forgot. He read law with Slocumb & Hambel, was some time afterwards elected county attorney and later judge of this district. Ten years ago he was elected one of the judges of the supreme court of the state of Nebraska, and this position he still fills with distinguished ability. I scarcely need to mention that this was Charles B. Letton. [144]

A celebration was held on July 4, 1871, at Mattingly's sawmill, and enthusiasm and patriotism were greatly stimulated by the blowing of a steam whistle which had recently been installed in the mill. Colonel Thomas Harbine, vice-president of the St. Joseph & Denver City R. R. Co., now the St. Joseph & Grand Island railroad, made the principal address, his subject being "The railroad, the modern civilizer, may we hail its advent." The Otoe Indian, Jim Whitewater, got drunk at this celebration, and on his way to the reservation murdered two white men who were encamped near Rock creek. He was arrested by the Indians, brought to Fairbury, and delivered to the authorities, after which chief Pipe Stem and chief Little Pipe visited the *Gazette* office and watched the setting of type and printing on the press with many a grunt of satisfaction. I was present at the trial of Whitewater the following spring. After the verdict of guilty was brought in, Judge O. P. Mason asked him if he had anything to say why judgment should not be pronounced. Whitewater proceeded to make a lengthy speech, ridiculed the former sheriff, S. J. Alexander, and commenced criticizing the judge. The judge ordered him to sit down. A look of livid rage came over Whitewater's face, and he stooped slightly as though to spring. Then the judge turned pale, and in that rasping voice which all who knew him remember well, commanded the sheriff to seat the prisoner, which was done.

The spring of 1872 marked a new era in the life of Fairbury. On March 13th of that year the St. Joseph and Denver City railroad built into and through our city. From the time the track-layers struck Jenkin's Mills, a crowd of us went down every day to see the locomotive and watch the progress of the work. One of our fondest dreams had come true. [145]

In the fall of 1873 Col. Thomas Harbine began the erection of the first bank building, a one-story frame structure on the east side of the square. George Cross was the bank's first customer, and purchased draft No. 1. Upon the death of Col. Harbine's son John, in August, 1875, I became cashier, bookkeeper, teller, and janitor of the "Banking House of Thomas Harbine." In 1882 this bank incorporated under the state banking law as the "Harbine Bank of Fairbury," and I have been connected with it in various capacities ever since.

We had our pleasures in those pioneer days, but had to make them ourselves. Theatrical troupes

never visited us—we were not on the circuit—but we had a dramatic company of our own. Mr. Charles B. Slocumb, afterwards famous as the author of the Slocumb high license law, was the star actor in the club. A local critic commenting on our first play said: "Mr. Slocumb as a confirmed drunkard was a decided success. W. W. Watson as a temperance lecturer was eminently fitted for his part. G. W. Hansen as a hard-up student would have elicited applause on any stage."

Election days in those "good old times" gave employment to an army of workers sent out by candidates to every precinct to make votes, and to see that those bought or promised were delivered. John McT. Gibson of Gibson precinct, farmer, green-backer, and poet, read an original poem at a Fourth of July celebration forty years ago, one verse of which gives us an idea of the bitterness of feeling existing in the political parties of that time:

"Unholy Mammon can unlock the doors
Of congress halls and legislative floors,
Dictate decisions of its judges bought,
And poison all the avenues of thought.
Metes out to labor miseries untold,
And grasps forever at a crown of gold."

I do not care to live too much in the past; but when the day's work is done, I love to draw aside the curtain that hides the intervening years, and in memory live over again Fairbury's pioneer days of the early seventies. Grasshoppers and drouth brought real adversity then, for, unlike the present, we were unprepared for the lean years. But we had hope and energy, and pulled together for the settlement of our county and the growth and prosperity of Fairbury. [146]

We dreamed then of the days to come—when bridges should span the streams, and farm houses and fields of grain and corn should break the monotony of the silent, unending prairie. We were always working for better things to come—for the future. The delectable mountains were always ahead of us—would we ever reach them? [147]

THE EARLIEST ROMANCE OF JEFFERSON COUNTY, NEBRASKA

BY GEORGE W. HANSEN

One hundred and three years ago Hannah Norton was born "away down east" in the state of Maine. Hannah married Jason Plummer, and in the year 1844, seized by the wanderlust, they decided to move west. One morning their little daughter Eleanor, four years old, stood outside the cabin door with her rag doll pressed tightly to her breast, and watched her parents load their household goods into the heavy, covered wagon, yoke up the oxen, and make preparations for a long journey.

As little Eleanor clambered up the wheel and into the wagon, she felt none of the responsibilities of the long pioneer life that lay before her, nor did she know or care about her glorious ancestry.

Only a few decades previous her ancestor, Major Peter Norton, who had fought gallantly in the war of the Revolution, had gone to his reward. His recompense on earth had been the consciousness of patriotic duty well performed in the cause of liberty and independence. A hero he was, but the Maine woods were full of Revolutionary heroes. He was not yet famous. It was reserved for Peter Norton's great-great-great-granddaughters to perpetuate the story of his heroic

deeds. One, Mrs. Auta Helvey Pursell, the daughter of our little Eleanor, is now a member of Quivera chapter, D. A. R., of Fairbury, Nebraska, and another, Lillian Norton, is better known to the world she has charmed with her song, as Madame Nordica.

But little Eleanor was wholly unmindful of past or future on that morning long ago. She laughed and chattered as the wagon rolled slowly on its westward way.

A long, slow, and painful journey through forests and over mountains, then down the Ohio river to Cincinnati was at last finished, and the family made that city their home. After several years the oxen were again yoked up and the family traveled to the West, out to the prairies of Iowa, where they remained until 1863. Then, hearing of a still fairer country where free homes could be taken in fertile valleys that needed no clearing, where wild game was abundant and chills and fever unknown, Jason, Hannah, and Eleanor again traveled westward. After a toilsome journey they settled in Swan creek valley, Nebraska territory, near the present northern line of Jefferson county. [148]

Theirs were pioneer surroundings. The only residents were ranchers scattered along the creeks at the crossings of the Oregon trail. A few immigrants came that year and settled in the valleys of the Sandys, Swan creek, Cub creek, Rose creek, and the Little Blue. No human habitation stood upon the upland prairies. The population was four-fifths male, and the young men traveled up and down the creeks for miles seeking partners for their dances, which were often given. But it was always necessary for a number of men to take the part of ladies. In such cases they wore a handkerchief around one arm to distinguish them.

The advent of a new family into the country was an important event, and especially when a beautiful young lady formed a part of it. The families of Joel Helvey and Jason Plummer became neighborly at once, visiting back and forth with the friendly intimacy characteristic of all pioneers. Paths were soon worn over the divide between Joel Helvey's ranch on the Little Sandy and the Plummer home on Swan creek, and one of Joel's boys was accused of making clandestine rambles in that direction. Certain it was that many of the young men who asked Eleanor for her company to the dances were invariably told that Frank Helvey had already spoken. Their dejection was explained in the vernacular of the time—they had "gotten the mitten."

The music for the dances was furnished by the most energetic fiddlers in the land, and the art of playing "Fisher's Hornpipe," "Devil's Dream," and "Arkansaw Traveler" in such lively, triumphant tones of the fiddle as played by Joe Baker and Hiram Helvey has been lost to the world. Sometimes disputes were settled either before or after the dance by an old-fashioned fist fight. In those days the accepted policy was that if you threshed your adversary soundly, the controversy was settled—there was no further argument about it. At one dance on the Little Sandy some "boys" from the Blue decided to "clear out" the ranchers before the dance, and in the lively melee that followed, Frank Helvey inadvertently got his thumb in his adversary's mouth; and he will show you yet a scar and cloven nail to prove this story. The ranchers more than held their own, and after the battle invited the defeated party to take part in the dance. The invitation was accepted and in the morning all parted good friends. [149]

On August 6, 1864, the Overland stage, which had been turned back on its way to the west, brought news that the Sioux and Cheyenne were on the warpath. They had massacred entire settlements on the Little Blue and along the trail a few miles west, and were planning to kill every white person west of Beatrice and Marysville.

For some time the friendly old Indians had told Joel Helvey that the young men were chanting the old song:

"Some day we shall drive the whites back
Across the great salt water
Whence they came;

Happy days for the Sioux
When the whites go back."

Little attention had been paid to these warnings, the Helvey family believing they could take care of themselves as they had during the past eighteen years in the Indian country. But the report brought by the stage was too alarming to be disregarded; and the women asked to be taken to a place of safety.

At this time Mrs. Plummer and her daughter Eleanor were visiting at the home of Joel Helvey. They could not return to Swan creek, for news had come that all Swan creek settlers had gone to Beatrice. There was no time to be lost. The women and father Helvey, who was then in failing health, were placed in wagons, the boys mounted horses to drive the cattle, and all "struck out" over the trail following the divide towards Marysville, where breastworks had been thrown up and stockades had been built.

During the day Frank found many excuses to leave the cattle with his brothers while he rode close to the wagon in which Eleanor was seated. It was a time to try one's courage and he beguiled the anxious hours with tales of greater dangers than the impending one and assured her, with many a vow of love, that he could protect her from any attack the Indians might make. [150]

The first night the party camped at the waterhole two miles northwest of the place where now an imposing monument marks the crossing of the Oregon trail and the Nebraska-Kansas line. Towards evening of the next day they halted on Horseshoe creek. In the morning it was decided to make this their permanent camp. There was abundant grass for their stock, and here they would cut and stack their winter hay.

A man in the distance saw the camp and ponies, and mistaking the party for Indians, hurried to Marysville and gave the alarm. Captain Hollenberg and a squad of militia came out and from a safe distance investigated with a spyglass. Finding the party were white people he came down and ordered them into Marysville. The captain said the Indians would kill them all and, inflamed by the bloodshed, would be more ferocious in their attack on the stockade.

The Helveys preferred taking their chances with the Indians rather than leave their cattle to the mercies of the Kansas Jayhawkers, and told the captain that when the Indians came they would get to Marysville first and give the alarm.

Their camp was an ideal spot under the grateful shadow of noble trees. The songs of birds in the branches above them, the odor of prairie flowers and the new-mown hay about them, lent charm to the scene. Two of the party, at least, lived in an enchanted land. After the blistering heat of an August day Frank and Eleanor walked together in the shadows and coolness of night and watched the moon rise through the trees. And here was told the old, old story, world old yet ever new. Here were laid the happy plans for future years. And yet through all these happy days there ran a thread of sorrow. Father Joel Helvey failed rapidly, and on September 3 he passed away. After he was laid to rest, the entire party returned to the ranch on Little Sandy.

The day for the wedding, September 21, at last arrived. None of the officers qualified to perform marriage ceremonies having returned since the Indian raid, Frank and Eleanor, with Frank's sister as chaperon, drove to Beatrice. On arriving there they were delighted to meet Eleanor's father. His consent to the marriage was obtained and he was asked to give away the bride. The marriage party proceeded to Judge Towle's cabin on the Big Blue where the wedding ceremony was solemnly performed and "Pap" Towle gave the bride the first kiss. [151]

And thus, just fifty years ago, the first courtship in Jefferson county was consummated. [152]

EXPERIENCES ON THE FRONTIER

BY FRANK HELVEY

I was born July 7, 1841, in Huntington county, Indiana. My father, Joel Helvey, decided in 1846 to try his fortune in the far West. Our family consisted of father, mother, three boys, and three girls. So two heavy wagons were fitted up to haul heavy goods, and a light wagon for mother and the girls. The wagons were the old-fashioned type, built very heavy, carrying the customary tar bucket on the rear axle.

Nebraska was at this time in what was called the Indian country, and no one was allowed to settle in it. We stopped at old Fort Kearny—now Nebraska City. In a short time we pulled up stakes and housed in a log cabin on the Iowa side. Father, two brothers—Thomas and Whitman—and I constructed a ferry to run across the Missouri river, getting consent of the commandant at the fort to move the family over on the Nebraska side; but he said we would have to take our chances with the Indians. We broke a small patch of ground, planting pumpkins, melons, corn, etc. The Indians were very glad to see us and very friendly—in fact, too much so. When our corn and melons began to ripen, they would come in small bands, gather the corn and fill their blankets. It did no good for us to protest, so we boys thought we would scare them away. We hid in the bushes close to the field. Soon they came and were filling their blankets. We shot over their heads, but the Indians didn't scare—they came running straight toward us. They gave us a little of our own medicine and took a few shots at us. We didn't scare any more Indians.

When word came in the fall of 1858 that gold had been discovered in Pike's Peak by the wagonload, that settled it. We got the fever, and in April, 1859, we started for Pike's Peak. We went by the way of Beatrice, striking the Overland trail near the Big Sandy. An ex-soldier, Tim Taylor, told us he believed the Little Sandy to be the best place in southern Nebraska. We built a ranch house on the trail at the crossing of Little Sandy and engaged in freighting from the Missouri river to the Rocky Mountains. This we did for several years, receiving seven to eight cents per pound. We hauled seven thousand to eight thousand pounds on a wagon, and it required from seventy-five to eighty days to make a round trip with eight and ten yoke of oxen to a wagon. I spent about nine years freighting across the plains from Atchison, Leavenworth, St. Joseph, and Nebraska City to Denver, hauling government supplies to Fort Laramie. In 1863-64 I served as substitute stage driver, messenger, or pony express rider. I have met at some time or another nearly every noted character or "bad man" that passed up and down the trail. I met Wild Bill for the first time at Rock Creek ranch. I met him often after the killing of McCanles, and helped bury the dead. I was well acquainted with McCanles. Wild Bill was a remarkable man, unexcelled as a shot, hard to get acquainted with. Lyman, or Jack, Slade was considered the worst man-killer on the plains.

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The Indians did not give us much trouble until the closing year of the civil war. Our trains were held up several times, being forced to corral. We were fortunate not to lose a man. I have shot at hundreds of Indians. I cannot say positively that I ever killed one, although I was considered a crack shot. I can remember of twenty or more staying with us one night, stretching out on their blankets before the fireplace, and departing in the morning without making a move out of the way. The Pawnees and Otoes were very bitter toward the Sioux and Cheyennes. In the summer of 1862 over five hundred Indians were engaged in an all-day fight on the Little Blue river south of Meridian. That night over a hundred warriors danced around a camp-fire with the scalps of their foes on a pole, catching the bloody scalp with their teeth. How many were killed we never knew.

My brothers and I went on one special buffalo hunt with three different tribes of Indians—Otoes, Omahas, and Pawnees—about one thousand in all, on Rose creek, about where the town of Hubbell is situated. We were gone about four days. The Indians would do all the killing. When they got what they wanted, then we boys would get our meat. There was plenty for all. The

prairies were covered with buffalo; they were never out of sight. On the 4th of July, 1859, six of us with two wagons, four yoke of oxen to a wagon, went over on the Republican where there were always thousands of buffalo. We were out two weeks and killed what meat we wanted. We always had a guard out at night when we camped, keeping the wolves from our fresh meat. We came home to the ranch heavily loaded. We sold some and dried some for our own use. [154]

I homesteaded, June 13, 1866, on the Little Blue, five miles northwest of Fairbury, and helped the settlers looking for homesteads locate their land. My father, Joel Helvey, entered forty acres where we had established our ranch on Little Sandy in 1861, the first year any land was entered in this county. I was the first sheriff of this county; served four years, 1867-1870. No sheriff had qualified or served before 1867. County business was done at Big Sandy and Meridian, and at the houses of the county officers. We carried the county records around from place to place in gunny sacks.

I am glad I participated in the earliest happenings of this county, and am proud to be one of its citizens.



[155]

Mrs. Elizabeth C. Langworthy Seventh State Regent, Nebraska Society, Daughters of the American Revolution. 1905-1906

LOOKING BACKWARD

BY GEORGE E. JENKINS

Looking backward forty years and more, I feel as Longfellow so beautifully expresses it,

"You may build more splendid habitations,
Fill your rooms with sculpture and with paintings,
But you cannot buy with gold the old associations,"

for in that time I have seen Fairbury grow from a little hamlet to a city of the first class, surrounded by a country that we used to call "the Indian country," considered unfit for agricultural purposes, but today it blossoms as the rose and no finer land lies anywhere.

I have read with great interest of the happenings of ten, twenty, thirty years ago as published each week in our Fairbury papers, but am going to delve into ancient history a little deeper and tell you from personal experience of the interesting picture presented to me forty-odd years ago, I think in the year '70 or '71, for I distinctly remember the day I caught the first glimpse of Fairbury. It was a bright and sunshiny morning in July. We had been making the towns in western Kansas and had gotten rather a late start from Concordia the day before; a storm coming up suddenly compelled us to seek shelter for the night. My traveling companion was A. V. Whiting, selling shoes, and I was selling dry-goods, both from wholesale houses in St. Joseph, Missouri. Mr. Whiting is well and honorably known in Fairbury as he was afterwards in business there for many years. He has been a resident of Lincoln for twenty-three years.

There were no railroads or automobiles in the country at that time and we had to depend on a good pair of horses and a covered spring wagon. We found a place of shelter at Marks' mill, located on Rose creek fifteen miles southwest of Fairbury, and here we stayed all night. I shall always remember our introduction there, viz: as we drove up to the house I saw a large, portly old man coming in from the field on top of a load of hay, and as I approached him I said, "My name is Jenkins, sir—" but before I could say more he answered in a deep bass voice, saying, "My name is Clodhopper, sir," which he afterwards explained was the name that preachers of the United Brethren church were known by at that time. This man, Marks, was one of the first county treasurers of Jefferson county, and it is related of him that while he was treasurer he had occasion to go to Lincoln, the capital of the state, to pay the taxes of the county, and being on horseback he lost his way and meeting a horseman with a gun across his shoulder, he said to the stranger, "I am treasurer of Jefferson county. My saddle-bags are full of gold and I am on the way to Lincoln to pay the taxes of the county, but I have lost my way. Please direct me."

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Returning to my story of stopping over night at Rose creek: we were most hospitably entertained and at breakfast next morning we were greatly surprised on being asked if we would have wild or tame sweetening in our coffee, as this was the first time in all our travels we had ever been asked that question. We were told that honey was wild sweetening and sugar the tame sweetening. I cannot refrain from telling a little incident that occurred at this time. When we had our team hitched up and our sample trunks aboard, we asked Mr. Marks for our bill and were told we could not pay anything for our entertainment, and just then Mrs. Marks appeared on the scene. She had in her hand a lot of five and ten cent war shinplasters, and as she handed them to Mr. Marks he said, "Mother and I have been talking the matter over and as we have not bought any goods from you we decided to give you a dollar to help you pay expenses elsewhere"; and on our refusing to take it he said, "I want you to take it, for it is worth it for the example you have set to my

children." Politely declining the money and thanking our host and hostess for their good opinion and splendid entertainment, we were soon on our way to pay our first visit to Fairbury.

We arrived about noon and stopped at a little one-story hotel on the west side of the square, kept by a man by the name of Hurd. After dinner we went out to see the town and were told it was the county-seat of Jefferson county. The courthouse was a little one-story frame building and is now located on the west side of the square and known as Christian's candy shop. There was one large general store kept by Champlin & McDowell, a drug store, a hardware store, lumber yard, blacksmith shop, a schoolhouse, church, and a few small buildings scattered around the square. The residences were small and widely scattered. Primitive conditions prevailed everywhere, and we were told the population was one hundred and fifty but we doubted it. The old adage reads, "Big oaks from little acorns grow," and it has been my privilege and great pleasure to have seen Fairbury "climb the ladder round by round" until today it has a population of fifty-five hundred. [157] [158]

THE EASTER STORM OF 1873

BY CHARLES B. LETTON

Spring opened very early in the year 1873. Farmers plowed and harrowed the ground and sowed their oats and spring wheat in February and March. The grass began to grow early in April and by the middle of the month the small-grain fields were bright green with the new crops. Most of the settlers on the uplands of Jefferson county were still living in dugouts or sod houses. The stables and barns for the protection of their live stock were for the most part built by setting forked posts in the ground, putting rough poles and brush against the sides and on the roof, and covering them with straw, prairie grass, or manure. Sometimes the bank of a ravine was made perpendicular and used as one side. The covering of the walls and roof of these structures needed continual renewal as the winds loosened it or as the spring rains caused it to settle. Settlers became careless about this early in the spring, thinking that the winter was over. The prairies were still bare of hedges, fences, or trees to break the winds or catch the drifting snow.

Easter Sunday occurred on the thirteenth of April. For days before, the weather had been mild and the air delightful. The writer was then living alone in a dugout seven miles north of Fairbury in what is now the rich and fertile farming community known as Bower. The granary stood on the edge of a ravine a short distance from the dugout. The stable or barn was partly dug into the bank of this ravine; the long side was to the north, while the roof and the south side were built of poles and straw in the usual fashion of those days. On the afternoon of Easter Sunday it began to rain and blow from the northwest. The next morning I had been awake for some time waiting for daylight when I finally realized that the dim light coming from the windows was due to the fact that they were covered with snow drifts. I could hear the noise of the wind but had no idea of the fury of the tempest until I undertook to go outside to feed the stock. As soon as I opened the door I found that the air was full of snow, driven by a tremendous gale from the north. The fury of the tempest was indescribable. The air appeared to be a mass of moving snow, and the wind howled like a pack of furies. I managed to get to the granary for some oats, but on looking into the ravine no stable was to be seen, only an immense snow drift which almost filled it. At the point where the door to the stable should have been there appeared a hole in the drift where the snow was eddying. On crawling into this I found that during the night the snow had drifted in around the horses and cattle, which were tied to the manger. The animals had trampled it under their feet to such an extent that it had raised them so that in places their backs lifted the flimsy roof, and the wind carrying much of the covering away, had filled the stable with snow until some of them were almost and others wholly buried, except where the remains of the roof protected them. [159]

Two animals died while I was trying to extricate them and at night I was compelled to lead two or three others into the front room of the dugout and keep them there until the storm was over in order to save their lives. It was only by the most strenuous efforts I was able to get to the house. My clothing was stiff. The wind had driven the snow into the fabric, as it had thawed it had frozen again, until it formed an external coating of ice.

I had nothing to eat all day, having gone out before breakfast, and when night came and I attempted to build a fire in the cook stove I found that the storm had blown away the joints of stovepipe which projected through the roof and had drifted the hole so full of snow that the snow was in the stove itself. I went on the roof, cleared it out, built a fire, made some coffee and warmed some food, then went to bed utterly fatigued and, restlessly tossing, dreamed all night that I was still in the snow drift working as I had worked all day.

Many other settlers took their cattle and horses into their houses or dugouts in order to save them. Every ravine and hollow that ran in an easterly or westerly direction was filled with snow from rim to rim. In other localities cattle were driven many miles by this storm. Houses, or rather shacks, were unroofed and people in them frozen to death. Travelers caught in the blizzard, who attempted to take refuge in ravines, perished and their stiffened bodies were found when the drifts melted weeks afterward. Stories were told of people who had undertaken to go from their houses to their outbuildings and who, being blinded by the snow, became lost and either perished or nearly lost their lives, and of others where the settler in order to reach his well or his outbuildings in safety fastened a rope to the door and went into the storm holding to the rope in order to insure his safe return. Deer, antelope, and other wild animals perished in the more sparsely settled districts. The storm lasted for three days, not always of the same intensity, and freezing weather followed for a day or two thereafter. In a few days the sun shone, the snow melted, and spring reappeared; the melting drifts, that lay for weeks in some places, being the only reminder of the severity of the storm.

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To old settlers in Nebraska and northern Kansas this has ever since been known as "The Easter Storm." In the forty-six years that I have lived in Nebraska there has only been one other winter storm that measurably approached it in intensity. This was the blizzard of 1888 when several people lost their lives. At that time, however, people were living in comfort; trees, hedges, groves, stubble, and cornfields held the snow so that the drifts were insignificant in comparison. The cold was more severe but the duration of the storm was less and no such widespread suffering took place.

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BEGINNINGS OF FAIRBURY

BY JOSEPH B. McDOWELL

In the fall of 1868 my brother, W. G. McDowell, and I started from Fairbury, Illinois, for Nebraska. Arriving at Brownville, we were compelled to take a stage for Beatrice, as the only railroad in the state was the Union Pacific.

Brownville was a little river village, and Tecumseh was the only town between Brownville and Beatrice. It probably had one hundred inhabitants. There was only one house between it and Beatrice. The trip from Brownville to Beatrice took two days with a night stop at Tecumseh. The scenery consisted of rolling prairie covered with buffalo grass, and a few trees along the banks of Rock creek. We stopped for dinner at a house a few miles northeast of the present site of Endicott, where the Oregon trail stages changed horses.

On our arrival at Beatrice we found a little village of about three hundred inhabitants. The only

hotel had three rooms: a reception room, one bedroom with four beds—one in each corner—and a combination dining-room and kitchen. There was a schoolhouse fourteen by sixteen feet, but there were no churches. We bought a few town lots, entered two or three sections of land, and decided to build a stone hotel, as there was plenty of stone along the banks of the Blue river, and in the water.

We then took a team and spring-wagon and started to find a location for a county-seat for Jefferson county. We found the land where Fairbury is now located was not entered, so we entered it with the intention of making it the county-seat.

On our return to Beatrice we let the contract for the stone hotel, which still stands today. We returned to Illinois, but the following February of 1869 I came back to look after the building of the hotel. I bought a farm with buildings on it, and began farming and improving the land I had entered. In the summer of 1869 my brother came out again, and we drove over to lay out the county-seat of Jefferson county, which we named after Fairbury, Illinois, with the sanction of the county commissioners. We shipped the machinery for a sawmill to Waterville, Kansas, and hauled it to Fairbury with teams. Judge Mattingly bought it and sawed all the lumber that was used for building around Fairbury. Armstrong Brothers started a small store in a shack. [162]

About 1870, I came over from Beatrice and built the first store building, on the east side of the square, which was replaced a few years ago by the J. D. Davis building. The Fairbury Roller Mill was built in 1873 by Col. Andrew J. Cropsey. I bought his interest in 1874 and have had it ever since. In 1880 I came to make my home in Fairbury and have watched its steady growth from its beginning, to our present thriving and beautiful little city of 1915. [163]

EARLY EXPERIENCES IN NEBRASKA

BY ELIZABETH PORTER SEYMOUR

In the spring of 1872, we came from Waterloo, Iowa, to Plymouth, Nebraska. My husband drove through, and upon his arrival I came by train with my young brother and baby daughter four months old.

When my husband came the previous fall to buy land, there was no railroad south of Crete, and he drove across the country, but the railroad had since been completed to Beatrice. There was a mixed train, with one coach, and I was the only lady passenger. There was one young girl, who could not speak any English, but who had a card hung on her neck telling where she was to go. The trainmen held a consultation and decided that the people lived a short distance from the track, in the vicinity of Wilber, so they stopped the train and made inquiries. Finding these people expected someone, we waited until they came and got the girl. My husband met me at Beatrice, and the next morning we started on a fourteen-mile drive to Plymouth, perched upon a load of necessaries and baggage.

We had bought out a homesteader, so we had a shelter to go into. This consisted of a cottonwood house fourteen by sixteen feet, unplastered, and with a floor of rough boards. It was a dreary place, but in a few days I had transformed it. One carpet was put on the floor and another stretched overhead on the joists. This made a place to store things, and gave the room a better appearance. Around the sides of the room were tacked sheets, etc., making a white wall. On this we hung a few pictures, and when the homesteader appeared at the door, he stood amazed at our fine appearance. A rude lean-to was built to hold the kitchen stove and work-table.

Many times that summer a feeling of intense loneliness at the dreary condition came over me, but

the baby Helen, always happy and smiling, drove gloom away. Then, in August, came the terrible blow of losing our baby blossom. Cholera infantum was the complaint. A young mother's ignorance of remedies, and the long distance from a doctor, caused a delay that was fatal. [164]

Before we came, the settlers had built a log schoolhouse, with sod roof and plank seats. In the spring of 1872, the Congregational Home Missionary Society sent Rev. Henry Bates of Illinois to the field, and he organized a Congregational church of about twenty-five members, my husband and myself being charter members. For a time we had service in the log schoolhouse, but soon had a comfortable building for services.

Most of the land about Plymouth was owned by a railroad company, and they laid out a townsite, put up a two-story schoolhouse, and promised a railroad soon. After years of waiting, the railroad came, but the station was about two miles north. Business went with the railroad to the new town, and the distinction was made between New Plymouth and Old Plymouth.

Prairie chickens and quail were quite abundant during the first years, and buffalo meat could often be bought, being shipped from the western part of the state. In the droves of cattle driven past our house to the Beatrice market, I have occasionally seen a buffalo.

Deer and wolves were sometimes seen, and coyotes often made havoc with our fowls, digging through the sod chicken house to rob the roosts. Rattlesnakes were frequently killed and much dreaded, but deaths from the bite were very rare, though serious illness often resulted.

Prairie fires caused the greatest terror, and the yearly losses were large. Everyone plowed fire guards and tried to be prepared, but, with tall grass and weeds and a strong wind, fire would be carried long distances and sweep everything before it with great rapidity.

Indians frequently camped on Cub creek for a few days in their journey from one reservation to another to visit. They would come to the houses to beg for food, and, though they never harmed us, we were afraid of them. More than once I have heard a slight noise in my kitchen, and on going out, found Indians in possession; they never knocked. I was glad to give them food and hasten their departure.

In the summer of 1873, quite a party of us went to the Otoe reservation to see just how the Indians lived. We had two covered wagons and one provision wagon. We cooked our food by a camp-fire, slept out of doors, and had a jolly time. We spent nearly one day on the reservation, visiting the agent's house and the school and peering into the huts of the Indians. At the schoolhouse the pupils were studious, but several of them had to care for papooses while studying, and the Indians were peering into the doors and windows, watching proceedings. Most of the Indians wore only a blanket and breech cloth, but the teacher was evidently trying to induce the young pupils to wear clothes, and succeeded in a degree. One boy amused us very much by wearing flour sacks for trousers. The sacks were simply ripped open at the end, the stamps of the brand being still upon them, one sack being lettered in red and the other in blue. Preparations were going on for a visit to the Omahas by a number of braves and some squaws, and they were donning paint and feathers. The agent had received some boxes of clothing from the East for them, which they were eager to wear on their trip. Not having enough to fit them out, one garment was given to each, and they at once put them on. It was very ludicrous to see them, one with a hat, another with a shirt, another with a vest, etc. At last they were ready and rode away on their ponies. As we drove away, an Indian and squaw, with papoose, were just ahead of us. A thunder storm came up, and the brave Indian took away from the squaw her parasol and held it over his head, leaving her unprotected. [165]

Although the settlers on the upland were widely scattered, they were kind and neighborly, as a rule—ready to help each other in all ways, especially in sickness and death. One Thanksgiving a large number of settlers brought their dinners to the church, and after morning services enjoyed a good dinner and social hour together. That church, so important a factor in the community in early days, was disbanded but a few years ago. Pioneer life has many privations, but there are also very

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

BY MRS. C. F. STEELE

Calvin F. Steele came to Nebraska, in March, 1871, staying for a little time in Beatrice. He heard of a new town just starting called Fairbury. Thinking this might be a good place for one with very little capital to start in business, he decided to go there and see what the prospects were. Nearly all of the thirty-three miles was unbroken prairie, with no landmarks to guide one. Mr. Steele had hired a horse to ride. Late in the afternoon the sky was overcast, and a storm came up. He saw some distance ahead of him a little rise of ground, and urging his horse forward he made for that, hoping he might be able to catch sight of the town he sought. To his surprise he found himself on top of a dugout.

The man of the house came rushing out. Mr. Steele explained and asked directions, only to find he was not near Fairbury as he hoped. He was kindly taken in for the night, and while all slept in the one room, that was so clean and comfortable, and the welcome so kindly, a friendship was started that night, a friendship that grew and strengthened with the years and lasted as long as E. D. Brickley, the man of the dugout, lived.

I arrived in Fairbury the first day of May, 1871. The morning after I came I counted every building in the town, including all outbuildings having a roof. Even so I could only bring the grand total up to thirty.

That summer proved a very hot one—no ice, and very few buildings had a cellar. We rented for the summer a little home of three rooms. The only trees in sight were a few cottonwoods along the ravine that ran through the town and on the banks of the Little Blue river. How to keep milk sweet or butter cool was a problem. At last I thought of our well, still without a pump. I would put the eatables in a washboiler, put the cover on, tie a rope through the handles, and let the boiler down into the well. In late September a lady told me as her husband was going away she would bring her work and sit with me. I persuaded her to stay for supper. I intended to have cold meat, a kind of custard known as "floating island"; these with milk and butter were put down the well. After preparing the table I went out and drew up my improvised refrigerator, and removing the cover went in with milk and butter. Returning almost instantly, the door closed with a bang and frightened a stray dog doubtless attracted by the smell of meat. He started to run and was so entangled in the ropes that as far as I could see, dog, boiler, and contents were still going. [167]

The whole thing was so funny I laughed at the time, and still do when I recall that scene of so long ago. [168]

HOW THE SONS OF GEORGE WINSLOW FOUND THEIR FATHER'S GRAVE

BY MRS. C. F. STEELE AND GEORGE W. HANSEN

Statement by Mrs. Steele

I have been asked to tell the story of how the sons of George Winslow found their father's grave.

In April, 1911, it was my pleasure and privilege to go to Washington to attend the national meeting of the Daughters of the American Revolution. I went in company with Mrs. C. B. Letton as well as a number of other delegates from different parts of the state. While passing around to cast our votes for president general, an eastern lady noticing our badges exchanged greetings with some of our delegates and expressed a wish to meet some one from Fairbury. She was told that Fairbury had a delegate and I was called up to meet Mrs. Henry Winslow of Meriden, Connecticut. She greeted me cordially, saying her husband's father was a "Forty-niner" and while on his way to California was taken sick, died, and was buried by the side of the Oregon trail. In February, 1891, a letter appeared in a Boston paper from Rev. S. Goldsmith of Fairbury, Nebraska, saying that he had seen a grave with the inscription "Geo. Winslow, Newton, Ms. AE. 25" cut on a crude headstone, and that he was ready to correspond with any interested party as to the lone grave or its silent occupant. This letter came to the notice of the sons of George Winslow, and they placed Mr. Goldsmith in communication with David Staples, of San Francisco, California, who was a brother-in-law of George Winslow and a member of the same company on the overland journey to California.

Mr. Staples wrote him about the organization of the company, which was called the "Boston and Newton Joint Stock Association," and the sickness and death of George Winslow; but after this they heard nothing further from the Nebraska man.

Mrs. Winslow asked me if I knew anything of the grave. I did not, but promised to make inquiries [169] regarding it on my return home.



**Mrs. Charles B. Letton Eighth State Regent, Nebraska Society,
Daughters of the American Revolution. 1907-1908**

Soon after reaching home, Judge and Mrs. Letton came down from Lincoln and as guests of Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Hansen we were all dining together. The conversation turned to the trip Mrs. Letton and I had enjoyed together, and we told the story of the talk with Mrs. Winslow. To my great surprise and pleasure Judge Letton said, "Why, Mrs. Steele, I remember seeing, many years ago, close by the Oregon trail, somewhere near the head of Whiskey Run, a grave marked with a red sandstone, and it is probably the grave you are searching for. I believe Mr. Hansen can find it."

A few days after this Mr. Hansen reported the finding of the grave. He said the headstone had been knocked down by a mower and dragged several rods away, and that he had replaced it upon the grave; that the inscription on the stone was as distinct as though freshly cut. I at once wrote to Mrs. Winslow, giving her the facts, and telling her Mr. Hansen would gladly answer any questions and give such further information as she might wish.

The grateful letter I received in reply more than compensated me for what I had done.

Statement by Mr. Hansen

Upon a beautiful swell of the prairie between the forks of Whiskey Run, overlooking the charming valley of the Little Blue river, in a quiet meadow, five miles north and one mile west of Fairbury, close to the "old legitimate trail of the Oregon emigrants," is a lone grave marked with a red sandstone slab, twenty inches in height, of equal width, and six inches thick, on which is carved "Geo. Winslow, Newton, Ms. AE. 25."

Through this meadow untouched by the plow may still be seen the deep, grass-grown furrows of the Oregon trail; and when George Winslow's companions laid him at rest by its side, they buried him in historic ground, upon earth's greatest highway.

To the honor of George Winslow's comrades be it said they loved him so well that in their grief the feverish haste to reach the gold fields was forgotten, and every member did what he could to give him Christian burial and perpetuate his memory. They dug his grave very deep so that neither vandals nor wolves would disturb him. They searched the surrounding country and found, two miles away, a durable quality of sandstone, which they fashioned with their rude tools for his monument, his uncle Jesse Winslow carving with great care his name, home, and age, and on a footstone the figures 1849. This service of love rendered him that day gave to his sons their father's grave, and enabled us sixty-three years afterwards to obtain the story of his life, and the story of the journey of his company to California. [170]

Of all the thousands of men who were buried by the side of the old trail in 1849 and 1850, the monument of George Winslow alone remains. All the rest, buried in graves unmarked or marked with wooden slabs, have passed into oblivion.

In June, 1912, it was my pleasure to meet George Winslow's sons, George E. of Waltham, Massachusetts, and Henry O. at the home of the latter in Meriden, Connecticut. They were intensely interested in the incident of their father's death and in the protection of his grave. It was planned that they should obtain a granite boulder from near their father's home in which the old red sandstone set up by his companions in 1849 might be preserved, and a bronze tablet fashioned by Henry O. Winslow's hands placed upon its face. This has been done, and the monument was unveiled on October 29, 1912, with appropriate ceremonies.

I learned from them that Charles Gould, then in the eighty-ninth year, the last survivor of the party, lived at Lake City, Minnesota. Mr. Gould kept a record of each day's events from the time the Boston and Newton Joint Stock Association left Boston until it arrived at Sutter's Fort, California. A copy of this interesting diary and a copy of a daguerreotype of Mr. Gould taken in 1849 are now in the possession of the Nebraska State Historical Society. The original letter written by George Winslow to his wife Eliza from Independence, Missouri, May 12, 1849, and the letter of Brackett Lord written at Fort Kearny June 17, 1849, describing Winslow's sickness, death, and burial, and a copy of a daguerreotype of George Winslow taken in 1849, were given me by Mr. Henry O. Winslow to present to the Nebraska State Historical Society.

From the Winslow memorial published in 1877, we learn that George Winslow was descended from Kenelm Winslow of Dortwitch, England, whose two sons Edward and Kenelm emigrated to Leyden, Holland, and joined the Pilgrim church there in 1617. Edward came to America with the first company of emigrants in the Mayflower, December, 1620, and was one of the committee of four who wrote the immortal compact or Magna Charta. He became governor of Plymouth colony in 1633. His brother Kenelm came to America in the Mayflower with the long hindered remainder of the Pilgrim church on a later voyage. [171]

His son Kenelm Winslow was born at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1635. His son, Josiah Winslow, born 1669, established the business of cloth dressing at Freetown, Massachusetts. His son James Winslow, born 1712, continued his father's business, and was a colonel in the second regiment Massachusetts militia. His son Shadrach Winslow, born 1750, graduated at Yale in 1771

and became an eminent physician. At the outbreak of the Revolutionary war, being a gentleman of independent fortune, he fitted out a warship or a privateer, and was commissioned to attack the enemy on the high seas. He was captured off the coast of Spain, and confined in a dismal prison ship where he suffered much. His son Eleazer Winslow, born 1786, took up his abode in the Catskill mountains with a view to his health and while there at Ramapo, New York, on August 11, 1823, his son George Winslow was born.

The family moved to Newton, Mass., now a suburb of Boston, where George learned his father's trade, that of machinist and molder. In the same shop and at the same time, David Staples and Brackett Lord, who afterwards became brothers-in-law, and Charles Gould were learning this trade.

George Winslow was married in 1845. His first son, George Edward, was born May 15, 1846. His second son Henry O., was born May 16, 1849, the day the father left the frontier town of Independence, Missouri, for California.

The Boston and Newton Joint Stock Association consisted of twenty-five picked young men from Newton and the vicinity of Boston, each member paying \$300 into the treasury. The incidents along the journey we obtain from Mr. Gould's excellent journal. They left Boston, April 16, 1849, traveling by rail to Buffalo, taking the steamer Baltic for Sandusky, Ohio, and then by rail to Cincinnati, where they arrived April 20, at 9:00 o'clock p. m. [172]

They left Cincinnati April 23rd, on the steamer Griffin Yeatman for St. Louis, and arrived there April 27th, then by steamer Bay State, to Independence, Missouri. The boat was crowded principally with passengers bound for California. A set of gamblers seated around a table well supplied with liquor kept up their game all night. Religious services were held on board on the Sabbath, Rev. Mr. Haines preaching the sermon. The usual exciting steamboat race was had, their boat leaving the steamer Alton in the rear, where, Mr. Gould remarks "we think she will be obliged to stay."

On May 3rd, they landed at Independence, Missouri, and began preparations for the overland journey. In the letter written by George Winslow to his wife, he says:

"We have no further anxiety about forage; millions of buffalo have feasted for ages on these vast prairies, and as their number have been diminished by reason of hunters, it is absurd to think we will not have sufficient grass for our animals....

"We have bought forty mules which cost us \$50 apiece. I have been appointed teamster, and had the good luck to draw the best wagon. I never slept better in my life. I always find myself in the morning—or my bed, rather—flat as a pan cake. As the darn thing leaks just enough to land me on terra firma by morning, it saves me the trouble of pressing out the wind; so who cares....

"Sunday morning, May 13, 1849. This is a glorious morning and having curried my mules and washed my clothes and bathed myself, I can recommence writing to you Eliza....

"We engaged some Mexicans to break the mules. To harness them they tied their fore legs together and threw them down. The fellows then got on them and wrung their ears, which like a nigger's shin, is the tenderest part. By that time they were docile enough to take the harness. The animals in many respects resemble sheep, they are very timid and when frightened will kick like thunder. They got six harnessed into a team, when one of the leaders, feeling a little mulish, jumped right straight over the other one's back. One fellow offered to bet the liquor that he could ride an unbroken one he had bought; the bet was taken—but he had no sooner mounted the fool mule than he landed on his hands and feet in a very undignified manner; a roar of laughter from the spectators was his reward. I suppose by this time you have some idea of a mule.... [173]

"I see by your letter that you have the blues a little in your anxiety for my welfare. I do not worry about myself, then why do you for me? I do not discover in your letter any anxiety on your own

account; then let us for the future look on the bright side and indulge in no more useless anxiety. It effects nothing, and is almost universally the bugbear of the imagination.... The reports of the gold region here are as encouraging as they were in Massachusetts. Just imagine to yourself seeing me return with from \$10,000 to \$100,000...."

On May 16th this company of intrepid men started out upon the long overland trail to California. They traveled up the Kansas river, delayed by frequent rains and mud hub deep, reaching the lower ford of the Kansas on the 26th, having accomplished about fifty miles in ten days. The wagons were driven on flatboats and poled across by five Indians. The road now becoming dry, they made rapid progress until the 29th, when George Winslow was suddenly taken violently sick with the cholera. Two others in the party were suffering with symptoms of the disease. The company remained in camp three days and the patients having so far recovered, it was decided to proceed. Winslow's brothers-in-law, David Staples and Brackett Lord, or his uncle, Jesse Winslow, were with him every moment, giving him every care. As they journeyed on he continued to improve. On June 5th they camped on the Big Blue, and on the 6th, late in the afternoon, they reached the place where the trail crosses the present Nebraska-Kansas state line into Jefferson county, Nebraska. Mr. Gould writes: "About a half hour before sunset a terrific thunder shower arose, which baffles description, the lightning flashes dazzling the eyes, and the thunder deafening the ears, and the rain falling in torrents. It was altogether the grandest scene I have ever witnessed. When the rain ceased to fall the sun had set and darkness closed in."

To this storm is attributed George Winslow's death. The next morning he appeared as well as usual, but at 3 o'clock became worse, and the company encamped. He failed rapidly, and at 9 o'clock a. m., the next day, the 8th of June, 1849, painlessly and without a struggle, he sank away as though going to sleep. He was taken to the center of the corral, where funeral services were performed, by reading from the scriptures by Mr. Burt, and prayer by Mr. Sweetser. He was then borne to the grave by eight bearers, and followed by the rest of the company. Tears rolled down the cheeks of those strong men as each deposited a green sprig in the open grave. [174]

For him the trail ended here—in these green pastures. All the rest of his company traveled the long old trail across plains, mountains, and deserts, and reached the fabled gardens and glittering sands of El Dorado, only to find them the ashes of their hopes. He alone of all that company was never disillusioned. [175]

EARLY DAYS IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

BY MRS. M. H. WEEKS

When I look upon the little city of Fairbury and see the beautiful trees, fine lawns, and comfortable homes, it is hard to realize the feelings I had in July, 1873, when as a bride, coming from the dear old Granite state, we came to our future home. I wanted to "go on" somewhere else, for everything that is usually green was so parched and dreary looking and desolate. The only trees were at the homes of L. C. Champlin and S. G. Thomas.

We spent the night at the Purdy house, and the following day drove to our homestead; and in fording the river where the Weeks bridge is now, the water poured into the express wagon (finest conveyance in town) driven by Will Hubbell. At least two of the party were much alarmed—our sister Mary Weeks and the writer.

It was the first of many peculiar experiences, such as taking my sewing and a rocking chair, on a hayrack, to the hay field, rather than stay home alone for fear of the Otoe Indians. The first intimation of their presence would be their faces pressed against the window glass, and that

would give one a creepy feeling.

I have ridden to town many times on loads of sand, rock, and hay; and when the ford was impassable with wagons, I would go on horseback, with arms around the neck of faithful Billy, and eyes closed for fear of tumbling off into the water. On the return trip both of our horses would be laden with bags of provisions.

In 1867 my husband went with a party of twenty-five on a buffalo hunt with a man by the name of Soules as guide. They secured plenty of elk, deer, and buffalo. The wagons were formed in a circle, to corral the horses and mules nights for fear of an attack by the Indians; each one taking turns as sentinel. The mules would always whistle if an Indian was anywhere near, so he felt secure even if he did sleep a little. They only saw the Indians at a distance as they were spearing the buffalo.

All things have surely changed, and now we ride in autos instead of covered wagons. What will the next fifty years bring?

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LOCATION OF THE CAPITAL AT LINCOLN

BY JOHN H. AMES

By an act of the legislature, approved June 14, 1867, it was provided that the governor, secretary, and auditor of state, should be commissioners for the purpose of locating the seat of government and public buildings of the state of Nebraska, and they were vested with the necessary powers and authority for proceeding, as soon as practicable, to effect that purpose, and required on or before the fifteenth day of July in the same year, to select from among certain lands belonging to the state, and lying within the counties of Seward, Saunders, Butler, and Lancaster, "a suitable site, of not less than six hundred and forty acres lying in one body, for a town, due regard being had to its accessibility from all portions of the state and its general fitness for a capital."

The commissioners were also required, immediately upon such selections being made, to appoint a competent surveyor and proceed to "survey, lay off and stake out the said tract of land into lots, blocks, streets, alleys, and public squares or reservations for public buildings"; and the act declared that such town when so laid out and surveyed, should "be named and known as Lincoln," and the same was thereby declared to be "the permanent seat of government of the state of Nebraska, at which all the public offices of the state should be kept, and at which all the sessions of the legislature thereof should be held."

The act further provided that the lots in the alternate blocks, not reserved as aforesaid, in said town, should, after notice thereof had been given by advertisement for the time and in the manner therein prescribed, be offered for sale to the highest and best bidder; and the commissioners were authorized, after having held the sale for five successive days, as therein provided, at Lincoln, Nebraska City, and Omaha, to adjourn the same to be held at such other place or places within or without the state, as they might see proper, provided that at such sales no lots should be sold for a less price than a minimum to be fixed on each lot by the commissioners, previous to the opening of the sales. All moneys received for the sale of said lots were declared to be a state building fund, and were directed to be deposited in the state treasury and kept separate from all other funds for that purpose. Notice was directed to be issued immediately after the sale of lots, asking from architects plans and specifications for a building, the foundation of which should be of stone, and the superstructure of stone or brick, which should be suitable for the two houses of the legislature and the executive offices of the state, and which might be designed as a portion of a larger edifice, but the cost of which should not exceed fifty thousand dollars. Provision was also made

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for the letting of the contract for its construction, and appointing a superintendent thereof, and also for the erection at Lincoln, as soon as sufficient funds therefor could be secured by the sale of public lands or otherwise, of a state university, agricultural college, and penitentiary; but no appropriation, other than of the state lands and lots as above described, was made for the aid of any of the enterprises herein mentioned.

What was the result of sending three men fifty miles out into an unbroken, and at that time, almost unknown prairie, to *speak* into existence simply by the magic of their own unconquerable, though unaided, enterprise and perseverance, a city that should not only be suitable for the seat of government of the state, but should be able, almost as soon as its name was pronounced, to contribute from its own resources sufficient funds for the erection of a state house and other necessary public state buildings, remains to be seen.

It appears from the report of the commissioners, made to the senate and house of representatives at its first regular session, held in January, 1869, that, having provided themselves with an outfit, and employed Mr. Augustus F. Harvey, as surveyor, to ascertain the location of the lines of the proposed sites, they left Nebraska City on the afternoon of the 18th of July, 1867, for the purpose of making the selection required in the act.

After having visited and examined the town sites of Saline City, or "Yankee Hill," and Lancaster, in Lancaster county, they proceeded to visit and examine the several proposed sites in each of the counties named in the act, in which occupations they were engaged until the twenty-ninth of the same month, when they returned, and made a more thorough examination of the two sites above referred to, at which time the favorable impressions received of Lancaster on their first visit were confirmed. Says the report: [178]

"We found a gently undulating surface, its principal elevation being near the centre of the proposed new site. The village already established being in the midst of a thrifty and considerable agricultural population; rock, timber, and water power available within short distances; the centre of the great saline region within two miles; and in addition to all other claims, the special advantage was that the location was at the centre of a circle, of about 110 miles in diameter, along or near the circumference of which are the Kansas state line directly south, the important towns of Pawnee City, Nebraska City, Plattsmouth, Omaha, Fremont, and Columbus.... Under these circumstances we entertained the proposition of the people residing in the vicinity of Lancaster, offering to convey to the state in *fee simple* the west half of the west half of section 25, the east half and the southwest quarter of section 26, which, with the northwest quarter of section 26 (the last named quarter being saline land), all in town 10, range 6 east; the whole embracing 800 acres, and upon which it was proposed to erect the new town. In addition, the trustees of the Lancaster Seminary Association proposed to convey to the state, for an addition to the site named in the foregoing proposition, the town site of Lancaster, reserving, however, certain lots therein which had been disposed of in whole or in part to the purchasers thereof."

After being satisfied of the sufficiency of the titles proposed to be conveyed to the state, and having carefully "considered all the circumstances of the condition of the saline lands, the advantage of the situation, its central position, and the value of its surroundings over a district of over *twelve thousand square miles* of rich agricultural country, it was determined to accept the proposition made by the owners of the land." Accordingly on the afternoon of the 29th of July the commissioners assembled at the house of W. T. Donavan, in Lancaster, and by a unanimous vote formally declared the present site of the capital city of Lincoln, which action was first made public by a proclamation issued on the 14th day of August next following.

On the 15th of August, Messrs. Harvey and Smith, engineers, with a corps of assistants, commenced the survey of the town, the design being calculated for the making of a beautiful city. The streets are one hundred and twenty feet wide, and all except the business streets capable of being improved with a street park outside the curb line; as, for instance: On the one hundred feet streets, pavements twelve feet wide and a park or double row of trees outside the pavement, and [179]

planted twelve feet apart so as to admit of a grass plat between, may be made on both sides the street. This will leave on the one hundred feet streets a roadway fifty-two feet wide; with pavements as above, and parks fifteen feet wide, will leave a roadway on the one hundred and twenty feet streets of sixty feet; while on the business streets a ninety-foot roadway was thought to be amply sufficient for the demands of trade.

Reservations of about twelve acres each were made for the state house, state university, and a city park, these being at about equal distances from each other.

Reservations of one block each were made for a courthouse for Lancaster county, for a city hall and market space, for a state historical and library association, and *seven* other squares in proper locations for public schools. Reservations were also made of three lots each in desirable locations for ten religious denominations, upon an understanding with the parties making the selections on behalf of the several denominations, that the legislature would require of them a condition that the property should only be used for religious purposes, and that some time would be fixed within which suitable houses of worship, costing not less than some reasonable minimum amount, should be erected. One lot each was also reserved for the use of the Independent Order of Good Templars, and Odd Fellows, and the order of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons. These reservations were afterwards confirmed by the legislature, with conditions recommended by the commissioners, and religious denominations were required to build on their reserved lots previous to or during the summer of 1870.

In anticipation of the completion of the survey, due advertisement thereof was made as provided by law, and a sale of lots opened at Lincoln on the 17th day of September, for the purpose of raising the necessary funds for commencing the construction of the state house.

Owing to the unpropitious state of the weather but few bidders were present, and the results of the first day's sales were light and disheartening; during their continuation, however, circumstances were changed for the better, and at the end of five days \$34,000 had been realized. Subsequent sales were held at Nebraska City and Omaha, which by the fourth day of October had increased that amount to the sum of \$53,000. Sales were subsequently held at Lincoln on the seventeenth of June and September, 1868, from which were realized the sum of \$22,580. [180]

On the tenth of September, 1867, the commissioners issued their notice to architects, inviting, for a period of thirty days, plans and specifications for a state house; and upon the tenth of October, after having considered the merits of the several plans presented, they concluded to accept that of Prof. John Morris, of Chicago, whom they thereupon appointed superintendent of construction, and issued notice to builders, inviting proposals for a term of three months, for the erection of the work; Prof. Morris in the meantime commencing such preliminary work as excavations for foundations, delivery of material for foundation, and other arrangements as should tend to facilitate the progress of the work after the contract was let.

On the tenth of November the superintendent caused the ground to be broken in the presence of a number of the citizens of Lancaster, the removal of the first earth being awarded to Master Frele Morton Donavan, the first child born in, and the youngest child of the oldest settler of Lancaster county.

On the eleventh of January, 1868, the bid of Mr. Joseph Ward, proposing to furnish the material and labor, and erect the building contemplated in the contract for the sum of \$49,000, was accepted, and from that time forward the work steadily progressed, with the exception of a few unavoidable delays, until its completion.

On account, however, of the increasing wants of the state, the difficulties attending, the changes of material and increased amount of work and additional accommodation found necessary and advisable, the commissioners deemed it expedient to exceed the amount of expenditure contemplated in the statute; the additional expense being defrayed from the proceeds of the sales

of lots and lands appropriated for that purpose.

It was originally intended that the walls of the building should be built of red sandstone, and faced with blue limestone, but upon proceeding with the work the architect and builder found that the difficulties attending the procuration of the last named material would, unless the object was abandoned, result in an impossibility of the completion of the work at contract prices; and in so far retarding its progress as to prevent its erection in time for the use of the next session of the legislature. Its use, therefore, was accordingly abandoned, and it was decided to substitute in lieu thereof the magnesian limestone of Beatrice, which the experience of the architect had proved to be of far better character for building purposes than the blue limestone, it being less liable to wear or damage from frost or fire or any other action of the elements. [181]

This change having been made, the work was pushed vigorously forward, and on the third day of December, 1868, was so far completed as to be ready for the occupancy of the state officers, and the governor, therefore, on that day issued his proclamation announcing the removal of the seat of government from Omaha to Lincoln and ordering the transportation of the archives of the state to the new capitol. [182]

AN INCIDENT IN THE HISTORY OF LINCOLN

BY ORTHA C. BELL

On February 1, 1872, I arrived in Lincoln, the capital of the state. About the middle of January, 1875, the residents of Lincoln were greatly startled at seeing a man, shoeless and coatless, mounted on a horse without saddle or bridle, coming down Eleventh street at full speed, and crying at the top of his voice, "Mutiny at the pen!" The man proved to be a guard from the penitentiary heralding the news of this outbreak and calling for help. The prisoners had taken advantage of the absence of Warden Woodhurst, overpowered Deputy Warden C. J. Nobes, bound and gagged the guard. The leader, Quinn Bohanan, disrobed the deputy warden, exchanged his own for the clothing and hat of the deputy, and produced the effect of a beard with charcoal. This disguise was all so complete that the guards did not detect the ruse when the prisoners were marched through the yards, supposed to be in charge of the deputy. When on the inside of the prison they used the warden's family as hostages and took possession of the arsenal, and were soon in command of the situation.

The man on horseback had spread the news through the city in a very short time and soon hundreds of men with all kinds of guns had left their places of business and gone to the penitentiary, which they surrounded, holding the prisoners within the walls.

The governor wired for a detail from the regulars, stationed at Fort Omaha, and with all possible haste they were rushed to the scene. They were soon in charge of the situation, and negotiations were begun for a restoration of normal conditions, which result was attained in three days' time.

During all this time Warden Woodhurst was on the outside of the walls and his brave little wife, with their two small children, were on the inside. Mrs. Woodhurst used all the diplomacy at her command to save her own life and that of the two children. She and the children had served as shields to the prisoners, protecting them from the bullets of the soldiers on the firing line around the penitentiary. [183]

The incident closed without loss of life to citizen or prisoner, but has left a lasting impression on the minds of those who were present. [184]

LINCOLN IN THE EARLY SEVENTIES

BY (MRS. O. C.) MINNIE DE'ETTE POLLEY BELL

In the spring of 1874 my father, Hiram Polley, came from Ohio to Lincoln, I being a young lady of nineteen years. To say that the new country with its vast prairies, so different from our beautiful timber country, produced homesickness, would be putting it mildly. My parents went on to a farm near what is now the town of Raymond, I remaining in Lincoln with an aunt, Mrs. Watie E. Gosper. My father built the barn as soon as possible and this was used for the house until after the crops were put in, then work was begun on the house that they might have it before cold weather.

The first trouble that came was the devastating plague of grasshoppers which swept over this section of the country in the years 1874 and 1875. Not long after this a new trouble was upon us. The day dawned bright and fair, became hotter and more still, until presently in the distance there could be seen the effects of a slight breeze; this however was only the advance of a terrible windstorm. When the hurricane had passed, the barn, which only a few months before had served as the house, was in ruins. Undaunted, my father set about to rebuild the barn, which still remains on the farm; the farm, however, is now owned by other parties.

In the winter of 1875 there was quite a fall of snow, and one of the funny sights was a man driving down O street with a horse hitched to a rocking chair. Everything that could be used for a sleigh was pressed into service. This was a strange sight to me, having come from Ohio where we had from three to four months of sleighing with beautiful sleighs and all that goes to make up a merry time.

During this winter many were using corn for fuel and great quantities were piled on the ground, which of course made rats very plentiful—so much so that when walking on the streets at dusk one would almost have to kick them out of the way or wait for them to pass. [185]

In the course of time a young man appeared upon the scene, and on December 10, 1874, I was married to Ortha C. Bell. We were married in the house which now stands at the northeast corner of Twelfth and M streets, then the home of my aunt, Mrs. Gosper. Four children were born to us: the first, a daughter, dying in infancy; the second, Jennie Bell-Ringer, of Lincoln; the third, a son, Ray Hiram Bell, dying at the age of three; and the fourth, a daughter, Hazel Bell-Smith. Two grandchildren have come to brighten our lives, De'ette Bell Smith and Edmund Burke Smith. Our home at 931 D street, which we built in 1886, is still occupied by us. [186]

A PIONEER BABY SHOW

BY (MRS. FRANK I.) JENNIE BELL-RINGER

I am a Nebraska product, having been born in the city of Lincoln, just across the street from the state university, on R street, between Eleventh and Twelfth.

When yet very young my proud mother entered me in an old-fashioned baby show which was held in the old opera house, known as "The Hallo Opera House." This show was not conducted as the "Better Babies" contest of today is conducted, but rather along the line of a game of chance. The judges went around and talked and played with the various babies. The baby that made the best

impression on the judges, or perhaps, more correctly speaking, the baby that was on its good behavior, was the one that made the best impression on the judges.

To make a long story short, I evidently, at that tender age, knew when to put on my company manners, and when the prizes were awarded, I held the lucky number and rode away in a handsome baby buggy, the first prize.

The second prize was awarded to John Dean Ringer, second son of Mr. and Mrs. Bradford Ringer. The third prize was given to Harry Hardenburg; and an impromptu fourth prize was awarded to a colored baby.

The day I was married my newly acquired brother, in bestowing good wishes upon me, said there was only one fault he had to find with me, and upon inquiry as to what that might be, he answered, "You took the first prize away from me at the baby show."



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Boulder at Fort Calhoun Commemorating the Council of Lewis and Clark with the Otoe and Missouri Indians, August 3, 1804. Erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Sons of the American Revolution, and the Nebraska State Historical Society

MARKING THE SITE OF THE LEWIS AND CLARK COUNCIL AT FORT CALHOUN

BY MRS. LAURA B. POUND

Looking backward for thirteen years, it is difficult for me to realize that at the beginning of my fourth term as state regent, in 1902, there were as yet only two chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Nebraska. From 1894 to 1902 there had been three other state regents besides myself; and it was surely through no lack of diligence or patriotism that the organization

grew so slowly. Mrs. S. C. Langworthy had been appointed organizing regent at Seward in 1896; Mrs. J. A. Cline at Minden, and Mrs. Sarah G. Bates at Long Pine in 1897; and Miss Anna Day at Beatrice in 1899. The total membership in the state probably did not exceed two hundred and fifty, and these, with the exception of the regents already named, belonged to the Deborah Avery and the Omaha chapters.

In 1899, Mrs. Eliza Towle reported to the president general and the national board of management that the Omaha chapter had decided to place a monument at Fort Calhoun—undoubtedly at the suggestion of Mrs. Harriet S. MacMurphy, who was much interested in the early history of that place.

As the hundredth anniversary of the acquisition of the Louisiana territory approached, and interest began to center around the expedition of Lewis and Clark, it was found that the only point touched in Nebraska by these explorers which could be positively identified was old Council Bluff, near Fort Calhoun; and here the Omaha chapter had decided to erect a monument. At a meeting of the Omaha chapter in 1901, the state regent directed the attention of the members to this fact, and it was voted to enlarge the scope of the undertaking, to make the marking of the site a state affair, and to ask the coöperation of the Sons of the American Revolution and of the State Historical Society. This action was ratified at the first conference of the Daughters of the American Revolution held in Nebraska, the meeting having been called especially for that purpose, in October, 1902. A committee in conjunction with the Sons of the American Revolution asked the state legislature of 1903 for a sum of five thousand dollars to buy the site of Fort Atkinson and to erect a suitable monument, under the auspices of the Sons and the Daughters of the American Revolution, the monument to be erected according to plans and specifications furnished by the two societies. [188]

Disappointed by the failure of the legislature to make the desired appropriation but in no way discouraged, the Daughters of the American Revolution at the second state conference, held in October, 1903, voted to observe the anniversary of the first official council held by Lewis and Clark with the Indians in the Louisiana territory, and to commemorate the event by placing a Nebraska boulder upon the site. As chairman of the committee, it fell to my lot to raise the money and to find the boulder; and it is with pleasure that I record the ease with which the first part of my duty was accomplished. The Deborah Avery chapter gave seventy-five dollars, the Omaha chapter one hundred, and the two new chapters organized in 1902, Quivira of Fairbury and Lewis-Clark of Fremont, raised the sum to two hundred, each promising more if it was needed.

To find a Nebraska boulder was more difficult; and it was still more difficult to find a firm in Nebraska willing to undertake to raise it from its native bed and to carve upon it the insignia of the D. A. R., with a suitable inscription. Finally a boulder of Sioux Falls granite was found in the Marsden farm, north of Lincoln, and it was given to the society by the owner, who remarked that he was "glad to be rid of it." Its dimensions were 7-1/2x8-1/3x3-1/2 feet. Its weight was between seven and eight tons. The firm of Kimball Brothers of Lincoln took the contract for its removal and inscription. Through the assistance of Mr. A. E. Sheldon of the State Historical Society, the Burlington and Missouri railroad generously transported it to Fort Calhoun, where its placing was looked after by Mr. J. H. Daniels of the Sons of the American Revolution. As the project had drifted away from the original intention, and had become a memorial to commemorate an event rather than to mark a spot, the boulder was placed on the public school grounds at Fort Calhoun. At last, almost five years from the time of the broaching of the project, the wish of the society was accomplished. [189]

The following condenses an account of the unveiling of the boulder, and the program, from the report of Miss Anna Tribell Adams of the Omaha chapter for the *American Monthly* of January, 1905:

"On August 3, 1904, the village of Fort Calhoun, fifteen miles above Omaha on the Missouri river, was the scene of the unveiling of a boulder commemorating the first peace council between

the United States government and the chiefs of the Otoe and Missouri Indian tribes. The town as well as the school grounds were brave with bunting and flags. Everyone wore with a small flag the souvenir button on which was a picture of the boulder with a suitable inscription. As a matter of history it is a pleasure to record that the button was designed by Mrs. Elsie De Cou Troup of the Omaha chapter. One worn by one of the speakers is in the collection of the Deborah Avery chapter in the rooms of the State Historical Society at Lincoln.

"Among those present were Brigadier General Theodore Wint, representing the United States government, Governor J. H. Mickey, Adjutant General and Mrs. J. H. Culver, Mr. J. A. Barrett and Mr. A. E. Sheldon of the State Historical Society, Senator J. H. Millard, ex-Governor J. E. Boyd, and others.

"The Thirtieth Infantry band from Fort Calhoun opened the program. Then came a brief reproduction, in pageant-manner, by the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben of Omaha, of the Council of 1804, enacting the Lewis and Clark treaty. Mr. Edward Rosewater of the Omaha *Bee* extended the welcome of the day, and brought to the attention of the audience the presence of Mr. Antoine Cabney, the first white child born in Nebraska, whose birthplace, in 1827, was near the site of Fort Calhoun. The state regent, Mrs. Abraham Allee, introduced Governor Mickey, who spoke briefly. He was followed by J. A. Barrett of the State Historical Society, who gave an account of the Lewis and Clark Council. Honorable W. F. Gurley of Omaha then delivered the address of the day. At the conclusion of the formal program the boulder was unveiled. In the presentation speech by Mrs. S. B. Pound of Lincoln, the boulder was committed formally, in the name of the Sons and the Daughters of the American Revolution and of the State Historical Society, to the care of the citizens of Fort Calhoun."

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EARLY HISTORY OF LINCOLN COUNTY

BY MAJOR LESTER WALKER

(Late captain Fifth U. S. Cavalry and brevet major U. S. Army)

It is supposed that the first white men who visited Lincoln county were the Mallet brothers, who passed this way to Santa Fe in 1739. Pierre and Auguste Chouteau were sent out from St. Louis to explore the northwestern country in 1762. In 1780 another expedition was sent to explore the country between the Missouri river and the Rocky Mountains.

After the expedition of Lewis and Clark, which followed up the Missouri river, the first government expedition was made in 1819, under Major Stephen H. Long, who traveled up the north side of the Platte and crossed just above the forks of the two rivers, then going up the valley between the two streams to the site of the present town of North Platte.

Titian Peale, the naturalist of Philadelphia, was with this expedition and the Peale family living at North Platte, are relatives of his. In 1835, Col. Henry Dodge visited this section of the country in the government employ to treat with the Arikara Indians.

In 1843, Col. John C. Fremont, making his expedition up the Platte, celebrated the Fourth of July of that year, in what is now Lincoln county. During the year 1844 travel up the Platte river became quite heavy and the first building in the county was erected by a Frenchman (name unknown) near the present residence of Mrs. Burke at Fort McPherson, and was used as a trading ranch, but was abandoned in 1848.

In 1852, a man by the name of Brady settled on the south side of the island now known as Brady Island. Brady is supposed to have been killed some time during the following year by the Indians.

In 1858, the first permanent settlement in the county was made at Cottonwood Springs and the first building was erected in the fall of the year by Boyer & Roubidoux. I. P. Boyer had charge of this ranch. In the same year another trading ranch was built at O'Fallon's Bluffs on the south side of the river. In 1859 Dick Darling erected the second building at Cottonwood Springs. This building was purchased by Charles McDonald for a store, and he stocked it with general merchandise. In 1860, Mr. McDonald brought his wife from Omaha, she being the first white woman to settle in Lincoln county. Mrs. McDonald lived here about three years before another white woman settled at Cottonwood Springs. Mr. McDonald is now living at North Platte, engaged in the banking business. Mrs. McDonald died in December, 1898, and is buried at North Platte. [191]

In the spring of 1860, J. A. Morrow built a ranch about twelve miles west from Cottonwood, to accommodate the great rush to California. To give some idea of the extent of the freight and emigrant business along this route, it was no uncommon thing to count from seven hundred to one thousand wagons passing in one day.

During the year 1861, the Creighton telegraph line was completed through the county. In June, 1861, the first white child was born. His name is W. H. McDonald, son of Chas. McDonald, now of North Platte, Nebraska.

In the spring of 1860, W. M. Hinman removed from Port Laramie to Cottonwood Springs, and opened up a farm, trading with the emigrants and Indians. In November, 1863, Fort McPherson was established by the government at this settlement of Cottonwood Springs. This military post was first commanded by Major George M. O'Brien.

Fort McPherson was established none too soon, for it was in the following year, 1864, that the war with the Sioux and Cheyenne Indians commenced. This war continued for over five years and many emigrants and soldiers were killed.

What is now known as Lincoln county, was first organized as a county under the territorial government of Nebraska in 1860. Cottonwood Springs was made the county-seat. The following officers were elected: County commissioners—I. P. Boyer, J. C. Gilman and J. A. Morrow; judge—Charles McDonald; treasurer—W. M. Hinman. Instead of calling the county Lincoln, it was named "Shorter." Nothing, however, was done under this organization. Judge McDonald qualified and the only business was the marriage ceremony.

On September 3, 1866, a meeting was held and arrangements made to reorganize Shorter county under the name of Lincoln county. Under the reorganization, the following officers were elected: J. C. Gilman, W. M. Hinman, and J. A. Morrow were elected county commissioners; S. D. Fitchie, county judge; Wilton Baker, sheriff; and Charles McDonald, clerk. The county seat was at Cottonwood Springs. W. M. Hinman built a sawmill near Cottonwood Springs and did a large business. The Union Pacific railroad was then being constructed through this county and the cañons south of the Platte abounded with cedar timber, furnishing an abundance of material. [192]

During November, 1866, the Union Pacific railroad was completed to North Platte and a town was laid out by the railroad company. The plat of the town was filed with the clerk of the county on January 31, 1867; a military post was established, and a garrison of soldiers was stationed here.

In 1867 the Union Pacific railroad began the erection of shops and roundhouse, North Platte having been designated as a division station. During the year 1867, a freight train was wrecked by the Indians. Several of the trainmen were killed and the train plundered and burned. In September, 1867, the Indian chiefs were all called to assemble at North Platte, where they were met by the commissioners appointed by the government to treat with them. These commissioners were General Sherman, General Harney, and John P. Sanborne, and a treaty of peace was entered into. During the stay of these commissioners, they were well entertained by the citizens of North Platte. The county-seat was moved from Cottonwood Springs to North Platte at an election held

October 8, 1867. A total of twenty-one votes were cast. The officers elected were B. I. Hinman, representative; W. M. Hinman, county judge; Charles McDonald, clerk; O. O. Austin, sheriff; Hugh Morgan, treasurer, and A. J. Miller, county commissioner. There was no courthouse, and the records were kept at the home of W. M. Hinman, who had moved from his farm to North Platte. The first county warrant was issued in 1867. The first term of district court was held at North Platte in 1867, Judge Gantt then being the circuit judge for the entire state. July 1, 1867, the first levy on the Union Pacific railroad in Lincoln county was made on an assessed valuation of \$49,000.00.

During this year, there was an Indian scare and settlers throughout the county thronged to the military parks at McPherson and North Platte, taking refuge in the railroad roundhouse at the latter place. [193]

The first money collected from fines was that paid into the county treasury on February 1, 1868, by R. C. Daugherty, a justice of the peace, who fined a man \$21.50 for stealing an overcoat.

The first school in the county was taught at North Platte during the summer of 1868. Theodore Clark was the first teacher. The next term of school began November 30, 1868, and was taught by Mary Hubbard, now Mrs. P. J. Gilman.

The first Sunday school in the county was at North Platte, and was founded by Mrs. Keith, Mrs. Miller, Mrs. Cogswell, and Mrs. Kramph. There were only three children in attendance.

During the year 1868, troubles with the Indians were on the increase. On one occasion, "Dutch" Frank, running an engine and coming round a curve with his train, saw a large body of Indians on each side of the road, while a number were crowded on the track. Knowing it would be certain death to stop, he increased the speed of his train and went through them, killing quite a number.

In May, 1869, the Fifth U. S. Cavalry arrived at Fort McPherson under General Carr. Eight companies were left here and four companies went to Sidney and Cheyenne. The government was surveying this county at that time and the troops were used to protect the surveyors. Large bands of Indians had left the reservation and were killing settlers and stealing horses. During the summer of 1869 the order from General Auger, commanding the department, was to clear the country of Indians between the Union Pacific and the Kansas Pacific. I was an officer of the Fifth U. S. Cavalry and was in command of the post at North Platte in 1869 and 1870, and was in all the Indian campaigns until I resigned in 1878.

The first bank in North Platte was started in 1875 by Walker Brothers and was later sold to Charles McDonald. [194]

GRAY EAGLE, PAWNEE CHIEF

BY MILLARD S. BINNEY

It is not often that one sees a real Indian chief on the streets of Fullerton, but such happened in June, 1913, when the city was visited by David Gillingham, as he is known in the English tongue, or Gray Eagle, as his people call him, chief of the Pawnees.

Gray Eagle is the son of White Eagle, whom the early inhabitants of Nance county will remember as chief of the Pawnees at the time the county was owned by that tribe.

Gray Eagle was born about three miles this side of Genoa, in 1861. He spent his boyhood in the county and when white men began to build at the place that is now Genoa, he attended school

there. When he was fourteen years of age he accompanied his tribe to its new home at Pawnee City, Oklahoma, where he has since resided. The trip overland was made mostly on horseback, and the memories of it are very interesting as interpreted to us by Chief Gray Eagle, and John Williamson, of Genoa, one of the few white men to make this long journey with the red men. Gray Eagle made one trip back here in 1879, visiting the spot that is now Fullerton—then only a few rude shacks.

Uppermost in Gray Eagle's mind had always been the desire to return and see what changes civilization had brought. In 1913 he was sent to St. Louis as a delegate to the Baptist convention, after which he decided to visit the old scenes. From St. Louis he went to Chicago and from that city he came to Genoa.

"I have always wanted to see if I could locate the exact spot of my birth," said Gray Eagle, in perfect English, as he talked to us on this last visit, "and I have been successful in my undertaking. I found it last week, three miles this side of Genoa. I was born in a little, round mud-house, and although the house is long since gone, I discovered the circular mound that had been its foundation. I stood upon the very spot where I was born, and as I looked out over the slopes and valleys that had once been ours; at the corn and wheat growing upon the ground that had once been our hunting grounds; at the quietly flowing streams that we had used so often for watering places in the days so long gone by; my heart was very sad. Yet I've found that spot and am satisfied. I can now go back to the South and feel that my greatest desire has been granted." [195]

When asked if the Indians of today followed many of the customs of their ancestors, he answered that they did not. Occasionally the older Indians, in memory of the days of their supremacy, dressed themselves to correspond and acted as in other days, but the younger generation knows nothing of those things and is as the white man. In Oklahoma they go to school, later engage in farming or enter business. "Civilization has done much for them," said Gray Eagle. "They are hard workers and have ambitions to accomplish great things and be better citizens. Only we old Indians, who remember the strenuous times of the early days, have the wild blood in our veins. The younger ones have never even seen a buffalo."

Then he told of his early life in the county and related interesting stories of the past—Gray Eagle, the Indian chief, and John Williamson, the pioneer, talking together, at times, in a tongue that to us was strange, but to them an echo of a very real past.

The Loup he called Potato Water, because of the many wild potatoes that formerly grew upon its banks. Horse creek he remembered as Skeleton Water, the Pawnees one time having fought a band of Sioux on its banks. They were victorious but lost many warriors. Their own dead they buried, leaving the bodies of their enemies to decay in the sun. Soon the banks of the creek were strewn with skeletons and ever after the creek was known to the Indians as Skeleton Water. The Cedar was known as Willow creek, Council creek as the Skidi, and the Beaver as the Sandburr. [196]

LOVERS' LEAP

BY MRS. A. P. JARVIS

I pause before I reach the verge
And look, with chilling blood, below;
Some dread attraction seems to urge
Me nearer to the brink to go.
The hunting red men used to force
The buffalo o'er this frightful steep;

They could not check their frantic course;
By following herds pressed down they leap,

Then lie a bleeding, mangled mass
Beside the little stream below.
Their red blood stained the waving grass,
The brook carnation used to flow.
Yet a far more pathetic tale
The Pawnees told the pioneer
Of dusky maid and stripling pale
Who found in death a refuge here.

The youth had been a captive long,
Yet failed to friendly favor find;
He oft was bound with cruel thong,
Yet Noma to the lad was kind.
She was the chieftain's only child,
As gentle as the cooing dove.
Pure was this daughter of the wild;
The pale-face lad had won her love.

Her father, angered at her choice,
Had bid'n her wed a chieftain brave;
She answered with a trembling voice,
"I'd rather lie within my grave."
The day before the appointed eve
When Wactah was to claim his bride,
The maid was seen the camp to leave—
The pale-face youth was by her side.

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She led him to this dangerous place
That on the streamlet's glee doth frown;
The sunlight, gleaming on her face,
Her wild, dark beauty seemed to crown.
"Dear youth," exclaimed the dusky maid,
"I've brought thee here thy faith to prove:
If thou of death art not afraid,
We'll sacrifice our lives to love."

Hand linked in hand they looked below,
Then, headlong, plunged adown the steep.
The Pawnees from that hour of woe
Have named the place The Lovers' Leap.

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EARLY INDIAN HISTORY

BY MRS. SARAH CLAPP

In 1843 Mr. and Mrs. Lester W. Platt were first engaged in missionary work among the Pawnees, and in 1857 the government set aside a tract of land thirty miles by fifteen miles, in the rich

prairie soil of Nance county, for their use; and when the Indian school was established at Genoa, Mrs. Platt was made matron or superintendent.

My mother taught in this school during the years 1866-67. She found the work interesting, learned much of the customs and legends of the Pawnees and grew very fond of that noble woman, Mrs. Platt, who was able to tell thrilling stories of her experiences during her mission work among the members of that tribe.

At the time my mother taught in the Genoa school, the Sioux, who were the greatest enemies of the Pawnees, on account of wanting to hunt in the same territory, were supposed to be friendly with the settlers, but drove away their horses and cattle and stole everything in sight, furnishing much excitement.

My father, Captain S. E. Cushing, accompanied my uncle, Major Frank North, on a number of expeditions against the hostile Indians, during the years 1869 until 1877. He was with Major North at the time of the famous charge on the village of the Cheyennes, when the notorious chief, Tall Bull, was killed by my uncle.

In 1856, when Frank North came to Nebraska, a young boy, he mingled fearlessly with the Indians along the Missouri in the region of Omaha, where our family first settled, learning their mode of warfare and living, and their language, which he spoke as fluently as his mother tongue. In 1861 he took a position as clerk and interpreter at the Pawnee reservation and by 1863 he had become known as a daring scout.

The next year the building of the Union Pacific railroad was started, and as the work progressed westward the fierce Arapahoes, Cheyennes, and Sioux began attacking the laborers, until it seemed deadly peril to venture outside the camps. It was useless to call on the regular troops for help as the government needed them all to hold in check the armies of Lee and Johnston. A clipping from the Washington *Sunday Herald*, on this subject, states that "a happy thought occurred to Mr. Oakes Ames," the main spirit of the work. He sent a trusty agent to hunt up Frank North, who was then twenty-four years old. "What can be done to protect our working parties, Mr. North?" said Mr. Ames. "I have an idea," Mr. North answered. "If the authorities at Washington will allow me to organize a battalion of Pawnees and mount and equip them, I will undertake to picket your entire line and keep off other Indians.

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"The Pawnees are the natural enemies of all the tribes that are giving you so much trouble, and a little encouragement and drill will make them the best irregular horse you could desire."

This plan was new but looked feasible. Accordingly Mr. Ames went to Washington, and, after some effort, succeeded in getting permission to organize a battalion of four hundred Pawnee warriors, who should be armed as were the U.S. cavalry and drilled in such simple tactics as the service required, and my uncle was commissioned a major of volunteers and ordered to command them. The newspaper clipping also says: "It would be difficult to estimate the service of Major North in money value." General Crook once said, in speaking of him, "Millions of government property and hundreds of lives were saved by him on the line of the Union Pacific railroad, and on the Nebraska, Wyoming, and Montana frontiers."

There is much to be said in his praise, but I did not intend writing a eulogy, rather to tell of the stories which have come down to me, with which he and my other relatives were so closely connected.

During the many skirmishes and battles fought by the Pawnees, under Major North, he never lost a man; moreover, on several different occasions he passed through such hair-breadth escapes that the Pawnees thought him invulnerable. In one instance, while pursuing the retreating enemy, he discovered that his command had fallen back and he was separated from them by over a mile. The enemy, discovering his plight, turned on him. He dismounted, being fully armed, and by using his horse as a breastwork he managed to reach his troops again, though his faithful horse was killed.

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This and many like experiences caused the Pawnees to believe that their revered leader led a charmed life. He never deceived them, and they loved to call him "Little Pawnee Le-Sharo" (Pawnee Chief), and so he was known as the White Chief of the Pawnees.

The coming of the railroad through the state, bringing thousands of settlers with household furnishings and machinery for tilling the soil, was of the greatest importance. It was concerning the guarding of that right of way that a writer for the *Horse World* has some interesting memories and devotes an article in a number in February, 1896, to the stories of Colonel W. F. Cody, Major Frank North, Captain Charles Morse, Captain Luther North, Captain Fred Mathews, and my father, Captain S. E. Cushing. The correspondent was under my father, in Company B, during one of the scouting expeditions, when the company was sent to guard O'Fallon's Bluffs, west of Fort McPherson on the Union Pacific. He tells much more of camp activities and of his initiation into border life than of the skirmishes or scouting trips. He was fond of horses and tells of a memorable race in which a horse of Buffalo Bill's was beaten by my father's horse "Jack."

My uncle, Captain Luther North, who also commanded a company of scouts at that time, now resides in Omaha.

While yet a boy he freighted between Omaha and Columbus and carried the mail, by pony, during a period when my grandmother felt that when she bade him good-bye in the morning she might never see him again, so unsettled was the feeling about the Indians. He was intimately acquainted with every phase of Indian life. He knew their pastimes and games, work of the medicine men and magicians, and especially was he familiar with many of their legends. I am happy to have been one of the children who often gathered 'round him to listen to the tales of his own experiences or stories told him by the red men.

One personal experience in the family happened before the building of the railroad, probably in sixty-one or sixty-two. A number of men, accompanied by the wives of two of them, went to put up hay for the government, on land located between Genoa and Monroe. One night the Indians surrounded their camp, presumably to drive away their stock. Naturally the party rebelled, and during the melee which followed Adam Smith and another man were killed and one of the women, Mrs. Murray, was wounded but saved herself by crawling away through the tall grass. The recital of this trouble grew in magnitude the farther it traveled, until people grew frantic with fear, believing it to mean an uprising of the Sioux. The settlers from Shell creek and all directions, bringing horses, cattle, and even their fowls, together with personal belongings, flocked into the village of Columbus for mutual protection. My mother, then a young girl, describes the first night as one of much confusion.

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Some of the fugitives were sheltered with friends, others camped in the open. Animals, feeling as strange as did their masters, were bawling or screeching, and no one could sleep, as the greatest excitement prevailed.

"They built a stockade of upright posts about eight feet high, around the town," says my uncle Luther, thinking that as the Indians usually fought on horseback, this would be a great help if not a first-class fort.

They organized a militia company and men were detailed for guard duty and stationed at different points along the stockade, so serious seemed the situation. One night Luther North and two other young men were sent on picket duty outside the stockade. They took their horses and blankets and went up west of town about half a mile, to keep an eye on the surrounding country. A Mr. Needham had gone up to his farm (now the John Dawson farm) that day, and did not return until it was getting dark. The guards thought it would be great fun to give him a little scare, so as he approached they wrapped themselves in their blankets, mounted, and rode down under a bank. Just as he passed they came up in sight and gave the Indian war whoop and started after him. He whipped his team into a run; they chased him, yelling at every step, but stopped a reasonable distance from the stockade and then went back. Mr. Needham gave graphic description of how

the Indians had chased him, which so upset the entire population that sleep was out of the question that night. Moreover he cautioned his wife in this wise: "Now, Christina, if the Indians come, it is everybody for himself, and you will have to skulk." This remark made by Mr. Needham became a byword, and even down into the next generation was a favorite saying and always provoked a smile. The young guards had no fear whatever of marauding Indians, and, blissfully unaware of the commotion they had aroused, went back up the road to a melon patch, ate a sufficient amount of the luscious fruit, picketed their horses, wrapped themselves in their blankets, and lay them down to pleasant dreams. The next morning they rode into town and reported no red men in sight. After a few weeks, when there was no further evidence of trouble from the savages, the people gradually dispersed to their homes and farms which were, by that time, much in need of attention. [202]



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Mrs. Oreal S. Ward Ninth State Regent, Nebraska Society, Daughters of the American Revolution. 1909-1910

THE BLIZZARD OF 1888

BY MINNIE FREEMAN PENNEY

On January 12, 1888, the states of Nebraska and South Dakota were visited by a blizzard so fierce and cruel and death-dealing that residents of those sections cannot speak of it even now without an involuntary shudder.

The storm burst with great suddenness and fury, and many there were who did not live to tell the story of their suffering. And none suffered more keenly than did the occupants of the prairie schoolhouses. Teachers and pupils lost their lives or were terribly maimed. The great storm indicated most impressively the measure of danger and trial that must be endured by the country school teacher in the isolated places on the frontier.

Three Nebraska country school teachers—Loie Royce of Plainfield, Etta Shattuck of Holt county, and Minnie Freeman of Mira Valley, were the subjects of much newspaper writing.

Miss Royce had nine pupils. Six went home for luncheon and remained on account of the storm. The three remaining pupils with the teacher stayed in the schoolhouse until three o'clock. Their fuel gave out, and as her boarding house was but fifteen rods away, the teacher decided to take the children home with her.

In the fury of the storm they wandered and were lost. Darkness came, and with it death. One little boy sank into the eternal silence. The brave little teacher stretched herself out on the cold ground and cuddled the two remaining ones closer. Then the other little boy died and at daylight the spirit of the little girl, aged seven, fluttered away, leaving the young teacher frozen and dumb with agony. Loie Royce "hath done what she could; angels can do no better." Miss Royce lost both feet by amputation.

Etta Shattuck, after sending her children home (all living near) tried to go to her home. Losing her way, she took refuge in a haystack, where she remained, helpless and hungry Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, suffering intensely and not able to move. She lived but a short time after her terrible experience. [204]

Minnie Freeman was teaching in Mira Valley, Valley county. She had in her charge seventeen pupils. Finding it impossible to remain in the schoolhouse, she took the children with her to her boarding place almost a mile from the schoolhouse.

Words are useless in the effort to portray that journey to the safe shelter of the farmhouse, with the touching obedience of the children to every word of direction—rather *felt* than *heard*, in that fierce winding-sheet of ice and snow. How it cut and almost blinded them! It was terrible on their eyes. They beat their way onward, groping blindly in the darkness, with the visions of life and death ever before the young teacher responsible for the destiny of seventeen souls.

All reached the farmhouse and were given a nice warm supper prepared by the hostess and the teacher, and comfortable beds provided.

Minnie Freeman was unconscious of anything heroic or unusual. Doing it in the simple line of duty to those placed in her care, she still maintains that it was the trust placed in the Great Spirit who guides and cares for His own which led the little band—

"Through the desert and illimitable air,
Lone wandering, but not lost."

AN ACROSTIC

Written to Miss Minnie Freeman in 1888 by Mrs. Ellis of St. Paul, Nebraska. Mrs. Ellis was then seventy-eight years old—now deceased

'Midst driving winds and blinding snows,
Impending dangers round her close;
No shelter from the blast and sleet,
No earthly help to guide her feet.
In God alone she puts her trust,
Ever to guide the brave and just.

Fierce and loud the awful storm,
Racking now her slender form,
Eager to save the little band
Entrusted to her guiding hand. [205]
Marshalled her host, see, forth she goes
And falters not while tempest blows;
Now God alone can help, she knows.

See them falling as they go;
Angry winds around them blow.
Is there none to hear their cry?
Now her strength will almost fail;
Tranquil, she braves the fearful gale.

Preëminent her name shall stand,
A beacon light o'er all the land,
Unrivalled on the page of time;
Let song and story swell the chime. [206]

EARLY DAYS IN NANCE COUNTY

BY MRS. ELLEN SAUNDERS WALTON

In 1872, after passing through a great sorrow, a longing came to me to enter the missionary field among the Indians. At that time the Pawnee tribe was located on their reservation, now Nance county, and I was sent to work among them. It was interesting, at the same time sad and depressing, to witness the degeneration and savagery of tribal life; and oftentimes it was seemingly hopeless to civilize and christianize them.

In 1874 the Pawnees were removed by the government to Indian territory, now Oklahoma, and the reservation was thrown on the market. This became Nance county, and a new order of things followed. Settlers came to the little hamlet of Genoa, that had been first settled by the Mormons in 1857, and though later given over to the Indians, it was one of the oldest towns in Nebraska.

A church was established under the care of the New England Congregational Mission and Rev. Charles Starbuck was put in charge. A small farmhouse where travelers could be accommodated, and a few homes of those who had bought land, comprised the village life. This freedom from restraint was indeed new to one accustomed to the rush of busy life in New York. Daily rides over

the prairie on my pony were a delight.

It was wonderful how many cultured people drifted into the almost unknown western country. It was not infrequent to see in humble sod houses shelves filled with standard books and writings of the best authors. This was the second wave of population, and though many things had to be sacrificed that in the old life were considered necessary to comfort, pioneer life had its happy features. One especially was the kindly expression of helpfulness in time of sickness or sorrow. The discomforts and self denials and the longing for dear ones far away grow dim and faded! only memories of pleasant hours remain. Then came the third wave of men and women settling all around, bringing fashion and refining influences, and entertainment of various kinds. Churches, elevators, banks, and business houses were built and Nance county began to show the march of civilization and progress. Where first we knew the flower-gemmed prairie, modern homes spring up and good roads follow the trails of the Indian and the hunter. [207] [208]

THE PAWNEE CHIEF'S FAREWELL

BY CHAUNCEY LIVINGSTON WILTSE

As I strolled alone, when the day had flown,
Through the once Pawnee reserve,
Where the memories keep of the brave asleep
By the winding Cedar's curve—
Methought the leaves of the old oak trees
'Neath the sheltering hill-range spoke,
And they said: "It's here that hearts knew no fear,
Where arose the Pawnee smoke!

"In the eventide, when all cares subside,
Is the hour the tribe liked best;
When the gold of day crossed the hills away,
And, like those who tried, found rest.
O'er this Lovers' Leap, where now shadows creep,
Strode the chief, in thought, alone—
And he said: "Trees true, and all stars in view,
And you very winds my own!

"I soon shall pass, like the blades of grass,
Where the wandering shadows go;
Only leaves will tell what my tribe did well—
But you Hearts of Oak—you know!
To those Hunting Grounds that are never found
Shall my tribe, in time, depart;
Then it will be you to tell who were true,
With the dawn-song in their heart!

"You will sing a song, with the winds along,
How the Pawnee loved these hills!
Here he loved to stray, all the wind-glad day—
In his heart the wind sings still!
You will whisper, too, how he braved the Sioux,

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How life's days he did his part;
Though not understood, how he wished but good,
With but love within his heart!

"The White Father's call reaches us, and all
To his South Wind land we fly,
Yet we fain would stay with you hills away—
It is hard to say good-bye!
You, our fatherland, we could once command,
We are driven from, so fast;
But you hills away in our hearts will stay
And be with us at the last!

"Here we took our stand for our fatherland,
Here our sons to manhood grew;
Here their loves were found, where these hills surround—
Here the winds sang to them, too!
By this Cedar's side, where the waters glide,
We went forth to hunt and dream;
Here we felt the spell of you oaks as well,
And felt all that love may seem!

"Here we felt the pang of the hot wind tang,
Here we felt the blizzard's breath;
Here we faced the foe, as the stars all know—
Here we saw the face of Death!
Here we braved the wrath of the lightning's path,
Here we dared starvation's worst;
Here tonight we stand, for our fatherland,
Banished from what was ours—first!

"Bravely we obey, and will go away;
The White Father wills it so;
But our thoughts will roam to this dawntime home
Where our fathers sleep, below!
And some shining day, beyond white men's sway,
We will meet our long-lost own—
Where you singing winds and the dawn begins,
One will say, "Come in—come home!"

"Just beyond you hills, the Rest Land still
Is waiting for us all;
At earth's sunset hour One will wake each flower,
And us home will softly call!
Trees and stream, good-bye! Now our parting's nigh;
Know you memory's sweet to me!
Though our footsteps go, you may always know
You've the heart of each Pawnee!"

"As the chief passed by, stars filled the sky,
And the moonlight softest fell—
But the night winds said, 'Peace is overhead!'
And the hills said, 'All is well!'"

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MY TRIP WEST IN 1861

BY SARAH SCHOOLEY RANDALL

In 1857 my brother, Charles A. Schooley, landed at Brownville and soon after purchased several tracts of land near there, one being the old home of Church Howe and adjoining the present site of the village of Howe. Incidentally, my husband's father, N. G. Randall, three years later purchased land within three miles—known later as Bedford.

In 1860, while my brother was visiting his old home, White Deer Valley, near Williamsport, Pennsylvania, the smoldering flames of adventure were kindled in my mind which nothing but a trip west could quench. On March 1, 1861, we left Williamsport by train from Pittsburgh and on arriving there went to the Monongahela hotel, then a magnificent building. Abe Lincoln had just left the hotel, much to our disappointment. After a few days we engaged passage on the *Argonaut* to St. Louis via the Monongahela, the Ohio, and the Mississippi rivers. Our experiences were varied and exciting enough to meet my expectations. During one night we stood tied to a tree and another night the pumps were kept going to keep us from sinking. Small consolation we got from the captain's remark that this was "the last trip for this old hulk." We had ample time for seeing all the important cities along the shore—Cincinnati, Louisville, etc.

Arriving at St. Louis we took passage on a new boat, *Sunshine*, and set sail upstream. Perhaps we felt a few pangs of fear as we neared the real pioneer life. We changed boats again at St. Joe and then our trip continued, now up the treacherous Missouri. Every now and then we struck a snag which sent the dishes scurrying from the table. I am reminded that this trip was typical of our lives: floating downstream is easy but upstream is where we strike the snags.

Of our valued acquaintances met on the trip were Rev. and Mrs. Barrette, the former a Presbyterian minister coming to Brownville, and our friendship continued after reaching our destination. Arriving in Brownville, we went to the McPherson hotel, where we continued to hear disturbing rumors about the coming civil war. [212]

After a few days we took a carriage and went west ten miles over the beautiful rolling prairies to our ranch. I was charmed with the scene, which was vastly different from the mountains and narrow winding valleys of Pennsylvania, and was determined to stay, though my brother had lost his enthusiasm and gave me two weeks to change my mind. Many a homesick spell I had when I would have very quickly returned to my father's home of peace and plenty, but the danger of travel detained me. I assured my brother that if he would only stay I would be very brave and economical. I only wanted five small rooms plainly furnished and a horse and carriage. When the place was ready we left Brownville in a big wagon, drawn by oxen, and fortified by a load of provisions. When we came in sight of our bungalow it proved to be a one-room, unpainted and unplastered edifice, but I soon overcame that defect by the use of curtains, and as all lived alike then, we were content with our surroundings. Our first callers were three hundred Indians on an expedition. I had been reading extensively about Indians, so knew when I saw their squaws and papooses with them that they were friendly—in fact, rather too familiar.

My brother fenced his land and planted it in corn and all kinds of vegetables. The season being favorable there was an abundant crop, both cultivated and wild. The timber abounded with grapes, plums, nuts, etc., and strawberries on the prairies. We had a well of fine water, a good cellar or cave, and a genuine "creampot" cow. Instead of a carriage I had a fine saddle horse (afterwards sold to a captain in the army), and how we did gallop over the prairies! One of my escapades was to a neighbor's home ten miles away for ripe tomatoes. In lieu of a sack we tied together the neck and sleeves of a calico wrapper, filled it with the tomatoes, then tied the bottom

and balanced it astride the horse in front of me. Going through the tall slough grass in one place near Sheridan, now Auburn, the horse became frantic with heat and flies and attempted to run away. The strings gave way and the tomatoes scattered. Finally the saddle turned and the well-trained horse stopped. An inventory revealed one sleeve full of tomatoes remaining.

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Among our near neighbors were Mr. and Mrs. Milo Gates and family, and Mr. and Mrs. Engle. Mrs. Gates's cheerful optimism made this pioneer life not only possible but enjoyable.

After five months, my brother joined the army and went south as a captain; was several times promoted, and stayed all through the war. A year after I went back to Brownville to stay until the war was over, and there made many valued acquaintances: Senator Tipton's sister, Mrs. Atkinson, Judge Wheeler, H. C. Lett, the McCrearys, Hackers, Whitneys, Carsons, Dr. Guin, Furnas, Johnson, etc. About this time the citizens gave a party for the boys who enlisted, and there I met E. J. Randall, whom I married soon after he returned from the army. Of the four Randall brothers who enlisted one was killed, one wounded, and one taken prisoner. Two of them still live, Dr. H. L. Randall of Aurora, forty-seven years a practicing physician in Nebraska and at one time surgeon at the Soldiers' Home, Grand Island; and A. D. Randall of Chapman, Nebraska, who enlisted at the age of sixteen and served all through the war.

After a college course of four years my husband entered the ministry and served for twenty-five years in Nebraska, except for one year of mission work at Cheyenne, Wyoming. The itinerant life is not unlike the pioneer life and brought with it the bitter and sweet as well, but the bitter was soon forgotten and blessed memories remain of the dear friends scattered all over the state of Nebraska, and indeed to the ends of the earth.

Dr. Wharton said when paying his tribute to my departed husband, "He still lives on in the lives of those to whom he has ministered." Our children are Charles H. Randall of Los Angeles, California, member of congress, and Mrs. Anna Randall Pope of Lincoln, Nebraska.

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STIRRING EVENTS ALONG THE LITTLE BLUE

BY CLARENDON E. ADAMS

Painting a Buffalo

The following narrative of Albert Bierstadt's visit to what is now Nuckolls county, Nebraska, was told to me by Mr. E. S. Comstock, a pioneer of the county. Mr. Comstock made his first settlement in this county at Oak Grove, in 1858, and was in charge of the Oak Grove ranch when this incident took place.

In 1863 Mr. Bierstadt returned from the Pacific coast via the Overland stage route, which was then conducted by Russell, Majors & Waddell, the pioneer stage and pony expressmen of the plains. Arriving at Oak Grove ranch, Mr. Bierstadt and his traveling companion, a Mr. Dunlap, correspondent of the *New York Post*, decided to stop a few days and have a buffalo hunt. In company with E. S. Comstock, his son George, and a neighbor by the name of Eubanks, who was killed by the Indians the next year, they proceeded to the Republican Valley and camped the first night in the grove on Lost creek, now known as Lincoln Park. The following morning the party proceeded up the river to the farm now owned by Frank Schmeling. Here they discovered a large herd of buffalo grazing along the creek to the west and covering the prairies to the north for several miles. Mr. Comstock says that it was one of the largest herds of buffalo he had ever encountered and that Mr. Bierstadt became greatly excited and said, "Now, boys, is our time for fun. I want to see an enraged wounded buffalo. I want to see him so mad that he will bellow and

tear up the ground." Mr. Comstock said they arranged for the affray: Mr. Bierstadt was to take his position on a small knoll to the east of the herd, fix himself with his easel so that he could sketch the landscape and the grazing bison, and when this was done the wounding of one of the buffalo bulls was to take place.

Bierstadt was stationed on a small knoll in plain view of the herd; Mr. Eubanks was stationed in a draw near Bierstadt, in order to protect him from the charges of the buffalo, if necessary. George Comstock was to select a buffalo bull from the herd and wound him and then tantalize him by shaking a red blanket at him until he was thoroughly enraged, then he was to give him another wound from his rifle and lead out in the direction of Mr. Bierstadt. [215]

The wounded buffalo became furious and charged Comstock's horse repeatedly, but Comstock, being an expert horseman, evaded the fierce charges and was all the time coming nearer to Bierstadt. When within about three hundred yards Comstock whirled his horse to the side of the maddened monster. As a buffalo does not see well out of the side of his eyes on account of the long shaggy hair about the face, Comstock was lost to his view. The infuriated animal tossed his head high in air and the only thing he saw was Bierstadt. Onward he rushed toward the artist, pawing the ground and bellowing furiously. Bierstadt called for help and took to his heels. The buffalo struck the easel and sent it in splinters through the air. Onward he rushed after the fleeing artist, who was making the best time of his life. Mr. Comstock said he was running so fast that his coat tails stuck so straight out that you could have played a game of euchre on them. The buffalo was gaining at every jump.

At this point in his story Mr. Comstock became greatly excited. He was standing on the identical spot telling me the story, and was living the exciting scene over again. "Why," he said, "I thought Eubanks never would shoot. I was scared. The buffalo nearly had his horns under Bierstadt's coat tail. He was snorting froth and blood all over him, but the gun cracked and the buffalo fell and Bierstadt was so overcome he fell at the same time entirely exhausted, but saved from a fearful death." When he recovered sufficiently to talk, he said, "That's enough; no more wounded buffalo for me." Mr. Bierstadt was several days recovering from his fearful experience, but while he was recovering, he was painting the picture. "Mr. Dunlap, the correspondent, wrote a graphic and vivid pen picture of the exciting scene," said Mr. Comstock; "but when Mr. Bierstadt finished his picture of the infuriated charging buffalo and the chase, the pen picture was not in it."

This was the painting that brought Bierstadt into prominence as an artist. It was exhibited at the first Chicago exhibition and was sold for \$75,000. I saw the picture in Chicago before I heard Mr. Comstock's narrative, and as I was one of the owners of El Capitan Rancho, the landscape of the famous painting, I fixed his story vividly upon my memory. Mr. Mike Woerner now owns a portion of El Capitan Rancho, the landscape of this famous painting. A portion of this original painting is embraced in Mr. Bierstadt's masterpiece, "The Last of the Buffalo." [216]

An Indian Raid

The settlement of the section now included in Nuckolls county was attended with more privation and suffering from Indian raids and depredations than any other county in the state of Nebraska. The great Indian raids of August 7, 1864, extended from Denver, Colorado, to Gage county, Nebraska, at which time every stage station and settlement along the entire line of the Overland trail was included in that skilfully planned attack. A certain number of warriors were assigned to each place and the attack was simultaneous along the line for four hundred miles in extent.

The Oak Grove ranch was among the most formidable in fortifications and a band of forty well-armed braves was sent to capture and destroy it. On the day of the attack G. S. Comstock, owner of Oak Grove ranch, was away from home; but besides his family there were five men at the stockade. The Indians came to the ranch about mid-day in a friendly attitude. They had left their ponies about a quarter of a mile away. They asked for something to eat and were permitted to come into the house with their guns and bows and arrows on their persons. They finished their

dinner and each received a portion of tobacco and some matches. Then without any warning they turned upon the inmates of the ranch yelling and shooting like demons, and only for the quickness and great presence of mind of one of the Comstock boys the whites would all have been killed or taken away captives to submit to the cruelty of the savage foe.

A Mr. Kelly, from Beatrice, was there and was the first to fall pierced with an arrow. He had a navy revolver in his belt. The Indians rushed for it but young Comstock was too quick for them and seized the revolver first and shot down the leader of the braves. Seeing the fate of their leader, the Indians rushed to the door in great fright. The revolver was in skilful hands and three [217] more of the braves went down under the unerring aim of young Comstock. Kelly and Butler were both killed outright. Two men by the name of Ostrander and a boy were wounded. All the other occupants of the ranch had their clothes pierced with arrows or bullets.

The Indians ran to their ponies, and while they were away planning another attack, the wounded were cared for as best they could. The doors were securely barred and the living were stationed in the most advantageous places for defense. The friendly game of the Indians had not worked as they expected, but they were not daunted and soon they encircled the house, riding, shooting, and yelling. This fiendish warfare they kept up all the afternoon. They tried several times to set the buildings on fire but shots from experienced marksmen, both men and women, kept them at bay.

The new leader of the Indians rode a white pony and seemed at times to work his warriors up to great desperation, and young Comstock made up his mind to shoot him the next time that he appeared. It was now too dark to distinguish one man from another. Mr. Comstock, senior, was mounted on a white horse and he was enroute home about the time the Indians were expected to return. The vigilant son raised his gun, took aim, and was about to shoot, when one of the girls, remembering that her father rode a white horse, called out, "Father, is it you?" An affirmative answer came back just in time to prevent the fatal shot which would have followed in an instant more. Mr. Comstock had ridden through the Indian lines, while returning to his ranch, unmolested. He said to me he believed the Indians spared his life that evening on account of favors he had always granted them.

Five miles east of the Comstock ranch that day a boy eighteen years old by the name of Ulig was met by two Indians. One of them shook hands with him while the other pierced his body with a spear and then scalped him and left him writhing in the broiling sun to die on the prairie. This savage and brutal act was followed by others unparalleled even in savage warfare. Four miles above Oak Grove at a place called the Narrows on the Little Blue river, lived a family of ten persons by the name of Eubanks. They were from the East and knew nothing of Indians' cruel warfare and when they were attacked they left their cabin and ran for the trees and brush along [218] the river banks. Nine of them were murdered in the most brutal manner: scalped and stripped of their clothing. Two of the women, Mrs. Eubanks, with a young babe in her arms, and Laura Roper, a school teacher who was there on a visit, were the only ones who arrived at a place of concealment and would have escaped had not the babe from heat and fright cried out. The practiced ear of the Indians caught the sound and they were made captives and subjected to the most inhuman and beastly treatment by the horrible savages. After the mother was made a captive the baby cried from hunger. The mother was so famished she could not nourish the babe but held it fondly in her arms trying to soothe it; and one of the merciless savages stepped up and brained it with his tomahawk. No pen or brush can tell the horrors of this diabolical deed.

The two women were subjected to six months of bondage impossible to describe. I was telling this story one day to the late Captain Henry E. Palmer of Omaha, and learned from him that he and his command of soldiers and Pawnee scouts followed these inhuman wretches over the plains trying to bring them to bay, and finally down on the Solomon river in Kansas captured some of the Indian chiefs and succeeded in exchanging them for the two women captives.

This is one of the terrible chapters in the early settlement of Nuckolls county and was graphically detailed to me by Mr. Comstock soon after I settled in the county. [219]

MY LAST BUFFALO HUNT

BY J. STERLING MORTON

(Read before the Nebraska State Historical Society, January 10, 1899)

Among all the glowing and glorious autumns of the forty-odd which I have enjoyed in clear-skied Nebraska, the most delicious, dreamy, and tranquil was that of 1861. The first day of October in that year surpassed in purity of air, clouds, and coloring all the other October days in my whole life. The prairies were not a somber brown, but a gorgeous old-gold; and there drifted in the dry, crisp atmosphere lace-like fragments of opalescent clouds which later in the afternoon gave the horizon the look of a far-away ocean upon which one could see fairy ships, and upon its farther-away shores splendid castles, their minarets and towers tipped with gold. The indolence of savagery saturated every inhalation, and all physical exertion except in the hunt or chase seemed repellent, irksome, and unendurable.

Then it was that—like an evolution from environment—the desire and impulse to go upon a buffalo hunt seized upon and held and encompassed and dominated every fibre of my physical, every ambition and aspiration of my mental, make-up. Controlled by this spontaneous reincarnation of the barbaric tastes and habits of some nomadic ancestor of a prehistoric generation, arrangements for an excursion to Fort Kearny on the Platte (Colonel Alexander, of the regular army, then in command) were completed. With food rations, tent and camping furniture, and arms and ammunition, and pipes and tobacco, and a few drops of distilled rye (to be used only when snake-bitten), a light one-horse wagon drawn by a well-bred horse which was driven by the writer, was early the next morning leaving Arbor Lodge, and briskly speeding westward on the "Overland Trail" leading to California. And what rare roads there were in those buoyant days of the pioneers! All the prairies, clear across the plains from the Missouri river to the mountains, were perfectly paved with solid, tough, but elastic sod. And no asphalt or block-paved avenue or well-worked pike can give the responsive pressure to the touch of a human foot or a horse-hoof that came always from those smooth and comely trails. Especially in riding on horseback were the felicities of those primitive prairie roads emphasized and accentuated. Upon them one felt the magnetism and life of his horse; they animated and electrified him with the vigor and spirit of the animal until in elation, the rider became, at least emotionally, a centaur—a semi-horse human. The invigoration and exaltation of careering over undulating prairies on a beautiful, speedy, and spirited horse thrilled every sense and satisfied, as to exhilaration, by physical exercise, the entire mental personality. Nature's roads in Nebraska are unequaled by any of their successors.

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This excursion was in a wagon without springs; and after driving alone, as far as the Weeping Water crossing, I overtook an ox train loaded with goods and supplies for Gilman's ranch on the Platte away beyond Fort Kearny.

One of the proprietors, Mr. Jed Gilman, was in command of the outfit, and by his cordial and hospitable invitation I became his willing and voracious guest for the noonday meal. With a township for a dining room over which arched the turquoise-colored sky, like a vaulted ceiling, frescoed with clouds of fleecy white, we sat down upon our buffalo robes to partake of a hearty meal. There was no white settler within miles of our camp. The cry of "Dinner is now ready in the next car" had never been heard west of the Mississippi river nor even dreamed of in the East. The bill of fare was substantial: bacon fried, hot bread, strong coffee, stronger raw onions, and roasted potatoes. And the appetite which made all exquisitely palatable and delicious descended to us out of the pure air and the exhilaration of perfect health. And then came the post-prandial pipe—how

fragrant and solacing its fumes—from Virginia natural leaf, compared to which the exhalations from a perfecto cigar are today a disagreeable stench. There was then the leisure to smoke, the liberty and impulse to sing, to whoop, and to generally simulate the savages into whose hunting grounds we were making an excursion. Life lengthened out before us like the Overland route to the Pacific in undulations of continuously rising hillocks and from the summit of each one scaled we saw a similarly attractive one beyond in a seemingly never-ending pathway of pleasure, ambition, and satisfaction. The gold of the Pacific coast was not more real then than the invisible possibilities of life, prosperity, success, and contentment which were to teem, thrive, and abound upon these prairies which seemed only farms asleep or like thoughts unuttered—books unopened. [221]

But the smoke over, the oxen again yoked to the wagons and the train, like a file of huge white beetles, lumbered along to the songs, swearing, and whip-crackings of the drivers toward the crossing of Salt creek. However, by my persuasive insistence, Mr. Gilman left his wagon boss in charge and getting into my wagon accompanied me. Together we traveled briskly until quite late at night when we made camp at a point near where the town of Wahoo now stands. There was a rough ranch cabin there, and we remained until the following morning, when we struck out at a brisk trot toward Fort Kearny, entering the Platte Valley at McCabe's ranch. The day and the road were perfect. We made good time. At night we were entertained at Warfield's, on the Platte. The water in the well there was too highly flavored to be refreshing. Nine skunks had been lifted out of it the day of our arrival and only Platte river water could be had, which we found rather stale for having been hauled some distance in an old sorghum cask. But fatigue and a square meal are an innocent opiate and we were soon fast asleep under the open sky with the moon and stars only to hear how loudly a big ranchman can snore in a bedroom of a million or more acres. In the morning of our third day out, we were up, breakfasted with the sunrise, and drove on over the then untried railroad bed of the Platte Valley at a rattling gait. The stanch and speedy animal over which the reins were drawn, a splendid bay of gentle birth, had courage and endurance by heredity, and thus we made time. Ranches were from twenty to thirty miles apart. And the night of the third day found us at Mabin's.

This was a hotel, feed barn, dry goods establishment, and saloon all under one roof, about thirty miles from Fort Kearny. After a reasonably edible supper, Mr. Gilman and I were escorted to the saloon and informed that we could repose and possibly sleep in the aisle which divided it from the granary which was filled with oats. Our blankets and buffalo robes were soon spread out in this narrow pathway. On our right were about two hundred bushels of oats in bulk, and on our left the counter which stood before variously shaped bottles containing alleged gin, supposed whiskey, and probable brandy. We had not been long in a recumbent position before—instead of sleep gently creeping over us—we experienced that we were race courses and grazing grounds for innumerable myriads of sand fleas. Immediately Gilman insisted that we should change our apartment and go out on the prairies near a haystack; but I stubbornly insisted that, as the fleas had not bitten me, I would continue indoors. Thereupon Gilman incontinently left, and then the fleas with vicious vigor and voracity assaulted me. The bites were sharp, they were incisive and decisive. They came in volleys. Then in wrath I too arose from that lowly but lively couch between the oats and the bar and sullenly went out under the starlit sky to find Mr. Gilman energetically whipping his shirt over a wagon wheel to disinfest it from fleas. But the sand fleas of the Platte are not easily discharged or diverted, from a fair and juicy victim. They have a wonderful tenacity of purpose. They trotted and hopped and skipped along behind us to the haystack. They affectionately and fervidly abided with us on the prairie; and it is safe to say that there never were two human beings more thoroughly perforated, more persistently punctured with flea bites than were the two guests at Mabin's ranch during all that long and agonizing night. However, there came an end to the darkness and the attempt at sleep, and after an early breakfast we resumed the Fort Kearny journey to arrive at its end in the late afternoon of the fourth day. [222]

There I found Colonel Alexander, of the regular army, in command. John Heth, of Virginia, was the sutler for the post and after some consultation and advisement it was determined that we might without much danger from Indians go south to the Republican river for a buffalo hunt. At

that time the Cheyennes, who were a bloodthirsty tribe, were in arms against the white people and yearning for their scalps wherever found. But to avoid or mitigate dangers Colonel Alexander considerably detailed Lieutenant Bush with twelve enlisted men, all soldiers of experience in the Indian country, to go with us to the Republican Valley as an escort or guard—in military parlance, on detached service. Thus our party moved southward with ample force of arms for its defense.

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The four hunters of the expedition were Lieutenant Bush, John Heth, John Talbot (who had been honorably discharged from the regular army after some years of service) and myself. The excursion was massed and ready for departure at 8 o'clock on the bright morning of October 6, 1861. The course taken was nearly due south from the present site of Kearney city in Buffalo county. The expedition consisted of two large army wagons, four mules attached to each wagon, a light, two-horse spring wagon, and four trained riding horses experienced in the chase, together with twelve soldiers of the regular U. S. army and the gentlemen already named. It had not traveled more than twenty-five miles south of Fort Kearny before it came in view of an immense and seemingly uncountable herd of buffalo.

My first sight of these primitive beeves of the plains I shall never forget. They were so distant that I could not make out their individual forms and I at once jumped to the conclusion that they were only an innumerable lot of crows sitting about upon the knobs and hillocks of the prairies. But in a few moments, when we came nearer, they materialized and were, sure enough, real bellowing, snorting, wallowing buffaloes. At first they appeared to give no heed to our outfit, but after we saddled and mounted our horses and rode into their midst they began to scatter and to form into small bands, single file. The herd separated into long, black swaying strings and each string was headed by the best meat among its numbers. The leading animal was generally a three-year-old cow. Each of these strings, or single-file bands, ran in a general southeast direction and each of the four hunters—Bush, Heth, Talbot, and the writer—selected a string and went for the preëminent animal with enthusiasm, zeal, and impulsive foolhardiness.

In the beginning of the pell-mell, hurry-scurry race it seemed that it would be very easy to speedily overtake the desired individual buffalo that we intended to shoot and kill. The whole band seemed to run leisurely. They made a sort of sidewise gait, a movement such as one often sees in a dog running ahead of a wagon on a country road. Upon the level prairie we made very perceptible gains upon them, but when a declivity was reached and we made a down hill gallop we were obliged to rein in and hold up the horses, or take the chances of a broken leg or neck by being ditched in a badger or wolf hole. But the buffaloes with their heavy shoulders and huge hair-matted heads lumbered along down the incline with great celerity, gaining so much upon us that every now and then one of them would drop out from the line upon reaching an attractive depression, roll over two or three times in his "wallow," jump up and join his fleeing fellows before we could reach him.

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But finally after swinging and swaying hither and thither with the band or line as it swayed and swung, the lead animal was reached and with much exultation and six very nervous shots put to death. My trophy proved to be a buffalo cow of two or three years of age; and after she had dropped to the ground, a nimble calf, about three months old, evidently her progeny, began making circles around and around the dead mother and bleating pitifully, enlarging the circle each time, until at last it went out of sight onto the prairie and alone, all the other parts of the herd having scattered beyond the rising bluffs and far away.

That afternoon was fuller of tense excitement, savage enthusiasms, zeal and barbaric ambition than any other that could be assorted from my life of more than sixty years. There was a certain amount of ancestral heathenism aroused in every man, spurring a horse to greater swiftness, in that chase for large game. And there was imperial exultation of the primitive barbaric instinct when the game fell dead and its whooping captors surrounded its breathless carcass.

But the wastefulness of the buffalo hunter of those days was wicked beyond description and,

because of its utter recklessness of the future, wholly unpardonable. Only the hump, ribs, the tongue, and perhaps now and then one hind-quarter were saved for use from each animal. The average number of pounds of meat saved from each buffalo killed between the years 1860 and 1870 would not exceed twenty. In truth, thousands of buffaloes were killed merely to get their tongues and pelts. The inexcusable and unnecessary extermination of those beef-producing and very valuable fur-bearing animals only illustrates the extravagance of thoughtlessness and mental nearsightedness in the American people when dealing with practical and far-reaching questions. It also demonstrates, in some degree, the incapacity of the ordinary every-day law-makers of the United States. Game laws have seldom been enacted in any of the states before the virtual extinction of the game they purposed to protect. Here in Nebraska among big game were many hundreds of thousands of buffaloes, tens of thousands of elk and deer and antelope, while among smaller game the wild turkey and the prairie chicken were innumerable. But today Nebraska game is practically extinct. Even the prairie chicken and the wild turkey are seldom found anywhere along the Missouri bluffs in the southern and eastern part of the commonwealth. [225]

Looking back: what might have been accomplished for the conservation of game in the trans-Missouri country is suggested so forcibly that one wonders at the stupendous stupidity which indolently permitted its destruction.

The first night outward and southeastward from Fort Kearny we came to Turkey creek which empties into the Republican river. There, after dark, tents were pitched at a point near the place where the government in previous years established kilns and burned lime for the use of soldiers in building quarters for themselves and the officers at Fort Kearny which was constructed in 1847 by Stewart L. Van Vliet, now a retired brigadier general and the oldest living graduate of West Point. After a sumptuous feast of buffalo steak, a strong pint of black coffee and a few pipes of good tobacco, our party retired; sleep came with celerity and the camp was peacefully at rest, with the exception of two regular soldiers who stood guard until 12 o'clock, and were then relieved by two others who kept vigil until sunrise. At intervals I awoke during the night and listened to the industrious beavers building dams on the creek. They were shoveling mud with their trowel-shaped tails into the crevices of their dams with a constantly-resounding slapping and splashing all night. The architecture of the beaver is not unlike that which follows him and exalts itself in the chinked and daubed cabins of the pioneers.

The darkness was followed by a dawn of beauty and breakfast came soon thereafter, and for the first time my eyes looked out upon the attractive, fertile and beautiful valley of the Republican river. All that delightful and invigorating day we zealously hunted. We found occasionally small bands of buffaloes here and there among the bluffs and hills along the valley of the Republican. But these animals were generally aged and of inferior quality. Besides such hunting, we found a great quantity of blue-winged and green-winged teal in the waters of the Republican and bagged not a few of them. There is no water-fowl, in my judgment, not even the redheaded duck and canvasback duck, which excels in delicate tissue and flavor the delicious teal. [226]

Just a little before sundown, on the third day of our encampment, by the bluffs land of the Republican, Lieutenant Bush and Mr. Heth in one party, and John Talbot and I in another, were exploring the steep, wooded bluffs which skirted the valley. The timber growing at that time on the sides of these bluffs was, much of it, of very good size and I shall never forget going down a precipitous path along the face of a hill and suddenly coming upon a strange and ghastly sight among the top limbs and branches of an oak tree which sprang from the rich soil of a lower level. The weird object which then impressed itself upon my memory forever was a dead Indian sitting upright in a sort of wicker-work coffin which was secured by thongs to the main trunk of the tree. The robe with which he had been clothed had been torn away by buzzards and only the denuded skeleton sat there. The bleached skull leered and grinned at me as though the savage instinct to repulse an intruder from their hunting grounds still lingered in the fleshless head. Perfectly I recall the long scalp-lock, floating in the wind, and the sense of dread and repellent fear which, for the startled moment, took possession of me in the presence of this arboreally interred Indian

whose remains had been stored away in a tree-top instead of having been buried in the ground.

Not long after this incident we four came together again down in the valley at a great plum orchard. The plum trees covered an area of several acres; they stood exceedingly close together. The frosts had been just severe enough to drop the fruit onto the ground. Never before nor since have my eyes beheld or my palate tasted as luscious fruit as those large yellow and red plums which were found that afternoon lying in bushels in the valley of the Republican. While we were all seated upon the ground eating plums and praising their succulence and flavor we heard the click-cluck of a turkey. Immediately we laid ourselves flat upon the earth and in the course of ten minutes beheld a procession of at least seventy-five wild turkeys feeding upon plums. We remained moveless and noiseless until those turkeys had flown up into the tall cottonwood trees standing thereabouts and gone to roost. Then after darkness had settled down upon the face of the earth we faintly discerned the black forms or hummocks of fat turkeys all through the large and leafless limbs of the cottonwoods which had been nearly defoliated by the early frosts of October. It required no deft marksmanship or superior skill to bring down forty of those birds in a single evening. That number we took into camp. In quick time we had turkey roasted, turkey grilled, turkey broiled; and never have I since eaten any turkey so well flavored, so juicy and rich, as that fattened upon the wild plums of the Republican Valley in the year 1861.

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At last, surfeited with hunting and its successes, we set out on our return to Fort Kearny. When about half way across the divide, a sergeant, one of the most experienced soldiers and plainsmen of the party, declared that he saw a small curl of smoke in the hazy distance and a little to the west and south of us. To my untrained eye the smoke was at first invisible, but with a field glass I ultimately discerned a delicate little blue thread hanging in the sky, which the soldiers pronounced smoke ascending from an Indian camp. Readjusting the glasses I soon made out to see three Indians stretched by the fire seemingly asleep, while two were sitting by the embers apparently cooking, eating and drinking. Very soon, however, the two feasters espied our wagons and party. Immediately they came running on foot to meet us; the other three, awaking, followed them; speedily they were in our midst. They proved, however, to be peaceful Pawnees. Mr. John Heth spoke the language of that tribe and I shall never forget the coolness with which these representatives of that nomadic race informed him that Mrs. Heth and his little two-years-of-age daughter, Minnie, were in good health in their wigwam at Fort Kearny; they were sure of it because they had looked into the window of the Heth home the day before and saw them eating and drinking their noonday meal.

These Indians then expressed a wish for some turkey feathers. They were told to help themselves. Immediately they pulled out a vast number of the large feathers of the wings and tails and decorated their own heads with them. The leader of the aboriginal expedition, in conversation with Mr. Heth, informed him that although they were on foot they carried the lariats which we saw hanging from their arms for the purpose of hitching onto and annexing some Cheyenne ponies which they were going south to steal. They walked away from home, but intended to ride back. The barbaric commander in charge of this larcenous expedition was named "The Fox," and when questioned by Mr. Heth as to the danger of the enterprise, and informed that he might probably lose his life and get no ponies at all, Captain Fox smiled and said grimly that he knew he should ride back to the Pawnee village on the Loup the owner of good horses; that only a year or two before that time he had been alone down into the Cheyenne village and got a great many horses safely out and up onto the Loup fork among the Pawnees without losing a single one. "The Fox" admitted, however, that even in an expedition so successful as the one which he recalled there were a great many courage-testing inconveniences and annoyances. But he dwelt particularly upon the fact that the Cheyennes always kept their ponies in a corral which was in the very center of their village. The huts, habitations, tipis, and wigwams of the owners of the ponies were all constructed around their communal corral in a sort of a circle, but "The Fox" said that he nevertheless, in his individual excursion of which he proudly boasted, crawled during the middle of the night in among the ponies and was about to slip a lariat on the bell-mare without her stirring, when she gave a little jump, and the bell on her neck rang out pretty loudly. Then he laid

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down in the center of the herd and kept still, very still, while the horses walked over him and tramped upon him until he found it very unpleasant. But very soon he saw and heard some of the Cheyennes come out and look and walk about to see if anything was wrong. Then he said he had to stay still and silent under the horses' hoofs and make no noise, or die and surely be scalped. At last, however, the Cheyennes, one after another, all went back into their wigwams to sleep, and then he very slowly and without a sound took the bell off from the mare, put his lariat on her neck quietly, led her out and all the herd of Cheyenne ponies followed. He never stopped until he was safe up north of the Platte river and had all his equine spoils safe in the valley of the Loup fork going towards the Pawnee village where Genoa now stands.

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The Fox was an "expansionist" and an annexationist out of sympathy for the oppressed ponies of the Cheyennes.

"The Fox" declared that the number of horses he made requisition for at that time on the stables of the Cheyennes was three hundred. At this statement some incredulity was shown by Mr. Heth, myself, and some others present. Immediately "The Fox" threw back his woolen blanket which was ornamented on the inside with more than two hundred small decorative designs of horses. Among the Pawnees, and likewise, if I remember rightly, among the Otoes and Omahas, robes and blankets were thus embellished and so made to pass current as real certificates of a choice brand of character for their wearers. Each horse depicted on the robe was notice that the owner and wearer had stolen such horse. Finally, after expressions of friendship and good will, the expedition in charge of "The Fox" bade us adieu and briskly walked southward on their mission for getting horses away from their traditional enemies.

It is perhaps worth while to mention that, it being in the autumn of the year, all these Indians were carefully and deftly arrayed in autumn-colored costumes. Their blankets, head-gear and everything else were the color of dead and dried prairie grass. This disguise was for the purpose of making themselves as nearly indistinguishable as possible on the brown surface of the far-stretching plains. For then the weeds and grasses had all been bleached by the fall frosts. We were given an exhibition of the nearly perfect invisibleness of "The Fox" by his taking a position near a badger hole around which a lot of tall weeds had grown upon the prairie, and really the almost exact similitude of coloring which he had cunningly reproduced in his raiment made him even at a short distance indistinguishable among the faded weeds and grasses by which he was surrounded.

In due time we reached Fort Kearny and after a pleasant and most agreeable visit with Mr. Heth and his family, Colonel Alexander and Lieutenant Bush, I pushed on alone for the Missouri river, by the North Platte route, bringing home with me two or three turkeys and a quarter of buffalo meat.

About the second evening, as I remember it, I arrived at the agency of the four bands of the Pawnee on the Loup fork of the Platte river, near where the village of Genoa in Nance county now stands. Judge Gillis of Pennsylvania was the U. S. government agent then in charge of that tribe, and Mr. Allis was his interpreter. There I experienced the satisfaction of going leisurely and observingly through the villages of the four bands of Pawnees, which there made their habitation. The names of the four confederate bands of Pawnee Indians were Grand Pawnee, Wolf Pawnee, Republican Pawnee, and Tapage Pawnee. At that time they all together numbered between four thousand and five thousand.

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Distinguished among them for fearlessness and impetuous courage and constant success in war was an Indian who had been born with his left hand so shrunken and shriveled that it looked like the contracted claw of a bird. He was celebrated among all the tribes of the plains as "Crooked Hand, the Fighter." Hearing me express a wish for making the acquaintance of this famous warrior and scalp accumulator, Judge Gillis and Mr. Allis kindly volunteered to escort me to his domicile and formally introduce me. We took the trail which lay across Beaver creek up into the village. This village was composed of very large, earthen, mound-like wigwams. From a distance

they looked like a number of great kettles turned wrong side up on the prairie. Finally we came to the entrance of the abode of Crooked Hand. He was at home. I was presented to him by the interpreter, Mr. Allis. Through him, addressing the tawny hero who stood before me, I said:

It has come to my ears that you are and always have been a very brave man in battle. Therefore I have made a long journey to see you and to shake the hand of a great warrior.

This seemed to suit his bellicose eminence and to appeal to his barbaric vanity. Consequently I continued, saying: I hear that you have skilfully killed a great many Sioux and that you have kept the scalp of each warrior slain by you. If this be true, I wish you would show me these trophies of your courage and victories?

Immediately Crooked Hand reached under a sort of rude settee and pulled out a very cheap traveling trunk, which was locked. Then taking a string from around his neck he found the key thereunto attached, inserted it in the lock, turned it, and with gloating satisfaction threw back the lid of the trunk. It is fair to state that, notwithstanding Mr. Crooked Hand's personal adornments in the way of paint, earrings, and battle mementoes, he was evidently not a man of much personal property, for the trunk contained not one other portable thing except a string of thirteen scalps. This he lifted out with his right hand and held up before me as a connoisseur would exhibit a beautiful cameo—with intense satisfaction and self-praise expressed in his features. [231]

The scalps were not large, averaging not much more in circumference than a silver dollar (before the crime of 1873). Each scalp was big enough to firmly and gracefully retain the scalp-lock which its original possessor had nourished. Each scalp was neatly lined with flaming red flannel and encircled by and stitched to a willow twig just as boys so stretch and preserve squirrel skins. Then there was a strong twine which ran through the center of each of the thirteen scalps leaving a space of something like three or four inches between each two.

After looking at these ghastly certificates of prowess in Indian warfare I said to the possessor: "Do you still like to go into fights with the Sioux?" He replied hesitatingly:

"Yes, I go into the fights with the Sioux but I stay only until I can kill one man, get his scalp and get out of the battle."

Then I asked: "Why do you do this way now, and so act differently from the fighting plans of your earlier years when you remained to the end of the conflict?" Instantly he replied and gave me this aboriginal explanation:

"You see, my friend, I have only one life. To me death must come only once. But I have taken thirteen lives. And now when I go into battle there are thirteen chances of my being killed to one of my coming out of the fight alive."

This aboriginal application of the doctrine of chance is equally as reasonable as some of the propositions relating to chances found in "Hedges' Logic," which I studied in the regular college course. There is more excuse for a savage faith in chance than can be made for the superstitious belief in it which is held by some civilized people.

My last buffalo hunt was finished and its trophies and its choicest memories safely stored for exhibition or reminiscence at Arbor Lodge. More than thirty-seven years afterwards I am permitted this evening by your indulgence and consideration to attempt faintly to portray the country and its primitive condition at that time in that particular section of Nebraska which is now Franklin county. [232]

But in concluding this discursive and desultory narrative I cannot refrain from referring to and briefly descanting on another and an earlier and larger expedition into the valley of the Republican which set out from Mexico in the year 1540 under the command of Coronado.

That explorer was undoubtedly the first white man to visit Nebraska. In his report to the Spanish

government is a description of buffalo which for graphic minuteness and correctness has never been excelled. Thus it pictures them as they appeared to him and his followers more than three hundred and fifty years ago:

"These oxen are of the bigness and color of our bulls, but their horns are not so great. They have a great bunch upon their foreshoulders, and more hair upon their fore-part than on their hinder-part; and it is like wool. They have, as it were, a horse mane upon their back bone, and much hair, and very long from the knees downward. They have great tufts of hair hanging down their foreheads, and it seemeth they have beards, because of the great store of hair hanging down at their chins and throats. The males have very long tails, and a great knob or flock at the end, so that in some respects they resemble the lion, and in some other the camel. They push with their horns, they run, they overtake and kill a horse when they are in their rage and anger. Finally, it is a fierce beast of countenance and form of body. The horses fled from them, either because of their deformed shape, or because they had never seen them before. Their masters [meaning no doubt the Indians] have no other riches or substance; of them they eat, they drink, they apparel, they shoe themselves; and of their hides they make many things, as houses, shoes, apparel and robes; of their bones they make bodkins; of their sinews and hair, thread; of their horns, maws and bladders, vessels; of their dung, fire; and of their calf skins, budgets, wherein they draw and keep water. To be short, they make so many things of them as they have need of, or as may suffice them in the use of this life."

It is perhaps a work of supererogation for me after the lapse of three and a half centuries to endorse and verify the accuracy of that word picture of the buffalo. A photograph of the great herd which I rode into during my hunt could hardly better convey to the mind the images of buffalo. The hundreds of years intervening between my own excursion into the valley of the Republican and the invasion of Coronado had neither impaired, improved, nor perceptibly changed either the buffalo or the soil of that fertile section now comprising the county of Franklin in the state of Nebraska. Of that immediate propinquity Coronado said: "The place I have reached is in the fortieth degree of latitude. The earth is the best possible for all kinds of productions of Spain, for while it is very strong and black, it is very well watered by brooks, springs and rivers. I found prunes" [wild plums, no doubt, just as my party and the wild turkeys were feasting upon in October, 1861] "like those of Spain, some of which are black; also some excellent grapes and mulberries." [233]

And Jaramillo, who was with Coronado, says: "This country has a superb appearance, and such that I have not seen better in all Spain, neither in Italy nor France, nor in any other country where I have been in the service of your majesty. It is not a country of mountains; there are only some hills, some plains and some streams of very fine water. It satisfies me completely. I presume that it is very fertile and favorable for the cultivation of all kinds of fruits."

And this land whence the Coronado expedition upon foot retraced its march to Old Mexico, a distance, by the trail he made, of 3,230 miles, was in latitude forty degrees and distant westward from the Missouri about one hundred and forty miles. Geographically, topographically, and in every other way, the description of Franklin and the neighborhood of Riverton in that county.

Here then in Franklin county it is recorded that the last horse belonging to Coronado and his band of precious-metal hunters died. At that time all the horses on this continent had been imported. The loss of this animal that day at that place was like the loss today of a man-of-war for Spain in a great naval conflict with the United States. It was discouraging and overwhelming and resulted in the relinquishment of further exploration for the land of Quivera—the home of gold and silver—and the return to Old Mexico. There was no use for saddles, bridles and other equestrian trappings, for with no horse to ride even stirrups were thrown away, and it has been the good fortune of Nebraska to have them exhumed after a sequestration of more than three centuries. [234]

And thus, after so many years of delay, I give you the story of the first buffalo hunt and the last buffalo hunt in the Republican Valley concerning which I am competent to make statement. [235]

HOW THE FOUNDER OF ARBOR DAY CREATED THE MOST FAMOUS WESTERN ESTATE

BY PAUL MORTON

"The memories that live and bloom in trees, that whisper of the loved and lost in summer leaves, are as imperishable as the seasons of the year—immortal as the love of a mother."—J. STERLING MORTON.

I suppose the story of a successful pioneer will always interest and encourage people. The narrative of a strong, far-sighted man who makes something out of nothing seems to put heart into the average worker. That is why I am telling the story of how my father, J. Sterling Morton, and his young wife, set their faces toward the West, one October day in 1854, and built them a home on the prairies.

Arbor Lodge as it stands today, with its classic porticoes, its gardens, and its arboretum, the present country home of my brother, Mr. Joy Morton, is not the home that I remember as a boy. That was a much more modest edifice. Yet even that house was a palace compared with the first one, which was a little log-cabin standing on the lonely prairie, exposed to blizzards and Indians, and with scarcely a tree in sight.

My father was a young newspaper man in Detroit, only recently out of college, when he took his bride, two years his junior, out to the little-known frontier. Attracted by the information about the new country brought out by Douglas and others in the Kansas-Nebraska debates in congress, he conceived and acted on the idea that here were fortunes to be made. Taking such household goods as they could, they traveled to the new land, making the last stage up the Missouri river by boat.

Nebraska at that time was the Indian's own country. There were not over 1,500 white people in the entire state. All the country west of the Missouri was called in the geographies the Great American Desert, and it took a good deal of faith to believe that anything could be made to grow where annual fires destroyed even the prairie grass and the fringes of cottonwoods and scrub-oaks along the rivers. Today this section, within a radius of some two hundred miles, includes perhaps the most fertile soil in the world and has become a center of industry, agriculture, and horticulture for the middle west. There was then no political organization, no laws; men went about fully armed. There were no roads and no bridges to speak of in the entire state; it was "waste land."

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This was part of the land of the Louisiana Purchase, and my father bought a quarter section (160 acres) from the man who preëmpted it from the government. The price paid was \$1.25 an acre. Today the estate comprises about 1,000 acres, and the land is readily saleable at a hundred times this price.

On the spot where Arbor Lodge now stands, my father built his first log-cabin. This was soon replaced by a modest frame house; there was not then another frame house between it and the Rocky Mountains, six hundred miles away. On the same place two succeeding houses were built by my father, the present, and fifth, Arbor Lodge having been built by his sons after his death. My father called these first four houses, "seed, bud, blossom, and fruit."

The first winter was a mild one, fortunately, but there were plenty of hardships for the young people. There were no very near neighbors, the village of Kearny Heights, now Nebraska City, being then over two miles away. The Indians formed the greatest danger. I can remember a day in my boyhood when we had everything packed up, ready to flee across the Missouri to Iowa from

the murderous Pawnees and Cheyennes, who, fortunately, did not come that time. A part of that first winter my father and mother spent in Bellevue.

When spring came they set about building their home. Later on they had young trees sent to them from the East, including some excellent varieties of apples, peaches, cherries, pears, etc. Things grew fast; it was only the prairie fires that had kept the land a desert so long, and year by year these fires had enriched the soil.

The farm was located on the Overland trail, the favorite route to Pike's Peak and the El Dorado. Many of the Mormon emigrants crossed the river at that place. I can remember the big trains of ox and mule teams passing the house.

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My father's interests were always inseparably joined with those of the community; he was in public life from the start, and Nebraska's fortunes were his. His neighbors all had the same experiences, and many a farmer who started with nothing is now wealthy. The farmers had to bring in from Missouri and Iowa all the food for themselves and their horses and cattle the first year. They were living on faith. During the first spring and summer the anxiety was great, but they were rewarded by a good harvest in the fall. The success of that harvest settled the Nebraska question forever. It was a land that could support its inhabitants.

But the end was not yet. The "get-rich-quick" fever struck the community. Immigration was overstimulated, and town lots were manufactured at a great rate. In a few months they increased in price from \$300 to \$3,000 apiece. Banks were created and money was made plenty by legislation. My father never caught this fever, being always a sound-money man and believing in wealth based on the soil.

At the end of the second summer the crop of town lots and Nebraska bank-notes was greater than the crop of corn. But the lesson was not learned until the panic of 1857 drove out the speculators and left the farmers in possession of the territory. With the spring of 1858 sanity came to rule once more, and there was less bank making and more prairie breaking. The citizens had learned that agriculture was to be the salvation of the new country. In 1857, two dollars a bushel had been paid for imported corn, but in 1859 the same steamers that had brought it in bore thousands of bushels south at forty cents a bushel, bringing more money into the territory than all the sales of town lots for a year.

The first territorial fair was held in Nebraska City in 1859, and on that occasion my father made a speech in which he reviewed the history of the new territory up to that time. I speak of these things because my father was always a man of public interests, and his fortunes were wrapped up in those of the territory. His hardships came when the community went crazy, and his fortune grew when sanity was once more restored.

I know of nothing that better illustrates my father's private character than an editorial which he wrote and published in *The Conservative* a short time before the untimely death of my brother Carl. The fact that both the author and the two loved ones of whom he so tenderly wrote have passed to the Great Beyond, imparts to this beautiful passage a most exquisite pathos:

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"It was a bright, balmy morning in April more than a quarter of a century ago. The sun was nursing the young grass into verdure, and the prairie was just beginning to put off its winter coat of somber colorings. Tranquil skies and morning mists were redolent at Arbor Lodge of the coming resurrection of the foliage and flowers that died the autumn before. All about the cottage home there was hope and peace; and everywhere the signs of woman's watchful love and tidy care, when, suddenly, toned with affectionate solicitude, rang out: 'Carl, Carl!' but no answer came. Downstairs, upstairs, at the barn, even in the well, everywhere, the mother's voice called anxiously, again and again. But the silence, menacing and frightening, was unbroken by an answer from the lost boy. At last, however, he was found behind a smokehouse, busily digging in the ground with a small spade, though only five years of age, and he said: 'I'm too busy to talk.

I'm planting an orchard,' and sure enough, he had set out a seedling apple tree, a small cottonwood, and a little elm.

"The delighted mother clasped him in her arms, kissed him, and said: 'This orchard must not be destroyed.'

"And so now

"I hear the muffled tramp of years
Come stealing up the slopes of Time;
They bear a train of smiles and tears
Of burning hopes and dreams sublime.'

"The child's orchard is more than thirty years of age. The cottonwood is a giant now, and its vibrant foliage talks, summer after summer, in the evening breeze with humanlike voice, and tells its life story to the graceful, swaying elm near by, while the gnarled and scrubby little apple tree, shaped, as to its head, like a despondent toadstool, stands in dual shade, and bears small sweet apples, year after year, in all humility. But that orchard must not be destroyed. It was established by the youngest tree planter who ever planted in this tree planter's state, and for his sake and the memory of the sweet soul who nursed and loved him, it lives and grows, one cottonwood, one apple tree, one elm. [239]

"But O, for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still.'

"The memories that live and bloom in trees, that whisper of the loved and lost in summer leaves, are as imperishable as the seasons of the year—immortal as the love of a mother." [240]

EARLY REMINISCENCES OF NEBRASKA CITY

BY ELLEN KINNEY WARE

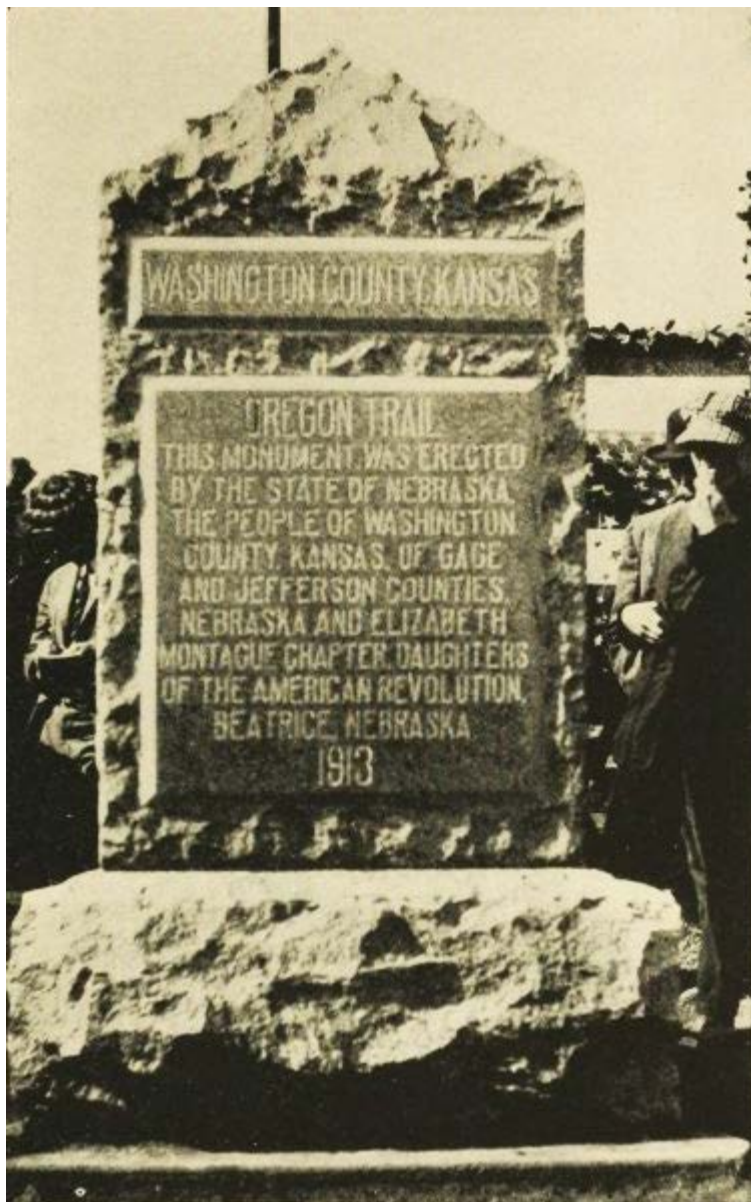
Social Aspects

As a girl graduate I came to Nebraska City from Virginia, at an early day. It seemed to me that I was leaving everything attractive socially and intellectually, behind me, but I was mistaken. On arriving here, I expected to see quite a town, was disappointed, for two large brick hotels, and a few scattered houses comprised the place. Among my first acquaintances was the family of Governor Black, consisting of his daughter about my own age, his wife, and himself. He was not only bright and clever, but a wit as well, and famous as a story-teller. Alas a sad fate awaited him. For leaving here to take command of a Pennsylvania regiment, he was killed early in the civil war.

Those were freighting days and Russell, Majors and Waddell, government freighters, made this their headquarters. Alexander Majors brought his family here adding much socially to the town. Major Martin, an army officer, was stationed here. He was a charming gentleman and had a lovely wife. Dancing was the principal amusement with the young people. Informal dances at private homes and occasionally on a steamboat when it arrived, brilliantly lighted and having a band of music on board. At the "Outfit" as it was called, where the supplies for the freighting company were kept, dwelt a family, Raisin by name, who were exceedingly hospitable, not only entertaining frequently, but often sending an ambulance for their guests. At these parties no round dancing was indulged in, just simple quadrilles and the lancers. Mr. and Mrs. J. Sterling Morton,

who lived on a country place, a short distance from town, which has since become widely known as Arbor Lodge, were among the most active entertainers, dispensing that delightful hospitality for which in later times they were so well known.

And so we lived without railroads, without telephones, automobiles, or theaters. But I believe that our social enjoyment was greater than it is now. Instead of railroads, we had steamboats arriving almost daily from St. Louis, St. Joseph, and other towns. In carriages we drove to Omaha and back, and the social intercourse of the two towns was much greater than it is now. [241]



Oregon Trail Monument, located at the point where the line between Jefferson and Gage Counties intersects the Kansas-Nebraska State Line Dedicated May 12, 1914. Cost \$350. Trail crosses state line 1,986 feet east, and crosses Jefferson-Gage county line 2,286 feet north of this point. Erected by the citizens of Gage and Jefferson counties, Nebraska, Washington county, Kansas, and Elizabeth Montague Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution

Amateur theatricals took the place of the theater, and often brilliant, undreamed of talent was shown. Literature also was not neglected, many highly educated men and women were among our pioneers and literary societies were a prominent part of our social life. We played chess in those days, but not cards. This alone might be taken as an index of how much less frivolous that day was than the present.

In 1860 Bishop Talbot arrived here from Indianapolis and made this his home, adding greatly socially and intellectually to the life of the community. In his family was the Rev. Isaac Hager, beloved and revered by all who knew him, a most thorough musician, as well as a fine preacher.

Remembering old times we sometimes ask ourselves, where now are the men and women, equal to the ones we knew in those days, certainly there are none superior to them, in intellect, manners, wit, and true nobility.

"Oh brave hearts journeyed to the west,
When this old town was new!"

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SOME PERSONAL INCIDENTS

BY W. A. McALLISTER

My father and family came to Nebraska in 1858, living two years at Genoa. At this time the government assigned what is now Nance county, to the Pawnee Indians, as a reservation. When the white settlers sought other homes our family located eight miles east of Columbus, at McAllister's lake. Every fall my father hired about sixty squaws to husk out his crop of corn. Only one buck ever came to work, and he was always known as "Squaw Charlie" after that. He spoke English quite well. They were slow workers, husking about twenty bushels per day. They were very gluttonous at meals, eating much bread, with meat soup containing potatoes and other vegetables, cooked in large twenty gallon camp kettles. This was supplemented by watermelons by the wagonload. It required a week or ten days to harvest the corn crop. The Indians were very thievish, stealing almost as much as their wages amounted to. During these years I often witnessed their "Medicine Dances."

When fifteen years old I enlisted in Company B, Second Nebraska Cavalry, and went to Fort Kearny. Our company relieved the Tenth Infantry, which went to the front. In less than twenty days this company was nearly annihilated at the battle of Fredericksburg.

While at the fort a buffalo hunt was organized by the officers, and I had an opportunity to go. Our party went south to the valley of the Republican. The first night we camped at the head of the Big Blue, and the second day I noticed south of us, about eight miles distant, a dark line along the horizon extending as far east and west as the eye could reach. I inquired what it was and an old hunter replied "buffaloes." I could not believe him, but in a few hours found he was right, for we were surrounded by millions of them. They were hurrying to the east with a roaring like distant thunder. Our sportsmen moved in a body through the herd looking for calves, not caring to carry back the meat of the old specimens. Strange to say this tremendous herd seemed to be composed of males, for the cows were still on the Oklahoma ranges caring for their calves, until strong enough to tramp north again. We noticed an old fellow making good progress on three legs, one foot having been injured. One of the party wished to dispose of him, but his woolly forehead covered with sand, turned every bullet. Finally the hunter asked me to attract his attention, while he placed a bullet in his heart. In doing this, he almost succeeded in goring my pony, but I turned a second too quickly for him. I was near enough to see the fire flashing from his angry eyes. In a

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few minutes he fell with a thud.

Several years after the war being over, I worked for the Union Pacific railroad company. At Kearney, in 1869, we met the Buck surveying party, who had come west to lay out, for the government, the lands of the Republican Valley. In this company was a young man from Pontiac, Illinois, named Harry McGregor. He left a home of plenty to hunt buffalo and Indians, but found among other privations, he could not have all the sugar he wished, so at Kearney he decided to leave the party and work with us. This decision saved his life, for the rest of the surveyors, about ten in all, after starting south next morning, were never seen again. They were surprised and killed by the Indians. Their skeletons were found several years later, bleaching on the Nebraska prairie.

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MAJOR NORTH'S BUFFALO HUNT

BY MINNIE FREEMAN PENNY

A party under the direction of Major Frank North set out with six wagon teams and four buffalo horses on November 13, 1871, to engage in a buffalo hunt. The other men were Luther North, C. Stanley, Hopkins Brown, Charles Freeman, W. E. Freeman, W. E. Freeman, Jr., and Messrs. Bonesteel, Wasson, and Cook. They camped the first night at James Cushing's ranch, eighteen miles out; the second night at Jason Parker's home at Lone Tree, now Central City, and the third night arrived at Grand Island. On the way to Grand Island one of the party accidentally started a prairie fire six miles east of Grand Island. A hard fight was made and the flames subdued just in time to save a settler's stable.

Leaving Grand Island on the sixteenth they crossed the Platte river and camped on the West Blue. From this point in the journey the party suffered incredible hardships until their return.

About midnight the wind changed to the north, bringing rain and sleet, and inside of an hour a blizzard was raging on the open prairie. The horses were covered with snow and ice and there was no fuel for the fires. The men went out as far as they dared to go for wood, being unsuccessful. It was decided to try to follow the Indian trail south—made by the Pawnee scouts under Major North. Little progress could be made and they soon "struck camp" near some willows that afforded a little protection to their horses and a "windbreak" was made for man and beast. This camp was at the head of the Big Sandy, called by this party the "Big Smoky" for the men suffered agonies from the smoke in the little tipi.

For two days the storm continued in all its terrible force. The wind blew and the air was so full of snow that it was blinding. The cold was intense. The men finally determined to find some habitation at any price and in groups of two and three left camp following the creek where they were sure some one had settled. A sod house was found occupied by two English families who received the party most hospitably. Charles Freeman, older than the other men of the party, suffered a collapse and remained at this home. During the night the storm abated and next morning, finding all the ravines choked with heavy snow drifts, it was decided by vote to abandon the hunt. They dug out their belongings from under many feet of snow, sold their corn to the English families to lighten their load and started back. The journey home was full of accidents, bad roads, and drifted ravines. Reaching the Union Pacific railroad at Grand Island Major North and Mr. Bonesteel returned to Columbus by rail, also Mr. Stanley from Lone Tree. The rest of the party returned by team, arriving on November 24.

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Major North admitted that of all his experiences on the prairie—not excepting his years with the Pawnee scouts—this "beat them all" as hazardous and perplexing.

The foregoing is taken from my father's diary.

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PIONEER LIFE

BY MRS. JAMES G. REEDER

It is almost impossible for people of the present day to realize the hardships and privations that the first settlers in Nebraska underwent. Imagine coming to a place where there was nothing but what you had brought with you in wagons. Add to the discomfort of being without things which in your former home had seemed necessities, the pests which abound in a new country: the rattlesnake, the coyote, the skunk, the weasel, and last—but not least—the flea.

My father, Samuel C. Smith, held the post of "trader" for the Pawnee Indians under Major Wheeler in 1865-66. We lived in a house provided by the government, near the Indian school at Genoa, or "The Reservation," as it was commonly called. I was only a few weeks old, and in order to keep me away from the fleas, a torture to everyone, they kept me in a shallow basket of Indian weave, suspended from the ceiling by broad bands of webbing, far enough from the floor and wall to insure safety.

I have heard my mother tell of how the Indians would walk right into the house without knocking, or press their faces against a window and peer in. They were usually respectful; they simply knew no better. Sometimes in cold weather three or four big men would walk into the kitchen and insist upon staying by the fire, and mother would have hard work to drive them out.

The next year my father moved his family to a homestead two miles east of Genoa where he had built a large log house and stables surrounded by a high tight fence, which was built for protection against the unfriendly Indians who frequently came to make war on the Pawnees. The government at times kept a company of soldiers stationed just north of us, and when there would be an "Indian scare," the officers' wives as well as our few neighbors would come to our place for safety. Major Noyes was at one time stationed there. Firearms of all sorts were always kept handy, and my mother could use them as skilfully as my father.

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One night my father's barn was robbed of eight horses by the Sioux and the same band took ten head from Mr. Gerrard, who lived four miles east of us. E. A. Gerrard, Luther North, and my father followed their trail to the Missouri river opposite Yankton, South Dakota, and did not see a white man while they were gone. They did not recover the horses, but twenty years after the government paid the original cost of the horses without interest. The loss of these horses and the accidental death of a brother of mine so discouraged my father that he moved to Columbus in 1870.

One of the delights of my childhood were the nights in early autumn when all the neighborhood would go out to burn the grass from the prairie north of us for protection against "prairie fires," as great a foe as was the unfriendly Indian of a few years before.

In the summer of 1874, which in Nebraska history is known as "the grasshopper year," my grandmother, Mrs. William Boone, accompanied by her daughter, Mrs. Mary Hemphill, and granddaughter, Ada Hemphill, came to make us a visit. For their entertainment we drove in a three-seated platform spring wagon or carryall to see the Indians in their village near Genoa. Their lodges were made of earth in a circular form with a long narrow entrance extending out like the handle of a frying pan. As we neared the village we came upon an ordinary looking Indian walking in the road, and to our surprise my father greeted him very cordially and introduced him to us. It was Petalesharo, chief of the Pawnees, but without the feathers and war-paint that I

imagined a chief would always wear. He invited us to his lodge and we drove to the entrance, but my grandmother and aunt could not be persuaded to leave the surrey. My cousin, being more venturesome, started in with my father, but had gone only a few steps when she gathered up her skirts and cried, "Oh, look at the fleas! Just see them hop!" and came running back to the rig, assuring us she had seen enough. The Indians must have taken the fleas with them when they moved to Oklahoma, for we seldom see one now.

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EARLY DAYS IN POLK COUNTY

BY CALMAR McCUNE

In the early history of the county, county warrants were thicker than the leaves on the trees (for trees were scarce then), and of money in the pockets of most people there was none. Those were the days when that genial plutocrat, William H. Waters, relieved the necessities of the needy by buying up county warrants for seventy-five cents on the dollar. Don't understand this as a reflection on the benevolent intentions of Mr. Waters, for he paid as high a price as anybody else offered; I mention it only to illustrate the financial condition of the people and the body politic.

Henry Mahan was postmaster and general merchant. The combined postoffice and store which, with a blacksmith shop, constituted the business part of the town of Osceola, was located on the west side of the square. It was a one and one-half story frame and on the second floor was *The Homesteader* (now the *Osceola Record*). Here H. T. Arnold, W. F. Kimmel, Frank Burgess, the writer, and Stephen Fleharty exercised their gray matter by grinding out of their exuberant and sometimes lurid imaginations original local items and weighty editorials. In those days if a top buggy was seen out on the open, treeless prairie, the entire business population turned out to watch it and soon there were bets as to whether it came from Columbus or Seward, for then there was not a top buggy in Polk county. The first drug store was opened by John Beltzer, a country blacksmith who suddenly blossomed from the anvil into a full-fledged pharmacist. Doctor Stone compounded the important prescriptions for a while.

I need not try to describe the grasshopper raid of 1874 for the old-timers remember it and I could not picture the tragedy so that others could see it. To see the sun's rays dimmed by the flying agents of destruction; to witness the disappearance of every vestige of green vegetation—the result of a year's labor, which was to most of the inhabitants the only resource against actual want, to see this I say, one must live through it. Many of the early settlers were young people newly married, who had left their homes in the East with all their earthly possessions in a covered wagon, or "prairie schooner" as it was called, and making the trip overland, had landed with barely enough money to exist until the first crop was harvested. Added to the loss and privation entailed by the visitation of the winged host was the constant dread that the next season would bring a like scourge.

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On Sunday afternoon, April 13, 1873, I left the farm home of James Bell in Valley precinct for Columbus, expecting to take the train there Monday morning for Omaha. The season was well advanced, the treeless prairie being covered with verdure. It was a balmy sunshiny spring day, as nearly ideal as even Nebraska can produce.

As I left the Clother hotel that evening to attend the Congregational church I noticed that the clouds were banking heavily in the northwest. There was a roll of distant thunder, a flash of lightning, and a series of gentle spring showers followed and it was raining when I went to bed at my hotel. Next morning when I looked out of my window I could not see half-way across the street. The wind was blowing a gale, which drove large masses of large, heavy snow-flakes

southward. Already where obstructions were met the huge drifts were forming. This continued without cessation of either snow or wind all day Monday and until late Tuesday night. Wednesday about noon the snow plow came, followed by the Monday train, which I boarded for Omaha. As the train neared Fremont I could see the green knolls peeping up through the snow, and at Omaha the snow had disappeared. There they had had mainly rain instead of snow. I may say that the storm area was not over two hundred miles wide with Clarks as about the center, the volume gradually diminishing each way from that point. It should be borne in mind that the farmers raised mainly spring wheat and oats. These grains had been sown several weeks before the storm and were all up, but the storm did not injure them in the least.

On leaving Omaha a few days later I went to Grand Island. At Gardner's Siding, between Columbus and Clarks, a creek passed under the track. This had filled bank high with snow which now melting, formed a lake. The track being bad the train ran so slowly that I had time to count [250] fifty floating carcasses of cattle upon the surface of the water. This was the fate of many thousands of head of stock.

Nobody dared to venture out into that storm for no human being could face it and live. The great flakes driven by a fifty-mile gale would soon plaster shut eyes, nose and mouth—in fact, so swift was the gale that no headway could be made against it.

In those days merchants hauled their goods from Columbus or Seward and all the grain marketed went to the same points. Wheat only was hauled, corn being used for feed or fuel.

A trip to Columbus and return the same day meant something. A start while the stars still twinkled; the mercury ten, twenty, or even thirty degrees below, was not a pleasure trip, to the driver on a load of wheat. But the driver was soon compelled to drop from the seat, and trudge along slapping his hands and arms against his body to keep from freezing. Leaving home at three or four o'clock in the morning he was lucky if he got home again, half frozen and very weary, several hours after dark. Speaking of exposure to wintry blasts, reminds me of a trip on foot I made shortly after my arrival in Polk county. December 24, 1872, I started to walk from the Milsap neighborhood in Hamilton county, several miles west of where Polk now stands, to the home of William Stevens, near the schoolhouse of District No. 5. It was a clear, bitter cold morning, the wind blowing strongly from the northwest, the ground coated with a hard crust of snow. I kept my bearings as best I could, for it should be remembered that there were no roads or landmarks and I was traveling purely by guess. Along about mid-day I stumbled upon a little dugout, somewhere north of where Stromsburg now stands—the first house I had seen. On entering I found a young couple who smiled me a welcome, which was the best they could do, for, as I saw from the inscriptions on a couple of boxes, they were recent arrivals from Sweden. The young lady gave me some coffee and rusks, and I am bound to say that I never tasted better food than that coffee and those rusks. I did not see another house until I reached the bluffs, where, about sunset, I was gladdened by the sight of the Stevens house in the valley, a couple of miles distant. When I finally reached this hospitable home the fingers of both hands were frozen and my [251] nose and ears badly frosted.

In the early days we traveled from point to point by the nearest and most direct route, for while the land was being rapidly taken up, there were no section line roads. Whenever the contour of the land permitted, we angled, being careful to avoid the patches of cultivated land. There were no trees, no fences, and very few buildings, so, on the level prairie, nothing obstructed the view as far as the eye could carry. The sod houses and stables were a godsend, for lumber was very expensive and most of the settlers brought with them lean purses. It required no high-priced, skilled labor to build a "soddy," and properly built they were quite comfortable.

When I grow reminiscent and allow my mind to go back to those pioneer days, the span of time between then and now seems very brief, but when I think longer and compare the *then* with the *now*, it seems as though that sod house-treeless-ox driving period must have been at least one hundred years ago. It is a far cry from the ox team to the automobile. [252]

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES

BY MRS. THYRZA REAVIS ROY

In March, 1865, my husband, George Roy, and I started from our home in Avon, Illinois, to Nebraska territory. The railroad extended to St. Joseph, Missouri. There they told us we would have to take a steamboat up the Missouri river to Rulo, forty miles from St. Joseph. We took passage on a small steamboat, but the ice was breaking up and the boat ran only four miles up the river. They said it was too dangerous to go farther so told us we would have to go back or land and get some one to drive us to Rulo, or the Missouri side of the river across from Rulo. We decided to land, and hired a man to drive us across country in an old wagon. It was very cold and when we reached the place where we would have to cross the Missouri, the ice was running in immense blocks. It was sunset, we were forty miles from a house on that side of the river. There was a man on the other side of the river in a small skiff. Mr. Roy waved to him and he crossed and took us in. Every moment it seemed those cakes of ice would crush the little skiff, but the man was an expert dodger and after a perilous ride he let us off at Rulo. By that time it was dark. We went to a roughly boarded up shanty they called a tavern. It snowed that night and the snow beat in on our bed. The next morning we hired a man to take us to Falls City, ten miles from Rulo. Falls City was a hamlet of scarcely three hundred souls. There was a log cabin on the square; one tiny schoolhouse, used for school, Sunday school, and church. As far as the eye could reach, it was virgin prairie.

There was very little rain for two years after we came. All provisions, grain, and lumber were shipped on boats to Rulo. There was only an Indian trail between Rulo and Falls City. Everything was hauled over that trail.

After the drouth came the grasshoppers, and for two years they took all we had. The cattle barely lived grazing in the Nemaha valley. All grain was shipped in from Missouri.

The people had no amusements in the winter. In the summer they had picnics and a Methodist camp-meeting, on the Muddy river north of Falls City. [253]



**Mrs. Charles Oliver Norton Tenth State Regent,
Nebraska Society, Daughters of the American
Revolution. 1911-1912**

Over the Nemaha river two and one-half miles southwest of Falls City, on a high hill above the falls from which the town was named, was an Indian village. The Sac and Foxes and Iowa Indians occupied the village. Each spring and fall they went visiting other tribes, or other tribes visited them. They would march through the one street of Falls City with their ponies in single file. The tipi poles were strapped on each side of the ponies and their belongings and presents, for the tribe they were going to visit, piled on the poles. The men, women, and children walked beside the ponies, and the dogs brought up the rear. Sometimes, when the Indians had visitors, they would have a war-dance at night and the white people would go out to view it. Their bright fires, their scouts bringing in the news of hostile Indians in sight, and the hurried preparations to meet them, were quite exciting. The Indians were great beggars, and not very honest. We had to keep things under lock and key. They would walk right into the houses and say "Eat!" The women were all afraid of them and would give them provisions. If there was any food left after they had finished their eating, they would take it away with them.

Their burying-ground was very near the village. They buried their dead with all accoutrements, in a sitting posture in a grave about five feet deep, without covering.

The Indians cultivated small patches of land and raised corn, beans, pumpkins, etc. A man named Fisher now owns the land on which the Indians lived when I reached the country.

The people were very sociable. It was a healthy country, and we had health if very little else. We were young and the hardships did not seem so great as they do in looking backward fifty years.

NOTE—Thyrza Reavis Roy was born August 7, 1834, in Cass county, Illinois, the daughter of Isham Reavis and Mahala Beck Reavis. Her great-grandfather, Isham Reavis, fought in the war of the Revolution. Her grandfather, Charles Reavis, and her own father, Isham Reavis, fought in the war of 1812. She is a real daughter of the war of 1812. She is a member of the U. S. Daughters of 1812, a member of the Deborah Avery Chapter D. A. R. of Lincoln, and a member of the Territorial Pioneers Association of Nebraska. Her husband, George Roy, died at Falls City March 2, 1903.

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TWO SEWARD COUNTY CELEBRATIONS

BY MRS. S. C. LANGWORTHY

I recall one reminiscence of my early life in Nebraska which occurred in 1876, when we first located in Seward. We could have gone no farther, even had we wished, as Seward was then the terminus of the Billings line of the Burlington railroad.

We soon learned that a county celebration was to be held on the fourth of July, and I naturally felt a great curiosity to know how a crowd of people would look to whom we had been sending boxes of clothing and bedding in response to appeals from the grasshopper sufferers. My surprise cannot be imagined when I saw people clothed as well as elsewhere and with baskets filled with an abundance of good things for a picnic dinner.

The same pretty grove in which this gathering occurred thirty-nine years ago is now our beautiful city park, where during the summer of 1914 our commercial club gave an old-time barbecue costing the members twelve hundred dollars. They secured the state band and fine speakers, and served a bounteous dinner to about fifteen thousand people. Everything was free to all who came, and a happier crowd can not be imagined. I speak of this because in the years to come it will be a pleasant reminiscence to many who may have been present.

NOTE—Elizabeth C. (Bennett) Langworthy, fourth state regent of the Nebraska Society D. A. R., is a daughter of Jacob and Caroline (Valentine) Bennett. Her paternal grandfather was also Jacob Bennett, a soldier in the Revolutionary war. He was taken prisoner and held in an English ship off the coast of Quebec for some time. Mrs. Langworthy was born in Orleans county, New York, in 1837. The family moved to Wisconsin in 1849, and the daughter finished her education at Hamline University, then located at Red Wing, Minnesota. In 1858 she was married to Stephen C. Langworthy, and in 1876 became a resident of Seward, Nebraska. Mr. Langworthy died March 3, 1904.

Mrs. Langworthy has been active and prominent in club work, and is widely known. She served for five years as a member of the school board at Seward and organized the History and Art Club of Seward of which she was president for several years. She

was the first secretary of the State Federation of Woman's Clubs, and was elected president in 1898. Mrs. Langworthy is the mother of six children.

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SEWARD COUNTY REMINISCENCES

COMPILED BY MARGARET HOLMES CHAPTER D. A. R.

Seward county shared with other counties all of the privations and experiences of pioneer life, though it seems to have had less trouble with hostile Indians than many localities in the state.

The struggles of pioneer settlers in the same country must necessarily be similar, though of course differing in detail. The first settlers deemed it important to locate on a stream where firewood could be obtained, and they were subject to high waters, prairie fires, constant fear of the Indian, and lack of provisions.

At one time the little band of settlers near the present site of Seward was reduced to one pan of corn, though they were not quite as reduced as their historic Pilgrim forefathers, when a load of provisions arrived that had been storm-bound.

Reminiscences are best at first hand, and the following letters, taken from the *History of Seward County* by W. W. Cox, recount some of the incidents of early pioneer life by those who really lived it.

Mrs. Sarah F. Anderson writes as follows:

"At the time of the great Indian scare of 1864, my father's family was one of the families which the Nebraska City people had heard were killed. It had been rumored throughout the little settlement that there were bands of hostile Indians approaching, and that they were committing great depredations as they went.

"One Sunday morning my uncle and Thomas Shields started down the river on a scouting expedition. After an all-day search, just at nightfall, they came suddenly upon an Indian camp. The men thought their time had come, but the redskins were equally scared. There was no chance to back out, and they resolved to know whether the Indians were friendly or hostile. As they bravely approached the camp, the Indians began to halloo, 'Heap good Omaha!' The men then concluded to camp over night with them, and they partook of a real Indian supper. The next morning they went home satisfied that there were no hostile Indians in the country.

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"A day or two after this, my father (William Imlay) and his brothers were on upper Plum creek haying, when grandfather Imlay became frightened and hastened to our house and said the Indians were coming upon the settlement. He then hurried home to protect his own family. About three o'clock in the afternoon we saw a band of them approaching. They were about where the B. & M. depot now stands. We were living about eighty rods above the present iron bridge. My mother, thinking to escape them, locked the cabin door, and took all the children across the creek to the spring where she kept the milk. To kill time, she commenced churning. Very soon, four Indians (great, big, ugly creatures) came riding up to the spring and told mother that she was wanted over to the house. She said, 'No, I can't go; I am at work.' But they insisted in such a menacing manner that she felt obliged to yield and go. They said, 'Come, come,' in a most determined manner. The children all clinging to her, she started, and those great sneaking braves guarded her by one riding on each side, one before, and one behind. Poor mother and we four children had a slim show to escape. They watched our every movement, step by step. When we reached the cabin, there sat sixteen burly Indians in a circle around the door. When we came up,

they all arose and saluted mother, then sat down again. They had a young Indian interpreter. As they thought they had the family all thoroughly frightened, the young Indian began in good shape to tell just what they wanted. They would like to have two cows, two sacks of flour, and some meat. Mother saw that she must guard the provisions with desperation, as they had cost such great effort, having been hauled from the Missouri river. The Indians said, 'The Sioux are coming and will take all away, and we want some.' 'No,' said mother, 'we will take our cattle and provisions and go to Plattsmouth.' 'But,' said the Indian, 'they will be here tonight and you can't get away.' Mother at this point began to be as much angry as frightened. 'I will not give you anything. You are lying to me. If the Sioux were so close, you would all be running yourselves.' At this point another brave, who had been pacing the yard, seeing mother grow so warm, picked up our axe and marched straight up to her and threw it down at her feet. She picked it up and stood it beside her. Mother said afterward that her every hair stood on end, but knowing that Indians respect bravery, she resolved to show no cowardice. We could all see that the whole river bend was swarming with Indians. Mother said with emphasis, 'I now want you to take your Indians and be gone at once.' Then they said, 'You are a brave squaw,' and the old chief motioned to his braves and they marched off to camp. The next day our family all went over to Plum creek and remained until things became settled.

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"The following winter father was at Omaha attending the legislature; and I am sure that over a thousand Indians passed our place during the winter. It required pluck to withstand the thievish beggars. Sometimes they would sneak up and peep in at the window. Then others would beg for hours to get into the house.

"A great amount of snow had fallen, and shortly after father's return home, a heavy winter rain inundated all the bottom lands. We all came pretty near being drowned but succeeded in crawling out of the cabin at the rear window at midnight. Our only refuge was a haystack, where we remained several days entirely surrounded by water, with no possible means of escape. Mr. Cox made several attempts to rescue us. First he tried to cross the river in a molasses pan, and narrowly escaped being drowned, as the wind was high and the stream filled with floating ice. The next day he made a raft and tried to cross, but the current was so rapid he could not manage it. It drifted against a tree where the water was ten feet deep, and the jar threw him off his balance, and the upper edge of the raft sank, so that the rapid current caught the raft and turned it on edge against the tree. Mr. Cox caught hold of a limb of the tree and saved himself from drowning. A desperate struggle ensued but he finally kicked and stamped until he got the raft on top of the water again, but it was wrong side up. We then gave up all hopes of getting help until the water subsided. The fourth day, tall trees were chopped by father on one side and by Mr. Cox on the other, and their branches interlocked, and we made our escape to his friendly cabin, where we found a kindly greeting, rest, food, and fire."

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The following from the pen of Addison E. Sheldon is recorded in the same *History of Seward County*:

"My recollections of early Seward county life do not go back as far as the author's. They begin with one wind-blown day in September, 1869, when I, a small urchin from Minnesota, crossed the Seward county line near Pleasant Dale on my way with my mother and step-father (R. J. McCall), to the new home on the southeast quarter of section 18, town 9, range 2 east—about three miles southeast of the present Beaver Crossing. Looked back upon now, through all the intervening years, it seems to me there never was an autumn more supremely joyous, a prairie more entrancing, a woodland belt more alluring, a life more captivating than that which welcomed the new boy to the frontier in the beautiful West Blue valley. The upland 'divides' as I remember them were entirely destitute of settlement, and even along the streams, stretches of two, three, and five miles lay between nearest neighbors.

"What has become of the Nebraska wind of those days? I have sought it since far and wide in the Sand Hills and on the table lands of western Nebraska—that wind which blew ceaselessly, month

after month, never pausing but to pucker its lips for a stronger blast! Where are the seas of rosin-weed, with their yellow summer parasols, which covered the prairie in those days? I have sought them too, and along gravelly ridges or some old ditch yet found a few degenerate descendants of the old-time host.

"Mention of merely a few incidents seeming to hold the drama and poetry of frontier life at that time: 'Pittsburgh, the city of vision, at the junction of Walnut creek and the West Blue, inhabited by a population of 20,000 people, with a glass factory, a paper factory, a brick factory, oil wells, a peat factory, woolen mills, junction of three railway lines, metropolis of the Blue Valley.' All this and so much more that I dare not attempt to picture it; a real existence in the brain of Christopher Lezenby in the years of 1871-72. What unwritten dramas sleep almost forgotten in the memories of early settlers! When Mr. Lezenby began to build his metropolis with the assistance of Attorney Boyd of Lincoln and a few other disinterested speculators, he was the possessor of several hundred acres of land, some hundreds of cattle, and other hundreds of hogs, and a fair, unmarried daughter. What pathetic memories of the old man, month after month, surveying off his beautiful farm into city lots for the new metropolis, while his cattle disappeared from the prairies and his swine from the oak thickets along the Walnut; with sublime and childish simplicity repeating day after day the confession of his faith that 'next week' work would begin; 'next week' the foundation for the factories would be laid; 'next week' the railway surveyors would set the grade stakes. And this real rural tragedy lasted through several years, ending in the loss of all his property, the marriage of his daughter to Irwin Stall, and the wandering forth of the old man until he died of a broken heart in California.

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"One monument yet remains to mark the site and perpetuate the memory of Pittsburgh, a flowing well, found I think at the depth of twenty-eight feet in the year 1874 and continuously flowing since that. Strange that no one was wise enough to take the hint and that it was twenty years later before the second flowing well was struck at Beaver Crossing, leading to the systematic search for them which dotted the entire valley with their fountains.

"There were no high water bridges across the West Blue in those days. I remember acting as mail carrier for a number of families on the south bank of the Blue during the high waters of two or three summers, bringing the mail from the city of Pittsburgh postoffice on the north bank. A torn shirt and a pair of short-legged blue overalls—my entire wardrobe of those days—were twisted into a turban about my head, and plunging into the raging flood of the Blue which covered all the lower bottoms, five minutes' vigorous swimming carried me through the froth and foam and driftwood to the other side where I once more resumed my society clothes and, after securing the mail, upon my return to the river bank, tied it tightly in the turban and crossed the river as before.

"I remember my first lessons in political economy, the fierce fight between the northern and the southern parts of the county upon the question of voting bonds to the Midland Pacific railway during the years 1871-72. It was a sectional fight in fact, but in theory and in debate it was a contest over some first principles of government. The question of the people versus the corporation, since grown to such great proportions, was then first discussed to my childish ears. One incident of that contest is forever photographed on my brain—a crowd of one hundred farmers and villagers lounging in the shadow of T. H. Tisdale's old store. A yellow-skinned, emaciated lawyer from Lincoln who looked, to my boyish vision, like a Chinese chieftain from Manchuria, was speaking with fluent imaginative words in favor of the benefits the people of Seward county might secure by voting the bonds. This was H. W. Sommerlad, registrar of Lincoln land office. A short Saxon opponent, Rev. W. G. Keen of Walnut creek, was picked from the crowd by acclamation to reply to the Lincoln lawyer. The impression of his fiery words denouncing the aggressions of capital and appealing to the memories of the civil war and the Revolutionary fathers to arouse the people's independence is with me yet.

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"Next in the economic vista is the old Brisbin sod schoolhouse east of Walnut creek where a grange was organized. Here a lyceum was held through several winters in which the debates were

strongly tinctured with the rising anti-monopoly sentiment of those hard times. George Michael and Charley Hunter, leaders of the boyish dare-deviltry of those days, were chosen as judges upon the debates in order to insure their good behavior, and they gravely decided for the negative or affirmative many deep discussions of doubtful themes.

"Beaver Crossing in the early days was remarkable for the great number of boys in its surrounding population, and I have observed in these later years when visiting there, that the custom of having boy babies in the family does not appear to have entirely gone out of fashion. That great swarm of restless boy population which gathered, sometimes two hundred strong, Saturday afternoons on the Common! What 'sleights of art and feats of strength' went round! What struggles of natural selection to secure a place upon the 'First Nine' of the baseball team! For years Beaver Crossing had the best baseball club in three or four counties, and some of her players won high laurels on distant diamonds.

"One custom which obtained in those frontier days seems to have been peculiar to the time, for I have not found it since in other frontier communities. It was the custom of 'calling off' the mail upon its arrival at the postoffice. The postmaster, old Tom Tisdale—a genuine facsimile of Petroleum V. Nasby—would dump the sacks of mail, brought overland on a buckboard, into a capacious box upon the counter of his store, then pick up piece by piece, and read the inscriptions thereon in a sonorous voice to the crowd, sometimes consisting of one or two hundred people. Each claimant would cry out 'Here!' when his name was called. Sometimes two-thirds of the mail was distributed in this way, saving a large amount of manual labor in pigeon-holing the same. Nasby had a happy and caustic freedom in commenting upon the mail during the performance, not always contemplated, I believe, by the United States postal regulations. A woman's handwriting upon a letter addressed to a young man was almost certain to receive some public notice from his sharp tongue, to the great enjoyment of the crowd and sometimes the visible annoyance of the young man. At one time he deliberately turned over a postal card written by a well-known young woman of Beaver Crossing who was away at school, and on observing that the message was written both horizontally and across, commented, 'From the holy mother, in Dutch.' If I should ever meet on the mystic other shore, which poets and philosophers have tried to picture for us, old Tom Tisdale, I would expect to see him with his spectacles pushed back from his nose, 'calling off' the mail to the assembled spirits, the while entertaining them with pungent personal epigrams. [261]

"One startling picture arises from the past, framed as Browning writes 'in a sheet of flame'—the picture of the great prairie fire of October, 1871, which swept Seward county from south to north, leaving hardly a quarter section of continuous unburnt sod. A heavy wind, increasing to a hurricane, drove this fire down the West Blue valley. It jumped the Blue river in a dozen places as easily as a jack rabbit jumps a road. It left a great broad trail of cindered haystacks and smoking stables and houses. A neighbor of ours who was burnt out remarked that he had 'been through hell in one night,' and had 'no fear of the devil hereafter.'

"At the other end of the scale of temperature are recollections of the 'Great Storm' of April 13, 14, 15, 1873. There burst from a June atmosphere the worst blizzard in the history of the state. For three days it blew thick, freezing sleet, changing to snow so close and dense and dark that a man in a wagon vainly looked for the horses hitched to it through the storm. Men who were away from home lost their lives over the state. Stock was frozen to death. In sod houses, dugouts, and log cabins settlers huddled close about the hearth, burning enormous baskets of ten-cent corn to keep from freezing. [262]

"In these later years of life, Fate has called me to make minute study of many historical periods and places. Yet my heart always turns to review the early scenes of settlement and civilization in Seward county with a peculiar thrill of personal emotion and special joy in the risen and rising fortunes of those who there built the foundations of a great commonwealth. No land can be dearer than the land of one's childhood and none can ever draw my thoughts further over plain or ocean

than the happy valley upon West Blue whose waters spring spontaneously from beneath the soil to water her fortunate acres."

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PIONEERING

BY GRANT LEE SHUMWAY

On September 15, 1885, I crossed the Missouri river at Omaha, and came west through Lincoln. The state fair was in full blast but our party did not stop, as we were bound for Benkleman, Parks, and Haigler, Nebraska.

After looking over Dundy county, Nebraska, and Cheyenne county, Kansas, the rest of the party returned to Illinois.

I went to Indianola, and with Mr. Palmatier, I started for the Medicine. He carried the mail to Stockville and Medicine, which were newly established postoffices in the interior to the north, and his conveyance was the hind wheels of an ordinary wagon, to which he had fashioned a pair of thills. He said that he was using such a vehicle because it enabled him to cut off several miles in the very rough country through which we passed.

The jolting was something fierce, but being young and used to riding in lumber wagons, I did not mind. I was very much interested in everything, but the things that linger most clearly in my mind after all these years are the bushy whiskered, hopeful faces of the men who greeted us from dugouts and sod cabins. The men's eyes were alight with enthusiasm and candor, but I do not remember of having seen a woman or child upon the trip.

It seems that men can drop back into the primitive so much more easily than women: not perhaps with all the brutality of the First Men, but they can adjust themselves to the environment of the wilderness, and the rusticity of the frontier, with comparative ease.

I stopped for the night in Hay cañon, a branch of Lake cañon, at Hawkins brothers' hay camp, and I remember when they told me that they had three hundred tons of hay in the stack, that it seemed almost an inconceivable quantity. On our old Illinois farm twenty-five or thirty tons seemed a large amount, but three hundred tons was beyond our range of reasoning. However, we now stack that much on eighty acres in the Scottsbluff country.

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In due time I went on over the great tableland to the city of North Platte, and going down the cañon on the south side of the south river, I killed my first jack rabbit, an event which seemed to make me feel more of a westerner than any circumstance up to that time.

My first impression of North Platte, with its twelve saloons, was not of the best. And my conception of Buffalo Bill dropped several notches in esteem when I saw the Wild West saloon. But in the light of years, I am less puritanical in my views of the first people of the plains. In subsequent years I rode the range as a cowboy, and drove twenty-mule teams with a single line and a black-snake, and while always I remained an abstainer and occasionally found others that did likewise, I learned to tolerate, and then enjoy, the witticisms and foolishness of those that did indulge. Sometimes the boys in their cups would "smoke up" the little cities of the plains, but they never felt any resentment if one of their number did not participate in their drinking and festive sports.

I spent the winter of 1885 on the ranch of Hall & Evans, near North Platte, and one of the pleasantest acquaintanceships of my life has been that of John Evans, now registrar of the land office at North Platte.

In the spring of '86 the constant stream of emigrant wagons going west gave one an impression that in a little time the entire West would be filled, and I grew impatient to be upon my way and secure selections. In May I arrived at Sidney and from there rode in a box car to Cheyenne. When we topped the divide east of Cheyenne, I saw the snow-capped peaks of the Rockies for the first time.

During the summer I "skinned mules," aiding in the construction of the Cheyenne & Northern, now a part of the Hill system that connects Denver with the Big Horn basin and Puget sound.

Returning to Sidney in the autumn, I fell in with George Hendricks, who had been in the mines for twenty years and finally gave it up. We shoveled coal for the Union Pacific until we had a grub stake for the winter. I purchased a broncho, and upon him we packed our belongings—beds, blankets, tarpaulin, provisions, cooking utensils, tools, and clothing, and started north over the divide for "Pumpkin creek," our promised land. In a little over a day's travel, one leading the horse and the other walking behind to prod it along, we reached Hackberry cañon, and here, in a grove by a spring, we built our first cabin. [265]

Three sides were log, the cracks filled with small pieces of wood and plastered with mud from the spring, and the back of the cabin was against a rock, and up this rock we improvised a fireplace, with loose stones and mud.

When we had rigged a bunk of native red cedar along the side of this rude shelter, and the fire was burning in our fireplace, the coffee steaming, the bread baking in the skillet, the odor of bacon frying, and the wind whistling through the tree-tops, that cabin seemed a mighty cozy place.

We could sometimes hear the coyotes and the grey wolves howl at night, but a sense of security prevailed, and our sleep was sound. Out of the elements at hand, we had made the rudiments of a home on land that was to become ours—our very own—forever. [266]

EARLY DAYS IN STANTON COUNTY

Statement by Andrew J. Bottorff

I came to Nebraska at the close of the civil war, having served during the entire campaign with the Seventeenth Indiana regiment. I came west with oxen and wagon in the fall of 1866, bringing my family. We wintered at Rockport, but as soon as spring opened went to Stanton county, where I took a homestead. Here we had few neighbors and our share of hardships, but thrived and were happy.

One day I heard my dogs barking and found them down in a ravine, near the Elkhorn river, with an elk at bay, and killed him with my axe.

The first year I was appointed county surveyor. Having no instruments at hand, I walked to Omaha, over a hundred miles distant, and led a fat cow to market there. I sold the cow but found no instruments. I was told of a man at Fort Calhoun who had an outfit I might get, so wended my way there. I found E. H. Clark, who would sell me the necessary supplies, and I bought them; then carried them, with some other home necessities obtained in Omaha, back to Stanton, as I had come, on foot.

I am now seventy-five years old, and have raised a large family; yet wife and I are as happy and spry as if we had never worked, and are enjoying life in sunny California, where we have lived for the last ten years.

Statement by Sven Johanson

With my wife and two small children I reached Omaha, Nebraska, June 26, 1868. We came direct from Norway, having crossed the stormy Atlantic in a small sailboat, the voyage taking eight weeks.

A brother who had settled in Stanton county, 107 miles from Omaha, had planned to meet us in that city. After being there a few days this brother, together with two other men, arrived and we were very happy. With two yoke of oxen and one team of horses, each hitched to a load of lumber, we journeyed from Omaha to Stanton county. Arriving there, we found shelter in a small dugout with our brother and family, where we remained until we filed on a homestead and had built a dugout of our own. [267]

We had plenty of clothing, a good lot of linens and homespun materials, but these and ten dollars in money were all we possessed.

The land office was at Omaha and it was necessary for me to walk there to make a filing. I had to stop along the way wherever I could secure work, and in that way got some food, and occasionally earned a few cents, and this enabled me to purchase groceries to carry back to my family. There were no bridges across rivers or creeks and we were compelled to swim; at one time in particular I was very thankful I was a good swimmer. A brother-in-law and myself had gone to Fremont, Nebraska, for employment, and on our return we found the Elkhorn river almost out of its banks. This frightened my companion, who could not swim, but I told him to be calm, we would come to no harm. I took our few groceries and our clothing and swam across, then going back for my companion, who was a very large man, I took him on my back and swam safely to the other shore.

While I was away, my family would be holding down our claim and taking care of our one cow. We were surrounded by Indians, and there were no white people west of where we lived.

In the fall of 1869 we secured a yoke of oxen, and the following spring hauled home logs from along the river and creek and soon had a comfortable log house erected.

Thus we labored and saved little by little until we were able to erect a frame house, not hewn by hand, but made from real lumber, and by this time we felt well repaid for the many hardships we had endured. The old "homestead" is still our home, but the dear, faithful, loving mother who so bravely bore all the hardships of early days was called to her rich reward January 28, 1912. She was born June 15, 1844, and I was born October 14, 1837. [268]

FRED E. ROPER, PIONEER

BY ERNEST E. CORRELL

Fred E. Roper, a pioneer of Hebron, Nebraska, was eighty years old on October 10, 1915. Sixty-one years ago Mr. Roper "crossed the plains," going from New York state to California.

Eleven years more than a half-century—and to look back upon the then barren stretch of the country in comparison with the present fertile region of prosperous homes and populous cities, takes a vivid stretch of imagination to realize the dreamlike transformation. At that time San Francisco was a village of about five hundred persons living in adobe huts surrounded by a mud wall for a fortified protection from the marauding Indians.

Fred E. Roper was born in Candor Hill, New York, October 10, 1835. When three years old he

moved with his parents to Canton, Bradford county, Pennsylvania, and later moved with his brother to Baraboo, Wisconsin. Then he shipped as a "hand" on a raft going down the Wisconsin and Mississippi rivers to St. Louis, getting one dollar a day and board. He returned north on a steamer, stopping at Burlington, Iowa, where his sister resided.

In 1854, when he was nineteen years of age, Mr. Roper "started west." His sister walked to the edge of the town with him as he led his one-horned cow, which was to furnish milk for coffee on the camp-out trip, which was to last three months, enroute to the Pacific coast.

There were three outfits—a horse train, mule train, and ox train. Mr. Roper traveled in an ox train of twenty-five teams. The travelers elected officers from among those who had made the trip before, and military discipline prevailed.

At nights the men took turns at guard duty in relays—from dark to midnight and from midnight to dawn, when the herder was called to turn the cattle out to browse. One man herded them until breakfast was ready, and another man herded them until time to yoke up. This overland train was never molested by the Indians, although one night some spying Cheyennes were made prisoners under guard over night until the oxen were yoked up and ready to start. [269]



Oregon Trail Monument, two miles north of Hebron Erected by the citizens of Hebron and Thayer county, and Oregon Trail

**Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, dedicated May
24, 1915. Cost \$400**

The prospectors crossed the Missouri river at Omaha, which at that time had no residences or business buildings. Enroute to Salt Lake City, the South Platte route was followed, averaging about twenty miles a day. Enough provisions were carried to last through the journey and as they had some provisions left when they reached Salt Lake City, they were sold to the half-starved Mormons at big prices.

Some perplexing difficulties were encountered on the journey. At one point in the mountains, beyond Salt Lake City, the trail was so narrow that the oxen were unhitched and led single file around the cliff, while the wagons were taken apart and lowered down the precipice with ropes.

When crossing the desert, additional water had to be carried in extra kegs and canteens. When the tired cattle got near enough to the river to smell the fresh water, they pricked up their ears, stiffened their necks, and made a rush for the stream, so the men had to stand in front of them until the chains were loosened to prevent their crazily dashing into the water with the wagons.

Mr. Roper worked by the day for three months in the mines northeast of San Francisco. While placer mining, he one day picked up a gold nugget, from which his engagement ring was made by a jeweler in San Francisco, and worn by Mrs. Roper until her death, October 28, 1908. The ring was engraved with two hearts with the initials M. E. R., and is now in the possession of their son Maun, whose initials are the same.

Mr. Roper was one of a company of three men who worked a claim that had been once worked over, on a report that there was a crevasse that had not been bottomed. The first workers did not have "quicksilver," which is necessary to catch fine gold, but Mr. Roper's company had a jug shipped from San Francisco. Nothing less than a fifty-pound jug of quicksilver would be sold, at fifty cents a pound. This was used in sluice-boxes as "quicksilver riffles," to catch the fine float gold, when it would instantly sink to the bottom of the quicksilver, while the dirt and stones would wash over; the coarse rock would be first tossed out with a sluice-fork (similar to a flat-tined pitchfork). In three years the three men worked the mine out, making about fifteen hundred dollars apiece. [270]

With his share carried in buckskin sacks belted around his waist under his clothes, Mr. Roper started in a sailing vessel up north along the coast on a trip, hunting for richer diggings. Then he went on a steamer to the Isthmus of Panama, which he crossed with a hired horse team, then by steamer to New York and by railroad to Philadelphia to get his gold minted.

After his marriage in 1861 Mr. Roper returned to the West and in '64 ran a hotel at Beatrice called "Pat's Cabin." When Nebraska voted on the question of admission to statehood, Mr. Roper's ballot was vote No. 3.

Desiring to get a home of his own, Fred Roper came on west into what is now Thayer county, and about six miles northwest of the present site of Hebron up the Little Blue, he bought out the preëmption rights of Bill and Walt Hackney, who had "squatted" there with the expectation of paying the government the customary \$1.25 per acre. In certain localities those claims afterwards doubled to \$2.50 per acre. Mr. Roper paid only the value of the log cabin and log stables, and came into possession of the eighty acres, which he homesteaded, and later bought adjoining land for \$1.25 per acre.

Occasionally he made trips to St. Joe and Nebraska City for supplies, which he freighted overland to Hackney ranch. At that time Mr. Roper knew every man on the trail from the Missouri river to Kearney. On these trips he used to stop with Bill McCandles, who was shot with three other

victims by "Wild Bill" on Rock creek in Jefferson county.

The first house at Hackney ranch was burned by the Cheyenne Indians in their great raid of 1864, at which time Miss Laura Roper (daughter of Joe B. Roper) and Mrs. Eubanks were captured by the Indians near Fox Ford in Nuckolls county and kept in captivity until ransomed by Colonel Wyncoop of the U. S. army for \$1,000. Si Alexander of Meridian (southeast of the present town of Alexandria), was with the government troops at the time of Miss Roper's release near Denver. Her parents, believing her dead, had meanwhile moved back to New York state. (Laura Roper is still alive, being now Mrs. Laura Vance, at Skiatook, Oklahoma.) At the time of the above-mentioned raid, the Indians at Hackney ranch threw the charred cottonwood logs of the house into the well, to prevent travelers from getting water. Fred Roper was then at Beatrice, having just a few days before sold Hackney ranch to an overland traveler. After the raid the new owner deserted the place, in the fall of 1869, and in a few months Mr. Roper returned from Beatrice and again preëmpted the same place. [271]

In 1876 Mr. and Mrs. Roper moved to Meridian and ran a tavern for about a year, then moved back to Hackney, where they resided until the fall of 1893, when they moved into Hebron to make their permanent home. Mr. Roper was postmaster at Hebron for four years under Cleveland's last administration. [272]

THE LURE OF THE PRAIRIES

BY LUCY L. CORRELL

The memories of the long hot days of August, 1874, are burned into the seared recollection of the pioneers of Nebraska. For weeks the sun had poured its relentless rays upon the hopeful, patient people, until the very atmosphere seemed vibrant with the pulsing heat-waves.

One day a young attorney of Hebron was called to Nuckolls county to "try a case" before a justice of the peace, near a postoffice known as Henrietta. Having a light spring wagon and two ponies he invited his wife and little baby to accompany him for the drive of twenty-five miles. Anything was better than the monotony of staying at home, and the boundless freedom of the prairies was always enticing. An hour's drive and the heat of the sun became oppressively intense. The barren distance far ahead was unbroken by tree, or house, or field. There was no sound but the steady patter of the ponies' feet over the prairie grass; no moving object but an occasional flying hawk; no road but a trail through the rich prairie grass, and one seemed lost in a wilderness of unvarying green. The heat-waves seemed to rise from the ground and quiver in the air. Soon a wind, soft at first, came from the southwest, but ere long became a hot blast, and reminded one of the heated air from an opened oven door. Added to other inconveniences came the intense thirst produced from the sun and dry atmosphere—and one might have cried "My kingdom for a drink!"—but there was no "kingdom."

After riding about nine miles there came into view the homestead of Teddy McGovern—the only evidence of life seen on that long day's drive. Here was a deep well of cold water. Cheery words of greeting and hearty handclasps evidenced that all were neighbors in those days. Again turning westward a corner of the homestead was passed where were several little graves among young growing trees—"Heartache corner" it might have been called. The sun shone as relentless there as upon all Nebraska, that scorching summer. [273]

As the afternoon wore on, looking across the prairies the heat-waves seemed to pulse and beckon us on; the lure of the prairies was upon us, and had we chosen we could not but have obeyed. Only the pioneers knew how to endure, to close their eyes to exclude the burning light, and close

the lips to the withering heat.

At last our destination was reached at the homestead of the justice of the peace. We were gladly seated to a good supper with the host and family of growing boys. After the meal the "Justice Court" was held out of doors in the shade of the east side of the house, there being more room and "more air" outside. The constable, the offender, the witness and attorney and a few neighbors constituted the prairie court, and doubtless the decisions were as legal and as lasting as those of more imposing surroundings of later days.

But the joy of the day had only just begun, for as the sun went down, so did even the hot wind, leaving the air so heavy and motionless and oppressive one felt his lungs closing up. The boys of the family sought sleep out of doors, the others under the low roof of a two-roomed log house. Sleep was impossible, rest unknown until about midnight, when mighty peals of thunder and brilliant lightning majestically announced the oncoming Nebraska storm. No lights were needed, as nature's electricity was illuminatingly sufficient. The very logs quivered with the thunder's reverberations, and soon a terrific wind loaded with hail beat against the little house until one wondered whether it were better to be roasted alive by nature's consuming heat, or torn asunder by the warring elements. But the storm beat out its fury, and with daylight Old Sol peeped over the prairies with a drenched but smiling face.

Adieus were made and the party started homeward. After a few miles' travel the unusual number of grasshoppers was commented upon, and soon the air was filled with their white bodies and beating wings; then the alarming fact dawned upon the travelers that this was a grasshopper raid. The pioneers had lived through the terrors of Indian raids, but this assault from an enemy outside of the human realm was a new experience. The ponies were urged eastward, but the hoppers cheerfully kept pace and were seen to be outdistancing the travelers. They filled the air and sky and obliterated even the horizon. Heat, thirst, distance were all submerged in the appalling dread of what awaited.

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As the sun went down the myriads of grasshoppers "went to roost." Every vegetable, every weed and blade of grass bore its burden. On the clothes-line the hoppers were seated two and three deep; and upon the windlass rope which drew the bucket from the well they clung and entwined their bodies.

The following morning the hungry millions raised in the air, saluted the barren landscape and proceeded to set an emulating pace for even the busy bee. They flew and beat about, impudently slapping their wings against the upturned, anxious faces, and weary eyes, trying to penetrate through the apparent snowstorm—the air filled with the white bodies of the ravenous hordes. This appalling sight furnished diversion sufficient to the inhabitants of the little community for that day.

People moved quietly about, in subdued tones wondering what the outcome would be. How long would the hoppers remain? Would they deposit their eggs to hatch the following spring and thus perpetuate their species? Would the old progenitors return?

But, true to the old Persian proverb, "this too, passed away." The unwelcome intruders departed leaving us with an occasional old boot-leg, or leather strap, or dried rubber, from which the cormorants had sucked the "juice."

The opening of the next spring was cold and rainy. Not many of the grasshopper eggs hatched. Beautiful Nebraska was herself again and "blossomed as the rose."

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SUFFRAGE IN NEBRASKA

Statement by Mrs. Gertrude M. McDowell

When I was requested to write a short article in regard to woman's suffrage in Nebraska I thought it would be an easy task. As the days passed and my thoughts became confusedly spread over the whole question from its incipiency, it proved to be not an easy task but a most difficult one. There was so much of interest that one hardly knew where to begin and what to leave unsaid.

This question has been of life-long interest to me and I have always been in full sympathy with the movement. When the legislature in 1882 submitted the suffrage amendment to the people of the state of Nebraska for their decision, we were exceedingly anxious concerning the outcome.

A state suffrage association was formed. Mrs. Brooks of Omaha was elected president; Mrs. Bittenbender of Lincoln, recording secretary; Gertrude M. McDowell of Fairbury, corresponding secretary.

There were many enthusiastic workers throughout the state. Among them, I remember Mrs. Clara Bewick Colby, of Beatrice, whom we considered our general; Mrs. Lucinda Russell and Mrs. Mary Holmes of Tecumseh, Mrs. Annie M. Steele of Fairbury, Mrs. A. J. Sawyer, Mrs. A. J. Caldwell, and Mrs. Deborah King of Lincoln, Mrs. E. M. Correll of Hebron and many more that I do not now recall.

There were many enthusiastic men over the state who gave the cause ardent support. Senator E. M. Correll of Hebron was ever on the alert to aid in convention work and to speak a word which might carry conviction to some unbeliever.

Some years previous to our campaign, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucy Stone on one of their lecture tours in the West were so impressed with the enthusiasm and good work of Hon. E. M. Correll that they elected him president of the National Suffrage Association, for one year. I also recall Judge Ben S. Baker, now of Omaha, and C. F. Steele of Fairbury, as staunch supporters of the measure. During the campaign, many national workers were sent into the state, among them Susan B. Anthony, Phoebe Couzens, Elizabeth Saxon of New Orleans, and others. They directed and did valiant work in the cause. We failed to carry the measure in the state, but we are glad to note that it carried in our own town of Fairbury. [276]

Thanks to the indomitable personality of our Nebraska women, they began immediately to plan for another campaign. In 1914, our legislature again submitted an amendment and it was again defeated. Since then I have been more than ever in favor of making the amendment a national one, President Wilson to the contrary notwithstanding—not because we think the educational work is being entirely lost, but because so much time and money are being wasted on account of our foreign population and their attitude towards reform. It is a grave and a great question. One thing we are assured of, viz: that we will never give up our belief in the final triumph of our great cause.

It is a far cry from the first woman's suffrage convention in 1850, brought about by the women who were excluded from acting as delegates at the anti-slavery convention in London in 1840.

Thus a missionary work was begun then and there for the emancipation of women in "the land of the free and the home of the brave." We can never be grateful enough to Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and other noble, self-sacrificing women who did so much pioneer work in order to bring about better laws for women and in order to change the moth-eaten thought of the world.

Many felt somewhat discouraged when the election returns from New Jersey, Massachusetts, and New York announced the defeat of the measure, but really when we remember the long list of states that have equal suffrage we have reason to rejoice and to take new courage. We now have Wyoming, Kansas, Utah, Idaho, Colorado, California, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Montana,

Arizona, New Mexico, Alaska, and Illinois, besides the countries of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Finland, New Zealand, Australia, Nova Scotia, and some parts of England.

In the future when the cobwebs have all been swept from the mind of the world and everyone is enjoying the new atmosphere of equal rights only a very few will realize the struggle these brave women endured in order to bring about better conditions for the world. [277]

Statement by Lucy L. Correll

Hebron, Thayer county, Nebraska, was the cradle of the Nebraska woman suffrage movement, as this was the first community in the state to organize a permanent woman's suffrage association.

Previous to this organization the subject had been agitated through editorials in the Hebron *Journal*, and by a band of progressive, thinking women. Upon their request the editor of the *Journal*, E. M. Correll, prepared an address upon "Woman and Citizenship." Enthusiasm was aroused, and a column of the *Journal* was devoted to the interests of women, and was ably edited by the coterie of ladies having the advancement of the legal status of women at heart.

Through the efforts of Mr. Correll, Susan B. Anthony was induced to come to Hebron and give her lecture on "Bread versus the Ballot," on October 30, 1877. Previous to this time many self-satisfied women believed they had all the "rights" they wanted, but they were soon awakened to a new consciousness of their true status wherein they discovered their "rights" were only "privileges."

On April 15, 1879, Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, upon invitation, lectured in Hebron and organized the Thayer County Woman's Suffrage Association. This society grew from fifteen, the number at organization, to about seventy-five, many leading business men becoming members.

Other organizations in the state followed, and at the convening of the Nebraska legislature of 1881, a joint resolution providing for the submission to the electors of this state an amendment to section 1, article VII, of the constitution, was presented by Representative E. M. Correll, and mainly through his efforts passed the house by the necessary three-fifths majority, and the senate by twenty-two to eight, but was defeated at the polls.

During that memorable campaign of 1881-82, Lucy Stone Blackwell, and many other talented women of note, from the eastern states, lectured in Nebraska for the advancement of women, leaving the impress of the nobility of their characters upon the women of the middle West. [278]

The Thayer County Woman's Suffrage Association was highly honored, as several of its members held positions of trust in the state association, and one of its members, Hon. E. M. Correll, who was publishing the *Woman's Journal*, at Lincoln, at the time of the annual conference of the American Woman's Suffrage Association, at Louisville, Kentucky, in October, 1881, was elected to the important position of president of that national organization, in recognition of the work he had performed for the advancement of the cause of "Equality before the Law."

This association served its time and purpose and after many years was instrumental in organizing the Hebron Library Association.

The constitution and by-laws of this first woman's suffrage association of the state are still well preserved. The first officers were: Susan E. Ferguson, president; Harriet G. Huse, vice president; Barbara J. Thompson, secretary; Lucy L. Correll, treasurer; A. Martha Vermillion, corresponding secretary. Of these first officers only one is now living. [279]

AN INDIAN RAID

BY ERNEST E. CORRELL

In 1869, Fayette Kingsley and family resided on the Haney homestead at the southeast corner of Hebron, where Mr. Haney had been brutally murdered in the presence of his three daughters in 1867, the daughters escaping and eventually reaching their home, "back east."

On May 26, 1869, "Old Daddy" Marks, accompanied by a young man for protection, drove over from Rose creek to warn Kingsley's that the Indians were on a raid. While they were talking, Mr. Kingsley heard the pit-pat of the Indian horses on the wet prairie. From the west were riding thirty-six Indians, led by a white man, whose hat and fine boots attracted attention in contrast to the bare-headed Indians wearing moccasins.

In the house were enough guns and revolvers to shoot sixty rounds without loading. When Mrs. Kingsley saw the Indians approaching she scattered the arms and ammunition on the table where the men could get them. There were two Spencer carbines, a double-barreled shotgun, and two navy revolvers, besides other firearms.

Mr. Kingsley and Charlie Miller (a young man from the East who was boarding with them) went into the house, got the guns, and leveled them on the Indians, who had come within 250 yards of the log-house, but who veered off on seeing the guns. One of the party at the house exclaimed, "The Indians are going past and turning off!" Mr. Marks then said, "Then for God's sake, don't shoot!"

The Indians went on down the river and drove away eleven of King Fisher's horses. Two of Fisher's boys lay concealed in the grass and saw the white leader of the Indians remove his hat, showing his close-cut hair. He talked the Indian language and ordered the redskins to drive up a pony, which proved to be lame and was not taken. The Indians continued their raid nearly to Meridian.

Meanwhile at Kingsley's preparations were made for a hurried flight. Mr. Marks said he must go home to protect his own family on Rose creek, but the young man accompanying him insisted that he cross the river and return by way of Alexander's ranch on the Big Sandy, as otherwise they would be following the Indians. Mr. Kingsley, with his wife and three children, went with them to Alexander's ranch, staying there two weeks until Governor Butler formed a company of militia composed of the settlers, to protect the frontier. A company of the Second U. S. Cavalry was sent here and stationed west of Hackney, later that summer. The Indians killed a man and his son, and took their horses, less than two miles from the soldiers' camp.

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On returning to the homestead, two cows and two yoke of oxen were found all right. Before the flight, Mr. Kingsley had torn down the pen, letting out a calf and a pig. Sixty days later, on recovering the pig, Mr. Kingsley noticed a sore spot on its back, and he pulled out an arrow point about three inches long.

The Indians had taken all the bedding and eatables, even taking fresh baked bread out of the oven. They tore open the feather-bed and scattered the contents about—whether for amusement or in search of hidden treasures is not known. They found a good pair of boots, and cut out the fine leather tops (perhaps for moccasins) but left the heavy soles. From a new harness they also took all the fine straps and left the tugs and heavy leather. They had such a load that at the woodpile they discarded Mr. Kingsley's double-barreled shotgun, which had been loaded with buckshot for them.

Captain Wilson, a lawyer who boarded with Mr. Kingsley, had gone to warn King Fisher, leaving several greenbacks inside a copy of the Nebraska statutes. These the Indians found and appropriated—perhaps their white leader was a renegade lawyer accustomed to getting money out of the statutes.

In 1877 Mr. Kingsley's family had a narrow escape from death in a peculiar manner. After a heavy rain the walls of his basement caved in. His children occupied two beds standing end to end and filling the end of the basement. When the rocks from the wall caved in, both beds were crushed to the floor and a little pet dog on one of the beds was killed, but the children had no bones broken. Presumably the bedding protected them and the breaking of the bedsteads broke the jar of the rocks on their bodies.

Mr. Kingsley has a deeply religious nature, and believes that Divine protection has been with him through life.

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REMINISCENCES

BY MRS. E. A. RUSSELL

In September, 1884, Rev. E. A. Russell was transferred by the American Baptist Publication Society from his work in the East to Nebraska, and settled on an eighty-acre ranch near Ord. Mr. Russell had held pastorates for twenty-six years in New Hampshire, New York, and Indiana, but desired to come west for improvement in health. He was accompanied by his family of seven. Western life was strange and exciting with always the possibility of an Indian raid, and dangerous prairie fires. It was the custom to plow a wide furrow around the home buildings as a precaution against the latter.

The first year in Nebraska, our oldest daughter, Alice M. Russell, was principal of the Ord school, and Edith taught in the primary grade.

On the fifth of August, 1885, late in the afternoon, a terrific hail-storm swept over the country. All crops were destroyed; even the grass was beaten into the earth, so there was little left as pasture for cattle. Pigs and poultry were killed by dozens and the plea of a tender-hearted girl, that a poor calf, beaten down by hailstones, might be brought "right into the kitchen," was long remembered. Not a window in our house remained unbroken. The floor was covered with rain and broken glass and ice; and our new, white, hard-finished walls and ceilings were bespattered and disfigured.

This hail-storm was a general calamity. The whole country suffered and many families returned, disheartened, to friends in the East.

The Baptist church was so shattered that, for its few members, it was no easy task to repair it. But they soon put it in good condition, only to see it utterly wrecked by a small cyclone the following October.

The income that year from a forty-acre cornfield was one small "nubbin" less than three inches in length.

All these things served to emphasize the heart-rending stories we had heard of sufferings of early pioneers. The nervous shock sustained by the writer was so great that a year elapsed before she was able to see clearly, or to read. As she was engaged on the four years' post-graduate course of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle, her eldest son read aloud to her during that year and her work was completed at the same time as he and his younger sister graduated with the class of 1887.

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Some time later the writer organized a Chautauqua Circle, Ord's first literary society. Its president was a Mr. King and its secretary E. J. Clements, now of Lincoln, Nebraska.

During our second winter in Nebraska the writer did not see a woman to speak to after her

daughters went to their schools in Lincoln, where one was teaching and the other a University pupil.

Of the "Minnie Freeman Storm" in January, 1888, all our readers have doubtless heard. Our two youngest boys were at school a mile away; but fortunately we lived south of town and they reached home in safety.

In 1881 Fort Hartsuff, twelve miles away, had been abandoned. The building of this fort had been the salvation of pioneers, giving them work and wages after the terrible scourge of locusts in 1874. It was still the pride of those who had been enabled to remain in the desolated country and we heard much about it. So, when a brother came from New England to visit an only sister on the "Great American Desert," we took an early start one morning and visited "The Fort." The buildings, at that time, were in fairly good condition. Officers' quarters, barracks, commissary buildings, stables, and other structures were of concrete, so arranged as to form a hollow square; and, near by on a hill, was a circular stockade, which was said to be connected with the fort by an underground passage.

A prominent figure in Ord in 1884 was an attractive young lady who later married Dr. F. D. Haldeman. In 1904 Mrs. Haldeman organized *Coronado* chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution. Her sister, Dr. Minerva Newbecker, has practiced medicine in Ord for many years. Another sister, Clara Newbecker, has long been a teacher in the public schools of Chicago. These three sisters, who descended from Lieutenant Philip Newbecker, of Revolutionary fame, and Mrs. Nellie Coombs, are the only living charter members of *Coronado* chapter. The chapter was named in honor of that governor of New Galicia in Mexico who is supposed to have passed through some portion of our territory in 1540 when he fitted out an expedition to seek and christianize the people of that wonderful region where "golden bells and dishes of solid gold" hung thick upon the trees. [283]

About all that is definitely known is that he set up a cross at the big river, with the inscription: "Thus far came Francisco de Coronado, General of an expedition."

And now, in 1915, the family of seven, by one marriage after another, has dwindled to a lonely—two.

The head of our household, with recovered health, served his denomination twenty years in this great field, comprising Nebraska, Upper Colorado, and Wyoming. He retired in 1904 to the sanctuary of a quiet home. [284]

REMINISCENCES OF FORT CALHOUN

BY W. H. ALLEN

I reached Fort Calhoun in May, 1856, with my friends, Mr. and Mrs. John Allen; coming with team and wagon from Edgar county, Illinois. I was then eleven years old. Fort Calhoun had no soldiers, but some of the Fort Atkinson buildings were still standing. I remember the liberty pole, the magazine, the old brick-yard, at which places we children played and picked up trinkets. There was one general store then, kept by Pink Allen and Jascoby, and but few settlers. Among those I remember were, my uncle, Thomas Allen; E. H. Clark, a land agent; Col. Geo. Stevens and family, who started a hotel in 1856, and Orrin Rhoades, whose family lived on a claim five miles west of town. That summer my father took a claim near Rhoades', building a log house and barn at the edge of the woods. We moved there in the fall, and laid in a good supply of wood for the huge fireplace, used for cooking as well as heating. Our rations were scanty, consisting of

wild game for meat, corn bread, potatoes and beans purchased at Fort Calhoun. The next spring we cleared some small patches for garden and corn, which we planted and tended with a hoe. There were no houses between ours and Fort Calhoun, nor any bridges. Rhoades' house and ours were the only ones between Fontenelle and Fort Calhoun. Members of the Quincy colony at Fontenelle went to Council Bluffs for flour and used our place as a half-way house, stopping each way over night. How we children did enjoy their company, and stories of the Indians. We were never molested by the red men, only that they would come begging food occasionally.

I had no schooling until 1860 when I worked for my board in Fort Calhoun at E. H. Clark's and attended public school a few months. The next two years I did likewise, boarding at Alex. Reed's.

From 1866 to 1869 inclusive I cut cord-wood and railroad ties which I hauled to Omaha for use in the building of the Union Pacific railroad. I received from \$8.00 to \$15.00 per cord for my wood, and \$1.00 each for ties. [285]

Deer were plentiful and once when returning from Omaha I saw an old deer and fawn. Unhitching my team I jumped on one horse and chased the young one down, caught and tamed it. I put a bell on its neck and let it run about at will. It came to its sleeping place every night until the next spring when it left, never to be seen by us again.

In the fall of 1864 I was engaged by Edward Creighton to freight with a wagon train to Denver, carrying flour and telegraph supplies. The cattle were corralled and broke at Cole's creek, west of Omaha known then as "Robber's Roost," and I thought it great fun to yoke and break those wild cattle. We started in October with forty wagons, seven yoke of oxen to each wagon. I went as far as Fort Cottonwood, one hundred miles beyond Fort Kearny, reaching there about November 20. There about a dozen of us grew tired of the trip and turned back with a wagon and one ox team. On our return, at Plum creek, thirty-fives miles west of Fort Kearny we saw where a train had been attacked by Indians, oxen killed, wagons robbed and abandoned. We waded the rivers, Loup Fork and Platte, which was a cold bath at that time of year.

I lived at this same place in the woods until I took a homestead three miles farther west in 1868.

My father's home was famous at that time, also years afterward, as a beautiful spot, in which to hold Fourth of July celebrations, school picnics, etc., and the hospitality and good cooking of my mother, "Aunt Polly Allen" as she was familiarly called, was known to all the early settlers in this section of the country. [286]

REMINISCENCES OF WASHINGTON COUNTY

BY MRS. EMILY BOTTORFF ALLEN

I came to Washington county, Nebraska, with my parents in the fall of 1865, by ox team from Indiana. We stopped at Rockport, where father and brothers got work at wood chopping. They built a house by digging into a hill and using logs to finish the front. The weather was delightful, and autumn's golden tints in the foliage were beautiful.

We gathered hazel nuts and wild grapes, often scaring a deer from the underbrush. Our neighbors were the Shipleys, who were very hospitable, and shared their garden products with us.

During the winter father bought John Frazier's homestead, but our home was still in a dugout, in which we were comfortable. We obtained all needed supplies from Fort Calhoun or Omaha.

In the spring Amasa Warrick, from Cuming City, came to our home in search of a teacher and

offered me the position, which I accepted. Elam Clark of Fort Calhoun endorsed my teacher's certificate. I soon commenced teaching at Cuming City, and pupils came for miles around. I boarded at George A. Brigham's. Mr. Brigham was county surveyor, postmaster, music teacher, as well as land agent, and a very fine man.

One day, while busy with my classes, the door opened and three large Indians stole in, seating themselves near the stove. I was greatly alarmed and whispered to one of my pupils to hasten to the nearest neighbor for assistance. As soon as the lad left, one Indian went to the window and asked "Where boy go?" I said, "I don't know." The three Indians chattered together a moment, and then the spokesman said, "I kill you sure," but seeing a man coming in the distance with a gun, they all hurried out and ran over the hill.

I taught at Cuming City until the school fund was exhausted, and by that time the small schoolhouse on Long creek was completed. Allen Craig and Thomas McDonald were directors. I boarded at home and taught the first school in this district, with fourteen pupils enrolled. At this time Judge Bowen of Omaha was county superintendent, and I went there to have my certificate renewed. [287]

When all the public money in the Long Creek district was used up, I went back to Cuming City to teach. The population of this district had increased to such an extent that I needed an assistant, and I was authorized to appoint one of my best pupils to the position. I selected Vienna Cooper, daughter of Dr. P. J. Cooper. I boarded at the Lippincott home, known as the "Halfway House" on the stage line between Omaha and Decatur. It was a stage station where horses were changed and drivers and passengers stopped over night.

At the close of our summer term we held a picnic and entertainment on the Methodist church grounds, using the lumber for the new church for our platform and seats. This entertainment was pronounced the grandest affair ever held in the West.

The school funds of the Cuming City district being again exhausted, I returned to Long Creek district in the fall of 1867, and taught as long as there was any money in the treasury. By that time the village of Blair had sprung up, absorbing Cuming City and De Soto, and I was employed to teach in their new log schoolhouse. T. M. Carter was director of the Blair district. Orrin Colby of Bell Creek, was county superintendent, and he visited the schools of the county, making the rounds on foot. I taught at Blair until April, 1869, when I was married to William Henry Allen, a pioneer of Fort Calhoun. Our license was issued by Judge Stilts of Fort Calhoun, where we were married by Dr. Andrews. We raised our family in the Long Creek district, and still reside where we settled in those pioneer days. [288]

REMINISCENCES OF PIONEER LIFE AT FORT CALHOUN

BY MRS. N. J. FRAZIER BROOKS

I came to Nebraska in the spring of 1857 from Edgar county, Illinois, with my husband, Thomas Frazier, and small daughter, Mary. We traveled in a wagon drawn by oxen, took a claim one and one-half miles south of Fort Calhoun and thought we were settling near what would be Nebraska's metropolis. My husband purchased slabs at the saw mill at Calhoun and built our shanty of one room with a deck roof. For our two yoke of oxen he made a shed of poles and grass and we all were comfortable and happy in our new home. In the spring Mr. Frazier broke prairie, put in the most extensive crops hereabouts, for my husband was young and ambitious. We had brought

enough money with us to buy everything obtainable in this new country, but he would often say, "I'd hate to have the home folks see how you and Mary have to live." Deer were a common sight and we ate much venison; wild turkeys were also plentiful. They could be heard every morning and my husband would often go in our woods and get one for our meat.

In 1859 he went to Boone county, Iowa, and bought a cow, hauling her home in a wagon. She soon had a heifer calf and we felt that our herd was well started. The following winter was so severe that during one storm we brought the cow in our house to save her. The spring of 1860 opened up fine and as we had prospered and were now making money from our crops we built us a frame house, bought a driving team, cows, built fences, etc. I still own this first claim, and although my visions of Fort Calhoun were never realized I know of no better place in which to live and my old neighbors, some few of whom are still here, proved to be everlasting friends. [289]

REMINISCENCES OF DE SOTO IN 1855

BY OLIVER BOUVIER

Mother Bouvier, a kind old soul, who settled in De Soto in the summer of 1855, had many hardships. Just above her log house, on the ridge, was the regular Indian trail and the Indians made it a point to stop at our house regularly, as they went to Fort Calhoun or to Omaha. She befriended them many times and they always treated her kindly. "Omaha Mary," who was often a caller at our house was always at the head of her band. She was educated and could talk French well to us. What she said was law with all the Indians. Our creek was thick with beavers and as a small boy I could not trap them, but she could, and had her traps there and collected many skins from our place. I wanted her to show me the trick of it, but she would never allow me to follow her. At one time I sneaked along and she caught me in the act and grabbed me by the collar and with a switch in her hand, gave me a severe warning. This same squaw was an expert with bow and arrow, and I have seen her speedily cross the Missouri river in a canoe with but one oar. Our wall was always black and greasy by the Indians sitting against it while they ate the plates of mush and sorghum my mother served them. I have caught many buffalo calves out on the prairies, and one I brought to our De Soto home and tamed it. My sister Adeline and myself tried to break it to drive with an ox hitched to a sled, but never succeeded to any great extent. One day Joseph La Flesche came along and offered us \$50.00 for it and we sold it to him but he found he could not separate it from our herd, so bought a heifer, which it would follow and Mr. Joseph Boucha and myself took them up to the reservation for him. He entertained us warmly at his Indian quarters for two or three days. I have cured many buffalo steak (by the Indian method) and we used the meat on our table. [290]

REMINISCENCES

BY THOMAS M. CARTER

In the spring of 1855, with my brother, Alex Carter, E. P. and D. D. Stout, I left the beautiful hills and valleys of Ohio, to seek a home in the west. After four weeks of travel by steamboat and stage, horseback and afoot, we reached the town of Omaha, then only a small village. It took us fourteen days to make the trip from St. Louis to Omaha.

While waiting at Kanessville or Council Bluffs as it is now called, we ascended the hills back of the town and gazed across to the Nebraska side. I thought of Daniel Boone as he wandered westward on the Kentucky hills looking into Ohio. "Fair was the scene that lay before the little band, that paused upon its toilsome way, to view the new found land."

At St. Mary we met Peter A. Sarpy. He greeted us all warmly and invited all to get out of the stage and have a drink at his expense. As an inducement to settle in Omaha, we were each offered a lot anywhere on the townsite, if we would build on it, but we had started for De Soto, Washington county, and no ordinary offer could induce us to change our purpose.

We thought that with such an excellent steamboat landing and quantities of timber in the vicinity, De Soto had as good a chance as Omaha to become the metropolis. We reached De Soto May 14, 1855, and found one log house finished and another under way. Zaremba Jackson, a newspaper man, and Dr. Finney occupied the log cabin and we boarded with them until we had located a claim and built a cabin upon the land we subsequently entered and upon which the city of Blair is now built.

After I had built my cabin of peeled willow poles the Cuming City Claim Club warned me by writing on the willow poles of my cabin that if I did not abandon that claim before June 15, 1855, I would be treated to a free bath in Fish creek and free transportation across the Missouri river. This however proved to be merely a bluff. I organized and was superintendent of the first Sunday school in Washington county in the spring of 1856.

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The first board of trustees of the Methodist church in the county was appointed by Rev. A. G. White, on June 1, 1866, and consisted of the following members, Alex Carter, L. D. Cameron, James Van Horn, M. B. Wilds, and myself. The board met and resolved itself into a building committee and appointed me as chairman. We then proceeded to devise means to provide for a church building at Cuming City, by each member of the board subscribing fifty dollars. At the second meeting it was discovered that this was inadequate and it was deemed necessary for this subscription to be doubled. The church was built, the members of the committee hewing logs of elm, walnut, and oak for sills and hauling with ox teams. The church was not completely finished but was used for a place of worship. This building was moved under the supervision of Rev. Jacob Adriance and by his financial support from Cuming City to Blair in 1870. Later it was sold to the Christian church, moved off and remodeled and is still doing service as a church building in Blair.

Jacob Adriance was the first regular Methodist pastor to be assigned to the mission extending from De Soto to Decatur. His first service was held at De Soto on May 3, 1857, at the home of my brother, Jacob Carter, a Baptist. The congregation consisted of Jacob Carter, his family of five, Alex Carter, myself and wife.

The winter before Rev. Adriance came Isaac Collins was conducting protracted meetings in De Soto and so much interest was being aroused that some of the ruffians decided to break up the meetings. One night they threw a dead dog through a window hitting the minister in the back, knocking over the candles and leaving us in darkness. The minister straightened up and declared, "The devil isn't dead in De Soto yet."

I was present at the Calhoun claim fight at which Mr. Goss was killed and Purple and Smith were wounded.

The first little log school was erected on the townsite of Blair, the patrons cutting and hauling the lumber. I was the first director and Mrs. William Allen *nee* Emily Bottorff, first teacher.

I served as worthy patriarch of the First Sons of Temperance organization in the county and lived in De Soto long enough to see the last of the whiskey traffic banished from that township.

I have served many years in Washington county as school director, justice of the peace, and

member of the county board.

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In October, 1862, I joined the Second Nebraska cavalry for service on the frontier. Our regiment lost a few scalps and buried a number of Indians. We bivouacked on the plains, wrapped in our blankets, while the skies smiled propitiously over us and we dreamed of home and the girls we left behind us, until reveille called to find the drapery of our couch during the night had been reinforced by winding sheets of drifting snow.

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FORT CALHOUN IN THE LATER FIFTIES

BY MRS. E. H. CLARK

E. H. Clark came from Indiana in March, 1855, with Judge James Bradley, and was clerk of the district court in Nebraska under him. He became interested in Fort Calhoun, then the county-seat of Washington county. The town company employed him to survey it into town lots, plat the same, and advertise it. New settlers landed here that spring and lots were readily sold. In June, 1855, Mr. Clark contracted with the proprietors to put up a building on the townsite for a hotel; said building to be 24x48 feet, two stories high, with a wing of the same dimensions; the structure to be of hewn logs and put up in good style. For this he was to receive one-ninth interest in the town. Immediately he commenced getting out timber, boarding in the meantime with Major Arnold's family, and laboring under many disadvantages for want of skilled labor and teams, there being but one span of horses and seven yoke of cattle in the entire precinct at this time. What lumber was necessary for the building had to be obtained from Omaha at sixty dollars per thousand and hauled a circuitous route by the old Mormon trail. As an additional incident to his trials, one morning at breakfast Mr. Clark was told by Mrs. Arnold that the last mouthful was on the table. Major Arnold was absent for supplies and delayed, supposedly for lack of conveyance; whereupon Mr. Clark procured two yoke of oxen and started at once for Omaha for provisions and lumber. Never having driven oxen before he met with many mishaps. By traveling all night through rain and mud he reached sight of home next day at sunrise, when the oxen ran away upsetting the lumber and scattering groceries all over the prairies. Little was recovered except some bacon and a barrel of flour.

Finally the hotel was ready for occupancy and Col. George Stevens with his family took up their residence there. It was the best hostelry in the west. Mr. Stevens was appointed postmaster and gave up one room to the office. The Stevens family were very popular everywhere.

Mr. and Mrs. John B. Kuony were married at the Douglas house, Omaha, about 1855 and came to the new hotel as cooks; but soon afterward started a small store which in due time made them a fortune. This couple were also popular in business, as well as socially.

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In March, 1856, my husband sent to Indiana for me. I went to St. Louis by train, then by boat to Omaha. I was three weeks on the boat, and had my gold watch and chain stolen from my cabin enroute. I brought a set of china dishes which were a family heirloom, clothes and bedding. The boxes containing these things we afterward used for table and lounge. My husband had a small log cabin ready on my arrival.

I was met at Omaha by Thomas J. Allen with a wagon and ox team. He hauled building material and provisions and I sat on a nail keg all the way out. He drove through prairie grass as high as the oxen's back. I asked him how he ever learned the road. When a boat would come up the river every one would rush to buy furniture and provisions; I got a rocking chair in 1857, the first one in the town. It was loaned out to sick folks and proved a treasure. In 1858 we bought a clock of John Bauman of Omaha, paying \$45.00 for it, and it is still a perfect time piece.

My father, Dr. J. P. Andrews, came in the spring of 1857 and was a practicing physician, also a minister for many years here. He was the first Sunday school superintendent here and held that office continually until 1880 when he moved to Blair.

In 1858 the Vanier brothers started a steam grist mill which was a great convenience for early settlers. In 1861 Elam Clark took it on a mortgage and ran it for many years. Mr. Clark also carried on a large fur trade with the Indians, and they would go east to the bottoms to hunt and camp for two or three weeks.

At one time I had planned a dinner party and invited all my lady friends. I prepared the best meal possible for those days, with my china set all in place and was very proud to see it all spread, and when just ready to invite my guests to the table, a big Indian appeared in the doorway and said, "hungry" in broken accents. I said, "Yes I get you some" and started to the stove but he said, "No," and pointed to the table. I brought a generous helping in a plate but he walked out doors, gave a shrill yell which brought several others of his tribe and they at once sat down, ate everything in sight, while the guests looked on in fear and trembling; having finished they left in great glee.

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SOME ITEMS FROM WASHINGTON COUNTY

BY MRS. MAY ALLEN LAZURE

Alfred D. Jones, the first postmaster of Omaha, tells in the *Pioneer Record* of the first Fourth of July celebration in Nebraska.

"On July 4, 1854, I was employed in the work of surveying the townsite of Omaha. At this time there were only two cabins on the townsite, my postoffice building and the company claim house. The latter was used as our boarding house. Inasmuch as the Fourth would be a holiday, I concluded it would be a novelty to hold a celebration on Nebraska soil. I therefore announced that we would hold a celebration and invited the people of Council Bluffs, by inserting a notice in the Council Bluffs paper, and requested that those who would participate should prepare a lunch for the occasion.

"We got forked stakes and poles along the river, borrowed bolts of sheeting from the store of James A. Jackson; and thus equipped we erected an awning to shelter from the sun those who attended. Anvils were procured, powder purchased and placed in charge of cautious gunners, to make a noise for the crowd. The celebration was held on the present high school grounds.

"The picnickers came with their baskets, and the gunner discharged his duty nobly. A stranger, in our midst, was introduced as Mr. Sawyer, an ex-congressman from Ohio."

I had a life-long acquaintance with one of those early picnickers, Mrs. Rhoda Craig, a daughter of Thomas Allen, who built the first house in Omaha. Mrs. Craig was the first white girl to live on the site of Omaha. She often told the story of that Fourth of July in Omaha. Their fear of the Indians was so great that as soon as dinner was over, they hurried to their boats and rowed across to Council Bluffs for safety.

Another pioneer woman was Aimee Taggart Kenny, who came to Fontenelle with her parents when a small child. Her father was a Baptist missionary in Nebraska, and his earliest work was with the Quincy colony. I have heard her tell the following experience:

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"On several occasions we were warned that the Indians were about to attack us. In great fear, we

gathered in the schoolhouse and watched all night, the men all well armed. But we were never molested. Another time mother was alone with us children. Seeing the Indians approaching we locked the doors, went into the attic by means of an outside ladder and looked out through a crack. We saw the red men try the door, peep in at the windows, and then busy themselves chewing up mother's home-made hop-yeast, which had been spread out to dry. They made it into balls and tossed it all away."

John T. Bell of Newberg, Oregon, contributed the following:

"I have a pleasant recollection of your grandfather Allen. My father's and mother's people were all southerners and there was a kindness about Mr. and Mrs. Allen that reminded me of our own folks back in Illinois. I often stopped to see them when going to and from the Calhoun mill.

"I was also well acquainted with Mrs. E. H. Clark, and Rev. Mr. Taggart and his family were among the most highly esteemed residents of our little settlement of Fontenelle. Mr. Taggart was a man of fine humor. It was the custom in those early days for the entire community to get together on New Year's day and have a dinner at 'The College.' There would be speech-making, and I remember that on one of these occasions Mr. Taggart said that no doubt the time would come when we would all know each others' real names and why we left the states.

"The experiences of the Bell family in the early Nebraska days were ones of privation. We came to Nebraska in 1856 quite well equipped with stock, four good horses, and four young cows which we had driven behind the wagon from western Illinois. The previous winter had been very mild and none of the settlers were prepared for the dreadful snow storm which came on the last day of November and continued for three days and nights. Our horses and cows were in a stable made by squaring up the head of a small gulch and covering the structure with slough grass. At the end of the storm when father could get out to look after the stock there was no sign of the stable. The low ground it occupied was levelled off by many feet of snow. He finally located the roof and found the stock alive and that was about all. The animals suffered greatly that winter and when spring came we had left only one horse and no cows. That lone horse was picking the early grass when he was bitten in the nose by a rattlesnake and died from the effects. One of those horses, 'Old Fox,' was a noble character. We had owned him as long as I could remember, and when he died we children all cried. I have since owned a good many horses but not one equalled Old Fox in the qualities that go to make up a perfect creature. [297]

"After the civil war my brother Will and I were the only members of our family left in Nebraska. We served with Grant and Sherman and then went back to Fontenelle, soon afterward beginning the improvement of our farm on Bell creek in the western part of the county. By that time conditions had so improved in Nebraska that hardships were not so common. I was interested in tree planting even as a boy and one of the distinct recollections of our first summer in Nebraska was getting so severely poisoned in the woods on the Elkhorn when digging up young sprouts, that I was entirely blind. A colored man living in Fontenelle told father that white paint would cure me and so I was painted wherever there was a breaking out, with satisfactory results.

"Later the planting of cottonwood, box elder, maple, and other trees became a general industry in Nebraska and I am confident that I planted twenty thousand trees, chiefly cottonwood. To J. Sterling Morton, one of Nebraska's earliest and most useful citizens, Nebraska owes a debt of gratitude. He was persistent in advocating the planting of trees. In his office hung a picture of an oak tree; on his personal cards was a picture of an oak tree with the legend 'Plant Trees'; on his letterheads, on his envelopes was borne the same injunction and the picture of an oak tree. On the marble doorstep of his home was cut a picture of an oak tree and the words 'Plant Trees'; on the ground-glass of the entrance door was the same emblem. I went to a theater he had built and on the drop curtain was a picture of an oak tree and the words 'Plant Trees.' Today the body of this useful citizen lies buried under the trees he planted in Wyuka cemetery, near Nebraska City." [298]

COUNTY SEAT OF WASHINGTON COUNTY

BY FRANK MCNEELY

In 1855 an act was passed by the territorial legislature reorganizing Washington county and designating Fort Calhoun as the county-seat.

De Soto, a small village five miles north of Fort Calhoun, wished the county-seat to be moved there. In the winter of 1858 a crowd of De Soto citizens organized and with arms went to Fort Calhoun to take the county-seat by force. Fort Calhoun citizens barricaded themselves in the log courthouse and held off the De Soto band until the afternoon of the second day, when by compromise, the county-seat was turned over to De Soto. One man was killed in this contest, in which I was a participant.

The county-seat remained in De Soto until an election in the fall of 1866 when the vote of the people relocated it at Fort Calhoun, where it remained until 1869. An election in the latter year made Blair the county-seat.

A courthouse was built in Blair, the present county-seat of Washington county, in 1889, at a cost of \$50,000.

NOTE—In the early days every new town, and they were all new, was ambitious to become the county-seat and many of them hopefully sought the honor of becoming the capital of the territory. Washington county had its full share of aspiring towns and most of them really got beyond the paper stage. There were De Soto, Fort Calhoun, Rockport, Cuming City, and last but not least—Fontenelle, then in Washington county, now a "deserted village" in Dodge county. Of these only Fort Calhoun remains more than a memory. De Soto was founded by Potter C. Sullivan and others in 1854, and in 1857 had about five hundred population. It began to go down in 1859, and when the city of Blair was started its decline was rapid. Rockport, which was in the vicinity of the fur trading establishments of early days, was a steamboat landing of some importance and had at one time a population of half a hundred or more. Now only the beautiful landscape remains. Cuming City, like De Soto, received its death blow when Blair was founded, and now the townsite is given over to agricultural purposes.

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THE STORY OF THE TOWN OF FONTENELLE

BY MRS. EDA MEAD

When Nebraska was first organized as a territory, a party of people in Quincy, Illinois, conceived the idea of starting a city in the new territory and thus making their fortune. They accordingly sent out a party of men to select a site.

These men reached Omaha in 1854. There they met Logan Fontenelle, chief of the Omahas, who held the land along the Platte and Elkhorn rivers. He agreed to direct them to a place favorable for a town. Upon reaching the spot, where the present village is now situated, they were so pleased that they did not look farther, but paid the chief one hundred dollars for the right to claim and locate twenty square miles of land. This consisted of land adjoining the Elkhorn river, then

ascending a high bluff, a tableland ideal for the location of the town.

These men thought the Elkhorn was navigable and that they could ship their goods from Quincy by way of the Missouri, Platte, and Elkhorn rivers.

Early in the spring of 1855 a number of the colonists, bringing their household goods, left Quincy on a small boat, the "Mary Cole," expecting to reach Fontenelle by way of the Elkhorn; and then use the boat as a packet to points on the Platte and Elkhorn rivers.

But the boat struck a snag in the Missouri and, with a part of the cargo, was lost. The colonists then took what was saved overland to Fontenelle.

By the first of May, 1855, there were sufficient colonists on the site to hold the claims. Then each of the fifty members drew by lot for the eighteen lots each one was to hold. The first choice fell to W. H. Davis. He chose the land along the river, fully convinced of its superior situation as a steamboat landing.

The colonists then built houses of cottonwood timber, and a store and hotel were started. Thus the little town of about two hundred inhabitants was started with great hopes of soon becoming a large city.

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Land on the edge of the bluff had been set aside for a college building. This was called Collegeview. Here a building was begun in 1856 and completed in 1859. This was the first advanced educational institution to be chartered west of the Missouri river.

In 1865 this building was burned. Another building was immediately erected, but after a few years' struggle for patronage, they found it was doomed to die, so negotiated with the people of Crete, Nebraska, and the Congregational organizations (for it was built by the Congregationalists) in Nebraska. It therefore became the nucleus of what is now Doane College.

The bell of the old building is still in use in the little village.

The first religious services were held by the Congregationalists. The church was first organized by Rev. Reuben Gaylord, who also organized the First Congregational church in Omaha.

In Fontenelle the Congregationalists did not have a building but worshiped in the college. This church has long since ceased to exist, but strange as it may seem after so many years, the last regular pastor was the same man, Rev. Reuben Gaylord, who organized it.

There was a little band of fifteen Methodists; this was called the Fontenelle Mission. In 1857 an evangelist, Jerome Spillman, was sent to take charge of this little mission. He soon had a membership of about three score people. A church was organized and a building and parsonage completed. This prospered with the town, but as the village began to lose ground the church was doomed to die. The building stood vacant for a number of years but was finally moved to Arlington.

The settlers found the first winter of 1855-56 mild and agreeable. They thought that this was a sample of the regular winter climate; so when the cold, blizzardy, deep-snow winter of 1856-57 came it found the majority ill prepared. Many were living in log cabins which had been built only for temporary use. The roofs were full of holes and just the dirt for floors.

On awaking in the morning after the first blizzard many found their homes drifted full of snow; even the beds were covered. The snow lay four or five feet deep on the level and the temperature was far below zero.

Most of the settlers lost all of their stock. Food was scarce, but wild game was plentiful. Mr. Sam Francis would take his horse and gun and hunt along the river. The settlers say he might be seen many times that winter coming into the village with two deer tied to his horse's tail trailing in the

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snow. By this means, he saved many of the colonists from starvation.

Provisions were very high priced. Potatoes brought four and five dollars a bushel; bacon and pork could not be had at any price. One settler is said to have sold a small hog for forty-five dollars; with this he bought eighty acres of land, which is today worth almost one hundred eighty dollars an acre.

A sack of flour cost from ten to fifteen dollars.

At this time many who had come just for speculation left, thus only the homebuilders or those who had spent their all and could not return, remained.

Then came trouble with the Indians. In the year 1859 the Pawnees were not paid by the government, for some reason. They became desperate and began stealing cattle from the settlers along the Elkhorn around Fontenelle. The settlers of Fontenelle formed a company known as the "Fontenelle Mounted Rangers," and together with a company sent out by Governor Black from Omaha with one piece of light artillery, started after the Pawnees who were traveling west and north.

They captured six prisoners and held them bound. While they were camped for rest, a squaw in some way gave a knife to one of the prisoners. He pretended to kill himself by cutting his breast and mouth so that he bled freely. He then dropped as if dead. Amidst the confusion the other five, whose ropes had been cut, supposedly by this same squaw, escaped.

As the settlers were breaking camp to still pursue the fleeing tribe, they wondered what to do with the dead Indian. Someone expressed doubt as to his really being dead. Then one of the settlers raised his gun and said he would soon make sure. No sooner had the gun been aimed than the Indian jumped to his feet and said, "Whoof! Me no sick!" They then journeyed on to attack the main tribe. When near their camp the settlers formed a semi-circle on a hill, with the artillery in the center.

As soon as the Indians saw the settlers, they came riding as swiftly as possible to make an attack, but when within a short distance and before the leader of the settlers could call "Fire!" they retreated. They advanced and retreated in this way three times. The settlers were at a loss to understand just what the Indians intended to do; but decided that they did not know of the artillery [302] until near enough to see it, then were afraid to make the attack, so tried to scare the settlers, but failing to do this they finally advanced with a white rag tied to a stick.

The Indians agreed to be peaceable and stop the thieving if the settlers would pay for a pony which had been accidentally killed, and give them medicine for the sick and wounded.

Some of the men who took part in this fight say that if the leader had ordered the settlers to fire on the first advance of the Indians every settler would have been killed. There were twice as many Indians in the first place and the settlers afterwards found that not more than one-third of their guns would work; and after they had fired once, while they were reloading, the Indians with their bows and arrows would have exterminated them. They consider it was the one piece of light artillery that saved them, as the Indians were very much afraid of a cannon. This ended any serious Indian trouble, but the housewives had to be ever on the alert for many years.

Each spring either the Omahas or Pawnees passed through the village on their way to visit some other tribe, and then returned in the fall. Then through the winter stray bands would appear who had been hunting or fishing along the river.

As they were seen approaching everything that could be was put under lock, and the doors of the houses were securely fastened. The Indians would wash and comb their hair at the water troughs, then gather everything about the yard that took their fancy. If by any chance they got into a house they would help themselves to eatables and if they could not find enough they would demand

more. They made a queer procession as they passed along the street. The bucks on the horses or ponies led the way, then would follow the pack ponies, with long poles fastened to each side and trailing along behind loaded with the baggage, then came the squaws, with their babies fastened to their backs, trudging along behind.

One early settler tells of her first experience with the Indians. She had just come from the far East, and was all alone in the house, when the door opened and three Indians entered, a buck and two squaws. They closed the door and placed their guns behind it, to show her that they would not harm her. They then went to the stove and seated themselves, making signs to her that they wanted more fire. She made a very hot fire in the cook stove. [303]

The old fellow examined the stove until he found the oven door; this he opened and took three frozen fish from under his blanket and placed them upon the grate. While the fish were cooking, he made signs for something to eat. The lady said she only had bread and sorghum in the house. This she gave them, but the Indian was not satisfied; he made a fuss until she finally found that he wanted butter on his bread. She had to show him that the sorghum was all she had. They then took up the fish and went out of doors by the side of the house to eat it. After they were gone she went out to see what they had left. She said they must have eaten every bit of the fish except the hard bone in the head, that was all that was left and that was picked clean.

Among the first settlers who came in 1855 was a young German who was an orphan and had had a hard life in America up to this time.

He took a claim and worked hard for a few years. He then went back to Quincy and persuaded a number of his own countrymen to come out to this new place and take claims, he helping them out, but they were to pay him back as they could.

Years passed; they each and all became very prosperous. But this first pioneer prospered perhaps to the greatest degree. The early settlers moved away one by one; as they left he would buy their homes.

The houses were torn down or moved away, the trees and shrubs were uprooted, until now this one man, or his heirs—for he has gone to his reward—owns almost the whole of the once prosperous little village, and vast fields of grain have taken the place of the homes and streets.

It is hard to stand in the streets of the little village which now has about one hundred fifty inhabitants and believe that at one time it was the county-seat of Dodge county, and that it lacked only one vote of becoming the capital of the state. There are left only two or three of the first buildings. A short distance south of this village on a high bluff overlooking the river valley, and covered with oaks and evergreens, these early pioneers started a city which has grown for many years, and which will continue to grow for years to come. In this city of the dead we find many of the people who did much for the little village which failed, but who have taken up their abode in this beautiful spot, there to remain until the end of time. [304]

This story of Fontenelle has been gathered from my early recollections of the place and what I have learned through grandparents, parents, and other relatives and friends.

My mother was raised in Fontenelle, coming there with her parents in 1856. She received her education in that first college.

My father was the son of one of the first Congregational missionaries to be sent there. I received my first schooling in the little village school.

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**Mrs. Warren Perry Eleventh State Regent, Nebraska Society,
Daughters of the American Revolution. 1913-1914**

THOMAS WILKINSON AND FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Wilkinson, early Nebraska settlers, were of English birth, and came to America when very young. They met in Illinois and were married in 1859 at Barrington. They moved to Louisiana, remaining there until the outbreak of the civil war, when they returned to Illinois for a short time, and then emigrated to the West, traveling in a covered wagon and crossing the Missouri river on the ferry. They passed through Omaha, and arrived at Elk City, Nebraska, July 27, 1864, with their two children, Ida and Emma, who at the present time are married and live in Omaha.

Soon after arriving in Elk City, Mr. Wilkinson lost one of his horses, which at that time was a

great misfortune. He purchased another from the United States government, which they called "Sam" and which remained in the family for many years.

At one time provisions were so high Mr. Wilkinson traded his watch for a bushel of potatoes.

At that time land was very cheap and could be bought for from two to five dollars per acre. The same land is now being held at two hundred dollars per acre. Labor was scarce, with the exception of that which could be obtained from the Indians. There were a large number of Indians in that part of the country, and the settlers often hired the squaws to shuck corn and cut firewood.

Mrs. Wilkinson has often told of the Indians coming to her door and demanding corn meal or beef. They always wanted beef and would not accept pork. They would come at night, look in at the windows, and call for firewater, tobacco, and provisions. Their visits were so frequent that Mrs. Wilkinson soon mastered much of their language and was able to talk to them in their own tongue.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilkinson first settled about twenty-five miles from Omaha on the old military road. During the early days of their life there, Mrs. Wilkinson made large quantities of butter for regular customers in Omaha. They often arose at three o'clock, hitched up the lumber wagon, and started for town, there to dispose of her butter and eggs and return with a supply of provisions. [306]

As a rule the winters were extremely severe and Mrs. Wilkinson has often told of the terrible snow storms which would fill the chimneys so full of snow it would be impossible to start a fire, and she would have to bundle the children up in the bedclothes and take them to the nearest house to keep from freezing.

During their second year in Nebraska they went farther west and located at "Timberville," which is now known as Ames. There they kept a "ranch house" and often one hundred teams arrived at one time to remain over night. They would turn their wagons into an immense corral, build their camp fires, and rest their stock. These were the "freighters" of the early days, and generally got their own meals.

During their residence at Elk City, two more children were born, Nettie and Will.

They continued to live on the farm until the year 1887, when they moved to Blair, Nebraska, there to rest in their old age.

Mr. Wilkinson died July 18, 1912. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Lucy Wilkinson, a son, Wm. W. Wilkinson, and two daughters, Mrs. J. Fred Smith and Mrs. Herman Shields. Mrs. George B. Dyball, another daughter, died May 13, 1914. [307]

NIKUMI

BY MRS. HARRIET S. MACMURPHY

He glanced from the letter in his hand to the Indian woman sitting in the door of the skin tipi, and the papoose on the ground beside her, then down the river, his eyes moving on, like the waters, and seeing some vision of his brain, far distant. After a time his gaze came back and rested upon the woman and her babe again.

"If I could take the child," he murmured.

The squaw watched him furtively while she drew the deer sinew through the pieces of skin from which she was fashioning a moccasin. She understood, although spoken in English, the words he

was scarce conscious of uttering, and, startled out of her Indian instinct of assumed inattention, looked at him with wide-opened eyes, trying to fathom a matter hardly comprehended but of great moment to her.

"Take the child"—where, and for what? Was he going to leave and sail down the great river to the St. Louis whence came all traders and the soldiers on the boats? Going away again as he had come to her many seasons ago? "Take the child," her child and his? Her mouth closed firmly, her eyes darkened and narrowed, as she stooped suddenly and lifted the child to her lap; and the Indian mother's cunning and watchfulness were aroused and pitted against the white father's love of his child.

Fort Atkinson was the most western post of the line established by President Monroe in 1819, after the Louisiana Purchase, to maintain the authority of the United States against Indian turbulence and British aggression, and had been in existence about four years before our story opens.

Here had been stationed the Sixth U. S. Infantry, who had wearily tramped for two months the banks of the Missouri river and dragged their boats after them, a distance of nearly a thousand miles of river travel to reach this post in the wilderness. Not a white man then occupied what is now the state of Iowa, except Julien Dubuque and a score or so of French traders. Not a road was to be found nor a vehicle to traverse it. But one or two boats other than keel boats and barges had ever overcome the swift current of the great Missouri thus far.

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The Santa Fe trail, that wound over the hills west of the fort, connected them with the Mexican Spanish civilization of the Southwest, and the great rivers with their unsettled land far away on the Atlantic seaboard.

Seventy-five years ago these soldiers dropped the ropes with which they had dragged the barges and keel boats and themselves thither, and picking up spade and shovel, dug foundations, molded and burned brick, cut down trees, and built barracks for themselves and the three detachments of artillery who terrified the redmen with the mysterious shells which dropped down amongst them and burst in such a frightful manner.

They numbered about twelve hundred men, and the bricks they molded and the cellars they dug still remain to tell of the Fort Atkinson that was, beside whose ruins now stands the little village of Fort Calhoun, sixteen miles north of Omaha on the Missouri river.

Dr. Gale, whom we have thus seen considering a question of great importance both to himself and to the Indian woman with whom he seems to have some relation, was the surgeon of the Sixth Infantry, an Englishman, short, thick-set, and evidently of good birth, although the marks of his rough life and rather dissolute habits obscured it in some degree.

The point where Fort Atkinson was built was the noted "Council Bluff" at which Lewis and Clark held the Indian council famous in the first annals of western explorations, and it still remains a rendezvous for the various tribes of Indians, the "Otoes, Pawnees, 'Mahas, Ayeaways, and Sioux," attracted thither by the soldiers and the trading posts, and secure from each others' attacks on this neutral ground.

Shortly after the troops were located here an Ayeaway (Iowa) chief and his band pitched their tents near the fort. The daughter of this chief was named Nikumi; she was young and had not been inured to the hard tasks which usually fell to the squaws, so her figure was straight, her eyes bright, and her manner showed somewhat the dignity of her position.

Not a white woman was there within a radius of five hundred miles except a few married ones belonging to the fort; was it strange that Dr. Gale, the younger son of an English family who had left civilization for a life of adventure in the New World, and who seemed destined to dwell away from all women of his own race, should woo this Indian princess and make her his wife? He had

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chosen the best of her race, for all who remember her in after years speak of her dignified carriage, her well-formed profile, and her strength of will and purpose, so remarkable among Indian women.

For four years she had been his wife, and the child she had just seized and held in her arms as if she would never let her go, was their child, little Mary, as her father named her, perhaps from his own name, Marion.

But now this union, which her unknowing mind had never surmised might not be for all time, and his, alas, too knowing one had carelessly assumed while it should be his pleasure, was about to be severed.

A boat had come up the river and brought mail from Chariton or La Charette, as the Frenchmen originally named it, several hundred miles below, and the point to which mail for this fort was sent.

These uncertain arrivals of news from the outside world made important epochs in the life of the past. The few papers and letters were handled as if they had been gold, and the contents were read and reread until almost worn out. For Dr. Gale came a bulky letter or package of letters tied together and sealed over the string with a circle of red wax. There was no envelope, as we have now, but each letter was written so as to leave a blank space after folding for the superscription, and the postage was at least twenty-five cents on the three letters so tied together. The postmark of the outer one was New York City; it was from a law firm and informed Dr. Marion F. Gale, surgeon of the Sixth Infantry, stationed at Fort Atkinson, the "camp on the Missouri river," that the accompanying letters had been received by them from a firm of London solicitors, and begging to call his attention to the same. His attention being most effectually called thereto elicited first that Messrs. Shadwell & Fitch of London desired them to ascertain the whereabouts of Marion F. Gale, late of Ipswich, England, and now supposed to be serving in the U. S. army in the capacity of surgeon, and convey to him the accompanying information, being still further to the effect that by a sudden death of James Burton Gale, who died without male issue, he, Marion F. Gale, being next of kin, was heir to the estate of Burton Towers, Ipswich, England. Last came a letter from the widow of his brother, telling him the particulars of his brother's death. [310]

Ten years before he had left home with a hundred pounds in his pocket and his profession, to make himself a career in the new country.

There were two brothers older than he, one of them married, and there seemed little prospect that he would ever become proprietor of Burton Towers; but they, who lived apparently in security, were gone, and he who had traversed the riverway of an unknown and unsettled country, among Indians and wild animals, was alive and well to take their place.

He thought of the change, back to the quiet life of an English country squire, after these ten years of the free life of the plains, and the soldiers and the Indians. The hunting of the buffalo, the bear, and the elk exchanged for the tame brush after a wild fox, or the shooting of a few partridges.

But the family instinct was strong, after all, and his eye gleamed as he saw the old stone house, with its gables and towers, its glorious lawns and broad driveway with the elms meeting overhead. Oh, it would satisfy that part of his nature well to go back as its master. This vision it was that had filled his eyes as they looked so far away. But then they came back again and rested on Nikumi and the child.

A certain kind of love had been begotten in his heart for the Indian maiden by her devotion to him, although he had taken her without a scruple at the thought of leaving her when circumstances called him away. But now he felt a faint twinge of the heart as he realized that the time had come, and a stronger one when he thought that he must part with the child. "But why need I do it?" he soliloquized. "I can take the child with me and have her educated in a manner to fit her for my daughter; if she is as bright as her mother, education and environment will fit her to fill any

position in life, but with Nikumi it is too late to begin, and she has no white blood to temper the wildness of the Indian. I will take the child."

Not a care for the mother love and rights. "Only a squaw." What rights had she compared with this English gentleman who had taken her from her tribe, and now would cast her back again and take away her child? But ah, my English gentleman, you reckoned without your ordinary sagacity when you settled that point without taking into consideration the mother love and the Indian cunning and watchfulness, their heritage from generations of warfare with each other. [311]

"What have you got?" she asked in the flowing syllables of the Indian tongue, for like the majority of Indians, though she understood much English she never, to the end of her days, deigned to speak it.

"Some words from my friends in the far-away country over the waters, Nikumi," he answered. "My brother is dead."

"Ah, and you are sad. You will go there to that land?" she said.

"I don't know, Nikumi; I may have to go over, for there is much land and houses and fields to be cared for. I am going down to see Sarpy, now. He came up on the boat today."

She watched him as he strode off down past the cattle station towards the fort. In the summer time her love of her native life asserted itself, and she left the log quarters which Dr. Gale provided for her, and occupied a tipi, or tent of skins, down among the cottonwoods and willows of the bottom lands where portions of her tribe were generally to be found. When he passed out of sight she took her baby and went to a tipi a short distance from hers, where a stalwart buck lay on a shaggy buffalo robe on the shady side, smoking a pipe of kinnikinnick, and playing with some young dogs. She spoke with him a few minutes. He ceased playing with the dogs, sat up and listened, and finally with a nod of assent to some request of hers started off towards the fort. She followed shortly after and glided about from the post store to the laundresses' quarters, stopping here and there where groups of soldiers were gathered, and listening attentively to their talk about the news that had come by the boats.

She learned that these boats were to be loaded with furs from Sarpy's trading post and go back to St. Louis in a few days. In the meantime the young buck, who was her brother, had gone by her directions to Sarpy's trading post, just below the fort. She had told him what she knew and surmised; that the "pale-faced medicine man," as the Indians called him, had received a paper from his friends across the great waters towards the rising sun which told his brother was dead, and that he might have to go there to care for the houses and lands his brother had left; that she had heard him say "If I could take the child," and she feared he might take her papoose away; "and he shall not," she said passionately. "I must know what he will do. Go you and listen if the medicine man talks with Sarpy; watch him closely and find out all." [312]

He had followed the Indian trail which skirted along the edge of the high bluffs on the eastern boundary of the fort, and reached the trading post from the north. Going in he uttered the single word "tobac," and while the clerk was handing it out to him he glanced around in the aimless, stolid Indian manner, as if looking over the blankets and skins hung against the logs. Back at the further, or southwest, corner of the store, near a window, and partially screened by a rude desk made of a box set upon a table and partitioned into pigeon-holes, sat two men. One of them was Dr. Gale, the other, Peter A. Sarpy.

To the ears of most readers the name will convey no particular impression; if a resident of Nebraska it would call to mind the fact that a county in that state was named Sarpy, and the reader might have a hazy consciousness that an early settler had borne that name; but in the days of this story and for thirty years later it meant power and fame. The agent of the American Fur Company in that section, Peter A. Sarpy's word was law; to him belonged the trading posts, or so it was believed; he commanded the voyageurs who cordelled the boats and they obeyed. Every

winter he went down the great river before it was frozen over, to St. Louis, and every spring his boats came up after the ice had broken up, and before the great mountain rise came on in June, with new goods that were anxiously looked for, and eagerly seized in exchange for the buffalo robes, the beaver, mink, otter, and deer skins that had been collected through the winter. He was of French parentage, a small man, with the nervous activity of his race; the brightest of black eyes; careful of his dress, even in the wilds; the polish of the gentleman always apparent in his punctilious greeting to everyone; but making the air blue with his ejaculations if his orders were disobeyed or his ire aroused. Famous the length of the river for his bravery and determination, he was a man well fitted to push actively the interests of the company of which he was the agent as well as a member. [313]

The Indian passed noiselessly out and going around to the side of the building seated himself upon the ground, and pulling his long pipe from the folds of his blanket, filled it with the "tobac," rested it on the ground, and leisurely began to smoke. It was no unusual thing for the Indians thus to sit round the post, and no one took any notice of him, nor in fact that he was very near the open window, just out of the range of vision of the two men sitting within.

"So upon me devolves the succession of the estate of Burton Towers," Gale was saying to Sarpy, "and my sister-in-law writes that some one is imperatively needed to look after the estate as there is no male member of the family left in England."

"And you will leave your wild life of the prairies to go back to the tame existence of rural English life? Egad, I don't believe I could stand it even to be master of the beautiful demesnes which belong to my family. Power is sweet, but Mon Dieu, the narrowness, the conventionalities, the tameness of existence!"

"No worse than the tameness of this cursed fort for the last year or two. It was very well at first when the country was new to us and the Indians showed some fight that gave us a little excitement, but now we've exhausted all the resources, and an English squire, even, will be a great improvement. You've some change, you know. St. Louis in winter gives you a variety."

"What are you going to do with Nikumi and Mary?"

"That's what I want to talk to you about. I find I'm fonder of the child than I thought, and indeed it gives my heartstrings a bit of a wrench to leave Nikumi behind; but to take her is out of the question. Mary, however, I can educate; she is bright enough to profit by it, and young enough to make an English woman of. I believe I shall try to get her away quietly, and take her with me."

"You ought to have lived here long enough to have some knowledge of the Indians, but I'm damned if I think you are smart enough to get that child away from its mother," said Sarpy. [314]

"Well, I'll try it, anyway. The worst trouble I apprehend is getting away myself at so short notice. When do your boats go down again?"

"In about a week."

"To leave the troops without any surgeon is rather risky, but they're pretty healthy at this season, and young Carver has been studying with me considerably, and can take my place for a short time. If I succeed in getting leave of absence to go on to Washington, Atkinson will probably send some one up from St. Louis as soon as possible. I shall have to get leave of absence from Leavenworth here, and then again from Atkinson at St. Louis. Then I can send in my resignation after I arrive at Philadelphia. All this beside the intermediate hardships and delays in reaching there."

To the Indian outside much of this was unintelligible, but he heard and understood perfectly "I think I shall try to get her away from her mother and take her with me," and later the reply that the boats would go down in about a week.

That was sufficient for him, and he arose, gathered up his blanket that had dropped down from his shoulders, slipped the pipe into his belt which held it around his waist, and then his moccasined feet trod the narrow trail, one over the other, the great toe straight in a line with the instep, giving the peculiar gait for which the Indian is famous.

He found Nikumi back at her tipi: the kettle was hung from the tripod of three sticks over the fire, and a savory smell arose which he sniffed with pleasure as he approached, for Nikumi was favored above her tribe in the supplies which she received from the camp, and which included great luxuries to the Indians. Nikumi was very generous to her relatives and friends, and often shared with them the pot which she had varied from the original Indian dish of similar origin by diligently observing the methods of the camp cooks.

She had learned to use dishes, too, and bringing forth two bowls, some spoons, and a tin cup, ladled some of the savory mixture into them, for she had evidently learned the same lesson as her white sisters: when you would get the best service from a man, feed him well.

On the present site of Fort Atkinson may be found, wherever the ground is plowed over or the piles of bricks and depressions that mark the cellars of the buildings are overhauled, a profusion of old buttons, fragments of firearms, cannon balls and shells, and many pieces of delf. A quaint old antiquarian who lives there has a large collection of them which he shows with delight. [315]

Who knows but that some of the fragments are pieces of Nikumi's bowl, for as her brother told her of Gale's words to Sarpy, her face added to its bronze hue an indescribable grayish tinge, and starting suddenly, the bowl fell from her hand, striking the stones which formed a circle for the fire, and broke into fragments. She forgot to eat, and a rapid flow of words from her lips was accompanied by gestures that almost spoke. They should keep strict watch of the loading of the boats, she said, and of the voyageurs in charge of them, and when they saw signs of departure of them, she would take the child and go—and she pointed, but spoke no word. He must make a little cave in the hillside, and cover it with trees and boughs, and she would provide food. When the white medicine man had gone he could tell her by a strip of red tied in the branch of a tree like a bird, which could be seen down the ravine from her hiding place, and she would be found again in her tipi as if she had never been absent. He grunted assent as well as satisfaction at the innumerable bowls of soup, and then stretched himself comfortably and pulled out his pipe.

Meanwhile little Mary, the heroine of this intrigue, was eating soup and sucking a bone contentedly. Would she be an Indian or an English maiden? She was an Indian one now and happy, too. And Nikumi? She had come to her white husband and remained with him contented and happy. He had been good to her in the main, although he swore at her and abused her sometimes when he got drunk or played at cards too long, but he was better than the braves were to their squaws, and she did not have to work as they did; she had wood and food and she could buy at the trading post the blankets and the strouding and the gay red cloths, and the beads with which the squaws delighted to adorn their necks and to stitch with deer sinew into their moccasins. She had lived each day unconscious that there might not be a tomorrow like it. But it had dropped from the skies, this sudden knowledge that had changed everything.

Had she had no child she would doubtless have mourned silently for the man who had come and taken her life to be lived beside his and then left her worse than alone; but the greater blow had deadened the force of the lesser, and only her outraged mother love cried out. [316]

She sat on the buffalo robe inside the tipi and watched the child rolling about outside with the little fat puppy, hugging it one moment, savagely spitting it over the eyes the next. She had no right to rebel; an Indian did what he would with his squaw, how much more a white man, and to any decree concerning herself she would doubtless have submitted silently, but to lose her child—that she would not do, and she knew how to save it.

All unconscious of this intrigue, Gale made his preparations for departure, and it was soon known

through the camp that he was about to go to the "states."

He had taken pains to conceal the fact of his intended final departure for England.

He secretly made arrangements with the man who acted as cook for the boats to take charge of little Mary until they got to St. Louis, where they could get a servant, and going down the river would take but a few days.

Gale's condition of mind was not to be envied during the interval before he started. He scarcely felt the injustice to Nikumi in thus leaving her, but he could not quite reconcile with even his weak sense of her rights that he should take the child away from her, and yet he fully intended to do so. He spent much of the time with Nikumi at her summer residence, the tipi, and she treated him with the same gentle deference and quiet submissiveness that were usual to her, so completely deceiving him that he did not once surmise she knew anything of his plans. The last two or three days he occupied himself in packing a case of articles of various kinds that he had accumulated: an Indian pipe of the famous red pipestone of the Sioux country, with its long flat stem of wood cut out in various designs and decorated with feathers and bits of metal; moccasins of deer skin, handsomely beaded and trimmed with fringes, some of them made by Nikumi's own hands; specimens of the strange Mexican cloths woven from the plumage of birds, brought by the trading Mexicans up the Santa Fe trail; a pair of their beautiful blankets, one robe, a few very fine furs, among them a black bear skin of immense size, a little mat woven of the perfumed grasses, which the Indians could find but the white man never, some of the nose and ear rings worn by the squaws. [317]

Nikumi came to his quarters while he was taking these things down from the walls and shelves where she had always cared for them with so much pride. In answer to her inquiring gaze he said: "I go Nikumi, to the far eastern land, and these I shall take with me to show my friends what we had that is beautiful in the land of the Indian and the buffalo, that they wish to know all about." "And when will you return to Nikumi and Mary?" "I can not tell; I hope before many moons; will you grieve to have me go Nikumi?" "Nikumi will look every day to the rising sun and ask the Great Spirit to send her pale-faced medicine man back safely to her and the child." He put his arms about her with a strange spasm of heart relenting, realizing for a moment the wrong he was purposing to commit. But ah, the stronger taking advantage of the weaker. The strong race using for their own pleasure the weak one. "Ye that are strong ought to help the weak." He also prepared at Sarpy's trading post, and by his advice, a smaller package of such things as would be desirable for little Mary's welfare and comfort.

It was greatly lacking in the articles we should consider necessary these times, but when we realize that every piece of merchandise which reached this far away post had to be transported thousands of miles by river it is matter of wonder how much there was.

The morning of the day before the boats were to start he occupied himself with some last preparations, giving Nikumi a number of articles that she had used around his quarters to take to her tipi, and telling her he would leave money with Sarpy so that she might get what was necessary for herself and Mary. In the afternoon he went down to the post and did not return to the quarters until late, where he supped at the mess table and then went in the direction of Nikumi's tent. He had devised, he thought, a cunning plan to get Nikumi to go the next morning for some fresh leaves of a shrub which she often procured for him to mix in his tobacco, and of which he was very fond; and after her departure he would make for the boat and embark hastily with little Mary, whom he would keep. Resolving the broaching of his plan as he approached the tipi, he did not notice that it failed to show the usual signs of habitation until he drew near when he observed that the kettle hanging from the tripod over the circle of stones had no fire beneath it, and no steam issuing from it, no dogs were playing about, and there was no sign of Nikumi and little Mary. He began to look about for them; the flap of skin usually fastened up to form a doorway was dropped down; he put it up and stooping, entered the tipi. It was almost entirely empty; the skins which had formed the beds were gone; the dishes seemed to be there, but the [318]

food of which he knew she always kept a supply, was all gone, and there were no signs of the articles of clothing belonging to them. Sarpy's words come to him, "I'm damned if I think you are smart enough to get the child away from its mother," and he knew that Nikumi had outwitted him. He should never see mother or child again.

He turned and traced angrily the narrow trail to Sarpy's. Striding in and down the low, dingy, fur odorous room to the rear where Sarpy sat lazily smoking his pipe he exclaimed, "You were right, Sarpy, Nikumi has gone with the child." Sarpy took his pipe from his mouth slowly, "Well I'm sorry you are disappointed, but it will be better for you and the child, too; she would have grieved herself to death, and worried you almost to the verge of lunacy first, and you would have had the burden on your conscience of Nikumi unhappy, and all for no good." "But I'll not give her up. I had set my heart on it; I shall start a search party for her at once." "And much good it will do you. There isn't a soldier in your camp that can find what an Indian chooses to hide, if it is not more than six feet away from him. You will only inform the camp of your design and of the fact that a squaw has outwitted you."

Gale knew too well the truth of his statement, but he paced up and down the building angrily for some time, determining at each turn towards the door to start out at the head of a search party, but turning again with an oath toward the rear as the futility of it all was forced upon him.

Sarpy regarded him quietly, a half smile in his eyes. He understood the conflict of feelings, the pain at leaving Nikumi, not very great, but enough to cause him some discomfort; the now added pain of separation from the child, also; the chagrin at being outwitted by a squaw, and one who had always seemed so submissive, and whom he had not dreamed possessed so much acuteness; the English obstinacy aroused by antagonism, all struggling against his knowledge that he could do nothing. Sarpy in his place would have invoked all the spirits of the darker regions, but he probably would never have put himself in a like predicament. To his class, seekers of fortunes in the New World, the Indian was simply a source of revenue and pleasure, treated fairly well to be sure, because that was the better policy; while it suited their convenience to use them they did so; when the need was supplied they cast them off; possibly Gale, if he analyzed the situation at all, thought the same, but under the present circumstances, a different set of emotions dominated him. Nikumi, superior to her tribe, had inspired inconveniently deep feelings, and he found his fatherly love a factor he had not counted on. [319]

At last he approached Sarpy, and throwing himself in a chair, took out one of the two great soothers of man's woes, his pipe, lighted it and proceeded to mingle its smoke with that of Sarpy's. "I suppose I shall have to give it up, but I'm damned if I can submit to it with equanimity, yet; outwitted by an apparently innocent and submissive squaw, I suppose two months from now I'll be thanking my lucky stars that I'm not saddled with a brat of an Indian, and at intervals thereafter shall be falling upon my knees, and repeating the operation. But I'm blessed if I can see it so now."

"Yes it will be better for you as well as the others, and as soon as you get away from here you will view it very differently," said Sarpy.

And Nikumi in her cave dug into the bluff, held her baby tight in her arms, and listened to every sound, while she watched by aid of the rude but cunningly devised dark lantern, the reptiles and insects which crawled about, moving only to dispatch a snake or two that were venomous.

Could Gale have seen her would he have relented and left the child to her? Has it been the history of the union of the stronger and weaker races that the stronger have given up their desires?

"You will have to look out for Mary, too, Sarpy, as you have promised to do for Nikumi. I haven't any more money to leave with you at present, but I will send you some from England. I don't want her to grow up without any education at all, and have to slave and toil as squaws do generally, nor Nikumi either." "I'll see to them," said Sarpy, briefly, "there isn't much chance for [320]

education unless they keep up the post here and she be permitted to learn with the white children; for I don't suppose Nikumi will ever let her go away to school as Fontenelle sends his boys, but she shall have what education she can get and Nikumi shall not be obliged to go back to her tribe for support as long as I am here," and the smoke of the Frenchman's and Englishman's pipes ascended to ratify this compact.

The next day at sunrise the boats dropped swiftly down the river. A figure at the stern of one of them watched until the last sign of the landing place faded in the early morning light.

Dr. Gale had played a brief part in the settlement of a new country from which he now disappeared as if he had never been.

In after years only the few who belonged to that early settlement remembered that Mary was his child, and told of it sometimes, when they recounted the adventurous life of those early days. A young man listened to these reminiscences from the lips of the strange, irascible, but warm hearted Frenchman, and treasured them in memory. Hence this true tale. Nikumi released from her reptile inhabited cave by the little red bird in the tree down the ravine, came back to her tipi. She had kept her child but she had lost her lover and her life. How should she take it up again? She had been always quiet and little given to the chatter and laughter of the young squaws; she was only a little more quiet now, and Mary's lot was decided; she would always be an Indian woman.

One day Sarpy came to her and told her that Gale had left money for her and she was to come to the fort for what she wished. And after a time it came to pass that Sarpy took her to wife as Gale had done. Perhaps that was in his mind when he looked at Gale with a smile in his eyes; but Nikumi would not listen to him till she had waited long, and until Sarpy told her and she heard from others that Gale would never come again. And she was his faithful wife for many years, occupying always, because of her inherent dignity and real womanliness, a position high in the estimation both of the white and the red men. Many tales are told of her life with Sarpy, how at one time she carried him miles on her back when he was stricken with fever in the mountains, until she brought him to aid and safety. Another time when he had given orders that no more goods should be given her from the post (she was always very liberal to her relatives and he wished to check it) she quietly picked up two or three bolts of calico, and walking to the river bank, threw them in; a second armful followed, and then the enemy capitulated. And still another time when Sarpy had bought a beautiful black mare, "Starlight," to minister to the pleasure of a designing English widow, she one day quietly appeared when the horse was driven round by Sarpy's black servant, and ordered it taken to the stable, and enforced the order, too. But this is another story. [321]

In later years, as Sarpy's dominion ceased with the gradual decline of the fur company, and he spent much of his time in St. Louis, Nikumi lived with Mary, who had married an Indian like herself, with a mixture of white blood in his veins, although he was French, and who occupied a prominent position in one of the tribes to whom was given a distinct reservation. From this mixture of English, French, and Indian bloods has arisen a family which stands at the head of their tribe, and one member who is known throughout this country. It is worthy of notice, too, that with one exception it has been the women of the family who have shown the qualities which gave them preëminence.

Nikumi died March 23, 1888, at the home of her daughter Mary; but her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren live to show that sometimes the mixture of races tends to development of the virtues, and not, as has been so often said, of the vices of both races. [322]

THE HEROINE OF THE JULES-SLADE TRAGEDY

BY MRS. HARRIET S. MACMURPHY

Our two weeks' ride over Iowa prairies was ended and we had reached our new home in Nebraska. I sat in the buggy, a child of twelve, with my three-year-old brother beside me, on the eastern bank of the Missouri river, while father went down where the ferry boat lay, to make ready for our crossing.

In the doorway of a log cabin near by stood a young girl two or three years older than I. We gazed at each other shyly. She was bare-headed and bare-footed, her cheeks tanned, and her abundant black hair roughened with the wind, but her eyes were dark and her figure had the grace of untrammelled out door life. To my girl's standard she did not appeal, and I had not then the faintest conception of the romance and tragedy of which she was the heroine.

We gazed at each other until father gave the signal for me to drive down on the clumsy raft-like boat behind the covered half-wagon half-carriage that held the other members of our family, which I did in fear and trembling that did not cease until we had swung in and out as the boat strained at the rope to which it was attached, the waters of the "Old Muddy," the like of which I had never seen before, straining and drawing it down with the current, and a fresh spasm of fear was added as we reached the far shore and dropped off the boat with a thud down into the soft bank. We had reached Decatur, our future Nebraska home, adjoining the Indian reservation with its thousand Omahas.

For a long time I did not know anything further of the girl of the log cabin by the river side, only that they told us the family were named Keyou and the men were boatmen and fishermen and ran the ferry. This first chapter of my little story opened in the spring of 1863.

Six years later my girlhood's romance brought marriage with my home-coming soldier, who in his first days in the territory of Nebraska had passed through many of the romantic events that a life among the Indians would bring, among them clerking in a trading post with one "Billy" Becksted, now the husband of my maiden of the riverside log cabin. And Billy and John always continued the comradeship of the free, happy, prairie hunting life, riding the "buckskin" ponies with which they began life together, although they came together from very different walks of life.

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And I learned of my husband that "Addie," as we had learned to call her, young as she was when first I saw her, had been the wife of a Frenchman named Jules, after whom the town of Julesburg (Colorado) is named, and his dreadful death at the hands of one Slade was one of the stock stories of the plains well known to every early settler.

Billy and Addie after a time drifted away from Decatur down the river and we lost sight of them.

We, too, left the home town and became residents of Plattsmouth.

One day my husband, returning from a trip in the country said, "I ran across Billy and Addie Becksted today and they were so glad to see me that Addie put her arms round me and kissed me, with tears in her eyes." Later we learned with sorrow that Billy was drinking and then that he had come down to Plattsmouth and tried to find my husband, who was out of town and had gone back home and when almost there had taken a dose of morphine, and they had found him unconscious and dying near their log cabin under the bluffs half a mile above the Bellevue station. And my husband really mourned that he had not been at home, perhaps to have kept good-hearted Billy from his woeful fate. After a time Addie married Elton, a brother of Billy's, and one Sunday I persuaded my husband to go down to them in their cabin under the bluffs.

"I have always wanted to get Addie to tell me her story of her life with Jules," I said.

"I don't believe you can get her to talk about it," said Mac, "she never speaks of it, Elton says."

We went, and they were delighted to see us, killed the fatted chicken and gathered for us some of the wild berries that grew in the bluffs, and then as we sat under the trees with the bluff towering above us, I asked her for the story of her girlhood's days out on the plains, when only a single house that sheltered three or four people was her home, and not another for many miles.

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"I was just a child," she said, "and Jules was more like my father than my husband. But there were few women in the country in those days and Jules said to my parents that he would take good care of me, and so they gave me to him, and they went on to Denver. He had a man and his wife to take care of the place and do the work, and I just did whatever I wanted to. We were on the great trail to California and Pike's Peak and trains would come by and purchase supplies from us, so I did not get lonesome. Jules had had some trouble with a man named Slade a few years before and had shot Slade, but had taken him to Denver and put him in a hospital and paid to have him cared for and Slade and he had made it all up, my husband thought. Slade's ranch was further west and on the other side of his ranch Jules had another ranch with cattle on, and one day he started off with two or three men to bring some of the cattle back. He had been told that Slade had threatened to kill him but he did not believe it, although he went armed and with good men, he thought. This time he did not take me along as he had the cattle to drive. When he got near Slade's place Slade and his gang came down on Jules and his men, shouting and shooting, drove off Jules' men, took him and carried him to Slade's ranch. One of Jules' men followed them and saw them tie Jules up to a great box and then Slade stood a ways off with his rifle and shot at Jules, just missing his ear or his neck or his hand that was stretched out and tied; sometimes hitting him just enough to draw the blood. He kept this up all the rest of the day and then towards night he fired a shot that killed him. The boys who were with Jules came back to us and told us what had been done. We were so frightened we did not know what to do at first, for we expected every minute that Slade and his gang would come and kill us. They did come the next day and carried off a lot of the stuff we had in the trading post but did not do any harm to us. The man and his wife that were with us and the boys then got a team together and put enough stuff into the wagon to do us until we could get to Denver. All the rest and the cattle I guess Slade got. Jules had money in some bank in Denver, he had always said, but we never could find it. I found my folks and after a while we came back here where we had lived before we went to Denver."

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She told her story in the simplest commonplace manner, but it did not need any addition of word or gesture to paint on my memory for all time the pathos beneath.

A girl of fourteen, happy and care-free under the protection of her father husband one day, putting him in the place of father, and mother, trusting to him, and suddenly standing beside the rude trading post way out on the treeless spaces of the trail that seemed to come from solitude and lead away to it again, and listening to the story of the frightened cowboy on his broncho whose almost unintelligible words finally made her understand that her protector, the kind man she had learned to love, had died a death so horrible it would make the strongest man shudder. And with only three or four frightened, irresponsible people to save her, perhaps from a similar or worse fate? But the women of the plains had but little childhood, and must act the part that came to them no matter what it might be.

Afterward she told me more of her strange life with Jules, of his fatherly, protecting care of her, of his good heart, of the trouble with Slade, which was Slade's fault in the first place, and it was plain to see the ideal that had always been cherished way down in her subconsciousness of the man who played such an eventful but brief part in her life. It was a wrong, perhaps, but natural feeling to have when I found by after reading of annals of the plains that Slade died the death that such a fiendish nature should have suffered.

Addie Becksted still lives in a little cabin down among the hills about Bellevue, her children and grandchildren about her, and still bears traces of the beauty that was hers as a girl. She is only about ten miles distant from Omaha but has not visited it for years.

When I go to see her, as I do occasionally, she puts her arms about me and kisses me on the cheek. And her still bright brown eyes look the affection of all the years and events that we have known together.

It is well worth while to have these humble friends who have lived through the pioneer days with us.

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THE LAST ROMANTIC BUFFALO HUNT ON THE PLAINS OF NEBRASKA

BY JOHN LEE WEBSTER

In the autumn of 1872 a group of men, some of whom were then prominent in Nebraska history, Judge Elmer S. Dundy and Colonel Watson B. Smith, and one who afterward achieved national fame as an American explorer, Lieutenant Frederick Schwatka, and another who has since become known throughout Europe and America as a picturesque character and showman, Colonel Wm. F. Cody, participated in what proved to be the last romantic buffalo hunt upon the western plains of the state of Nebraska.

Elmer S. Dundy was a pioneer who had come to Nebraska in 1857. He had been a member of the territorial legislature for two successive terms; he was appointed a territorial judge in 1863, and became the first United States district judge after the admission of the state into the union. Colonel Watson B. Smith at that time held the office of clerk of the United States district and circuit courts for the district of Nebraska. Some years afterward he met a tragic death by being shot (accidentally or by assassination) in the corridors of the federal building in the city of Omaha. Colonel Smith was a lovable man, of the highest unimpeachable integrity and a most efficient public officer. There was also among the number James Neville, who at that time held the office of United States attorney and who afterward became a judge of the district court of Douglas county. He added zest, vim, and spirit by reason of some personal peculiarities to be mentioned later on.

These men, with the writer of this sketch, were anxious to have the experience and the enjoyment of the stimulating excitement of participating in a buffalo hunt before those native wild animals of the plains should become entirely extinct. To them it was to be a romantic incident in their lives and long to be remembered as an event of pioneer days. They enjoyed the luxury of a pullman car from Omaha to North Platte, which at that time was little more than a railway station at a division point upon the Union Pacific, and where was also located a military post occupied by a battalion of United States cavalry.

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Memorial Fountain Erected in Antelope Park, Lincoln, Nebraska, by Deborah Avery Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, in memory of Mary M. A. Stevens, First Regent of the Chapter (1896-1898). Dedicated, June 17, 1914. Cost \$300

Lieutenant Frederick Schwatka, a regular army officer and American explorer, at one time commanded an arctic expedition in search of traces of the remains of Dr. Franklin. At another time he was in command of an exploring expedition of the Yukon river. At another time he commanded an expedition into the northernmost regions of Alaska in the interest of the *New York Times*. He also became a writer and the author of three quite well known books: *Along Alaska's Great River*, *Nimrod in the North*, and *Children of the Cold*.

At the time of which we are speaking Lieutenant Schwatka was stationed at the military post at North Platte. He furnished us with the necessary army horses and equipment for the hunting expedition, and he himself went along in command of a squad of cavalry which acted as an escort to protect us if need be when we should get into the frontier regions where the Indians were at times still engaged in the quest of game and sometimes in unfriendly raids.

William F. Cody, familiarly known as "Buffalo Bill," who had already achieved a reputation as a guide and hunter and who has since won a world reputation as a showman, went along with us as courier and chief hunter. He went on similar expeditions into the wilder regions of Wyoming with General Phil Sheridan, the Grand Duke Alexis, and others quite equally celebrated.

This Omaha group of amateur buffalo hunters, led by Buffalo Bill and escorted by Lieutenant Schwatka and his squad of cavalry, rode on the afternoon of the first day from North Platte to Fort McPherson and there camped for the night with the bare earth and a blanket for a bed and a small army tent for shelter and cover.

On the next morning after a rude army breakfast, eaten while we sat about upon the ground, and without the luxury of a bath or a change of wearing apparel, this cavalcade renewed its journey in a southwesterly direction expecting ultimately to reach the valley of the Republican. We

consumed the entire day in traveling over what seemed almost a barren waste of undulating prairie, except where here and there it was broken by a higher upland and now and then crossed by a ravine and occasionally by a small stream of running water, along the banks of which might be found a small growth of timber. The visible area of the landscape was so great that it seemed boundless—an immense wilderness of space, and the altitude added to the invigorating and stimulating effect of the atmosphere. [328]

We amateurs were constantly in anticipation of seeing either wild animals or Indians that might add to the spirit and zest of the expedition. There were no habitations, no fields, no farms. There was the vast expanse of plain in front of us ascending gradually westward toward the mountains with the blue sky and sunshine overhead. I do not recollect of seeing more than one little cabin or one little pioneer ranch during that whole day's ride. I do know that as the afternoon wore on those of us who were amateur horsemen were pleased to take our turns as the opportunity offered of riding in the army wagon which carried our supplies, and leading our horses.

When the shades of night of the second day had come we had seen many antelope and now and then heard the cry of the coyote and the wolf but we had not seen any sign of buffalo, but we did receive information from some cattlemen or plain wanderers that there was a band of roving Indians in that vicinity which created in us a feeling of some anxiety—not so much for our personal safety as that our horses might be stolen and we be left in these remote regions without the necessary facilities for traveling homeward.

Our camp for the night was made upon a spot of low ground near the bank of a small creek which was bordered by hills on either side and sheltered by a small grove of timber near at hand. The surrounding hills would cut off the sight of the evening camp fires, and the timber would obscure the ascending columns of smoke as they spread into space through the branches of the trees.

The horses were picketed near the camp around the commissary wagon and Lieutenant Schwatka placed the cavalymen upon sentinel duty. The night was spent with some restlessness and sleep was somewhat disturbed in anticipation of a possible danger, and I believe that all of us rather anxiously awaited the coming of the morning with the eastern sunlight that we might be restored to that feeling of security that would come with freedom of action and the opportunity for "preparedness." When morning did come we had the pleasure of greeting each other with pleasant smiles and a feeling of happy contentment. We had not been molested by the Indians and our military sentinels had not seen them. [329]

On the afternoon of the third day of our march into the wilderness we reached the farther margin of a high upland of the rim of a plain, where we had an opportunity of looking down over a large area of bottom land covered by vegetation and where there appeared to be signs of water. From this point of vantage we discovered a small herd of browsing buffalo but so far away from us as to be beyond rifle range. These animals were apparently so far away from civilization or human habitation of any kind that their animal instinct gave them a feeling of safety and security.

We well knew that these animals could scent the approach of men and horses even when beyond the line of vision. We must study the currents of the air and plan our maneuvers with the utmost caution if we expected to be able to approach within any reasonable distance without being first discovered by them.

We intrusted ourselves to the guidance of Buffalo Bill, whose experience added to his good judgment, and so skilfully did he conduct our maneuvers around the hills and up and down ravines that within an hour we were within a reasonable distance of these wild animals before they discovered us, and then the chase began. It was a part of the plan that we should surround them but we were prudently cautioned by Mr. Cody that a buffalo could run faster for a short distance than our horses. Therefore we must keep far enough away so that if the buffalo should turn toward any of us we could immediately turn and flee in the opposite direction as fast as our horses could carry us.

I must stop for a moment to recite a romantic incident which made this buffalo chase especially picturesque and amusing. Judge Neville had been in the habit of wearing in Omaha a high silk hat and a full dress coat (in common parlance a spiketail). He started out on this expedition wearing this suit of clothes and without any change of garments to wear on the hunt. So it came about that when this group of amateur buffalo huntsmen went riding pell-mell over the prairies after the buffalo, and likewise when pursued by them in turn, Judge Neville sat astride his running war-horse wearing his high silk hat and the long flaps of his spiketail coat floating out behind him on the breeze as if waving a farewell adieu to all his companions. He presented a picture against the horizon that does not have its parallel in all pioneer history. [330]

It was entirely impossible for us inexperienced buffalo hunters while riding galloping horses across the plains to fire our rifles with any degree of accuracy. Suffice it to say we did not succeed in shooting any buffalo and I don't now even know that we tried to do so. We were too much taken up with the excitement of the chase and of being chased in turn. At one time we were the pursuers and at another time we were being pursued, but the excitement was so intense that there was no limit to our enjoyment or enthusiasm.

Buffalo Bill furnished us the unusual and soul-stirring amusement of that afternoon. He took it upon himself individually to lasso the largest bull buffalo of the herd while the rest of us did but little more than to direct the course of the flight of these wild animals, or perhaps, more correctly expressed—to keep out of their way. It did not take Buffalo Bill very long to lasso the large bull buffalo as his fleet blooded horse circled around the startled wild animal. When evening came we left the lassoed buffalo out on the plains solitary and alone, lariated to a stake driven into the ground so firmly that we felt quite sure he could not escape. It is my impression that we captured a young buffalo out of the small herd, which we placed in a corral found in that vicinity.

On the following morning we went out upon the plains to get the lassoed buffalo and found that in his efforts to break away he had broken one of his legs. We were confronted with the question whether we should let the animal loose upon the prairies in his crippled condition or whether it would be a more merciful thing to shoot him and put him out of his pain and suffering. Buffalo Bill solved the vexatious problem by concluding to lead the crippled animal over to the ranchman's house and there he obtained such instruments as he could, including a butcher knife, a hand-saw, and a bar of iron. He amputated the limb of the buffalo above the point of the break in the bone and seared it over with a hot iron to close the artery and prevent the animal from bleeding to death. The surgical operation thus rudely performed upon this big, robust wild animal of the prairie seemed to be quite well and successfully performed. The buffalo was then left in the ranchman's corral with the understanding that he would see it was well fed and watered. [331]

We were now quite a way from civilization and near the Colorado border line, and notwithstanding our subsequent riding over the hills and uplands during the following day we did not discover any other buffalo and those which had gotten away from us on the preceding day could not be found. During that day we turned northward, and I can remember that about noon we came to a cattleman's ranch where for the first time since our start on the journey we sat down to a wooden table in a log cabin for our noonday meal. During the afternoon we traveled northward as rapidly as our horses could carry us but night came on when we were twenty miles or more southwest of Fort McPherson and we found it again necessary to go into camp for the night, sleeping in the little army tents which we carried along with us in the commissary wagon.

Colonel Cody on this journey had been riding his own private horse—a beautiful animal, capable of great speed. I can remember quite well that Mr. Cody said that he never slept out at night when within twenty miles of his own home. He declined to go into camp with us but turned his horse to the northward and gave him the full rein and started off at a rapid gallop over the plains, expecting to reach his home before the hour of midnight. It seemed to us that it would be a desolate, dreary, lonesome and perilous ride over the solitude of that waste of country, without roads, without lights, without sign boards or guides, but Buffalo Bill said he knew the direction

from the stars and that he would trust his good horse to safely carry him over depressions and ravines notwithstanding the darkness of the night. So on he sped northward toward his home.

On the next day we amateur buffalo hunters rode on to Fort McPherson and thence to North Platte where we returned our army horses to the military post with a debt of gratitude to Lieutenant Schwatka, who at all times had been generous, courteous, and polite to us, as well as an interesting social companion.

So ended the last romantic and rather unsuccessful buffalo hunt over the western plains of the state of Nebraska—a region then desolate, arid, barren, and almost totally uninhabited, but today a wealthy and productive part of our state. [332]

The story of the buffalo hunt in and of itself is not an incident of much importance but it furnishes the material for a most remarkable contrast of development within a period of a generation. The wild buffalo has gone. The aboriginal red man of the plains has disappeared. The white man with the new civilization has stepped into their places. It all seems to have been a part of Nature's great plan. Out of the desolation of the past there has come the new life with the new civilization, just as new worlds and their satellites have been created out of the dust of dead worlds.

There was a glory of the wilderness but it has gone. There was a mystery that haunted all those barren plains but that too has gone. Now there are fields and houses and schools and groves of forest trees and villages and towns, all prosperous under the same warm sunshine as of a generation ago when the buffalo grazed on the meadow lands and the aboriginal Indians hunted over the plains.

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**Mrs. Charles H. Aull Twelfth State Regent, Nebraska Society,
Daughters of the American Revolution. 1915-1916**

OUTLINE HISTORY OF THE NEBRASKA SOCIETY, DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

BY MRS. CHARLES H. AULL, *State Regent*

The National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution was organized in Washington, District of Columbia, October 11, 1890, and incorporated under the laws of Congress, June 8, 1891. Its charter membership numbered 818. Its declared object was:

"To perpetuate the memory of the spirit of the men and women who achieved

American Independence by the acquisition and protection of historical spots, and the erection of monuments; by the encouragement of historical research in relation to the Revolution and the publication of its results; by the preservation of documents and relics, and of the records of the individual services of revolutionary soldiers and patriots, and by the promotion of celebrations of all patriotic anniversaries.

"To carry out the injunction of Washington in his farewell address to the American people, 'to promote, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge,' thus developing an enlightened public opinion, and affording to young and old such advantages as shall develop in them the largest capacity for performing the duties of American citizens.

"To cherish, maintain, and extend the institutions of American freedom, to foster true patriotism and love of country, and to aid in securing for mankind all the blessings of liberty."

Although there were previously some "members at large" in Nebraska, no chapter had been organized until the formation of Deborah Avery chapter in 1896. At present (1916) there are thirty-three chapters with a membership of fifteen hundred, and a well organized state society actively engaged in historical, educational, and patriotic work. Each chapter pays to the state society a per capita tax of twenty-five cents. A conference is held annually to plan the state work and promote the purposes of the national society.

Mrs. Charlotte F. Palmer of Omaha was appointed by the national society as organizing regent for Nebraska, June 7, 1894. She was reappointed in February, 1895, and again in February, 1896. [334]

No chapters were formed until in 1896, when Mary M. A. Stevens of Lincoln was admitted to membership in the national society, January 8, and was made organizing regent by Mrs. Philip Hichborn, vice-president general in charge of organization. Under the direction of Miss Stevens, Deborah Avery chapter was formed May 15, 1896, and chartered June 17 following.

In May, 1896, Mrs. Laura B. Pound of Lincoln was appointed state regent to succeed Mrs. Palmer and the real work of organization was begun.

Omaha chapter was formed June 29, 1896, and approved by the national society October 1, 1896. In December, 1896, Mrs. Elizabeth C. Langworthy was appointed organizing regent at Seward but a chapter was not completed there until nine years later. In February, 1897, Mary M. A. Stevens of Deborah Avery chapter and Mrs. Henry L. Jaynes of Omaha chapter were delegates to the continental congress at Washington. Miss Stevens nominated Mrs. Pound for state regent and Mrs. Jaynes nominated Mrs. John M. Thurston of Omaha for vice-president general from Nebraska. Their election followed. Mrs. Thurston died March 14, 1898, and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Angie Thurston Newman of Lincoln was elected at the following congress to succeed her. No new chapters were perfected in 1897 but Minnie Shedd Cline of Minden and Mrs. Sarah G. Bates of Valentine were appointed organizing regents.

Mrs. Frances Avery Haggard of Lincoln was elected state regent by the continental congress in February, 1898. She devoted her energies to raising money and supplies for the relief work undertaken by the Daughters during the Spanish-American war. At the close of her first term Mrs. Haggard declined a renomination.

The third state regent was Mrs. Elizabeth Towle of Omaha, who was first elected in 1899 and reelected in 1900. Miss Anna Day of Beatrice was appointed organizing regent by Mrs. Towle.

In 1901 Mrs. Laura B. Pound was again elected state regent and served two terms. The national society having made provision for state vice-regents, Mrs. Mildred L. Allee of Omaha was elected to that office. Mrs. Annie Strickland Steele was appointed organizing regent at Fairbury, Mrs. Janet K. Hollenbeck at Fremont, and Mrs. Olive A. Haldeman at Ord. In her last report as [335]

state regent Mrs. Pound recorded two new chapters, Quivira chapter at Fairbury, organized December 3, 1902, and Lewis-Clark chapter at Fremont, January 17, 1903, with chapters at Beatrice and Ord in process of formation. Quivira chapter was chartered February 3, 1903, and Lewis-Clark chapter was chartered February 13, 1903.

The first state conference was called by Mrs. Pound in October, 1902, and was held in Lincoln at the home of the late Mrs. Addison S. Tibbetts. This conference was called to nominate a state regent and plan for observing the centennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition. This event was celebrated August 3, 1904, the anniversary of the council of Lewis and Clark with the Otoe and Missouri Indians. On this date a Nebraska boulder was dedicated at Fort Calhoun with appropriate exercises, participated in by the Sons of the American Revolution and the Nebraska State Historical Society. This was the first historical event commemorated by the Daughters in Nebraska.

Mrs. Mildred L. Allee of Omaha was nominated for state regent at the conference in 1902, and Mrs. Emma Kellogg of Lincoln for vice-regent. These nominations were approved at the continental congress in 1903 and both nominees were elected, and reelected in 1904.

Coronado chapter at Ord was organized January 25, 1904, and Elizabeth Montague chapter at Beatrice June 17, 1904. The former was chartered September 30, 1904, and the latter June 21, 1905.

On October 20, 1903, the second annual state conference was held in Omaha. Mrs. Charles Warren Fairbanks, president general of the national society, was the guest of honor and delivered an address upon the subject, "The Mission of the Daughters of the American Revolution."

The third annual state conference assembled in Lincoln, October 19, 1904, for a two days' session. Mrs. Elizabeth C. Langworthy of Seward was chosen for state regent and Mrs. Janet K. Hollenbeck of Fremont was the choice of the conference for vice-regent. Both were elected, and both were renominated at the fourth state conference held at Fairbury in October, 1905. Mrs. Langworthy organized the Margaret Holmes chapter at Seward April 10, 1905, and Nikumi chapter at Blair, February 23, 1906.

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Lincoln entertained the fifth annual state conference October 29-30, 1906, Mrs. Donald McLean, president general, being the guest of honor. At this conference a state organization was perfected and by-laws adopted providing that nominations for state regent and vice-regent should be made by the state board of management and submitted to the continental congress for election. Other officers for the state organization were to be elected at the annual conference. This system was followed until 1910, when the by-laws of the national society were changed to permit each state organization to elect its own regent and vice-regent.

Mrs. Charles B. Letton of Quivira chapter, Fairbury, was nominated for state regent and Mrs. Janet K. Hollenbeck for vice-regent at the meeting of the board of management in the spring of 1907, and were elected at the national congress immediately following. Mrs. Letton was reelected in 1908 and Mrs. S. D. Barkalow of Omaha was elected vice-regent.

The sixth annual state conference was held in Omaha October 22-23, 1907. Mrs. Letton appointed three organizing regents, one at Aurora, where no chapter has yet been formed; Mrs. Arthur E. Allyn at Hastings, and Mrs. Charles Oliver Norton at Kearney. On May 16, 1908, she organized the Fort Kearney chapter at Kearney, which was chartered October 27, 1908, with Mrs. Norton as its first regent.

Mrs. Richard C. Hoyt presented the following resolution to the sixth annual conference and moved its adoption, the motion being seconded by Mrs. Henrietta M. Rees:

"Therefore, be it resolved that the D. A. R. of Nebraska coöperate with the State Historical Society in taking some steps toward marking the old Oregon trail in Nebraska and that a committee be

appointed to act in unison with the Historical Society."

The resolution was adopted. Members of the Omaha chapter who were interested in this matter at the time, say that the idea was suggested by Dr. George L. Miller of Omaha, then president of the State Historical Society. In accordance with the foregoing resolution Mrs. Letton, state regent, appointed the following committee: Mrs. John J. Stubbs, Omaha; Mrs. George H. Brash, Beatrice; and Mrs. Stephen B. Pound, Lincoln. [337]



Monument Located in Bemis Park, Omaha, on the California Trail or Military Road Erected by Omaha Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution



Monument in Riverside Park, Omaha, marking the Initial Point of the California Trail Erected by Omaha Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution

The seventh annual conference was held at Fremont October 29-30, 1908. At this conference Mrs. Letton urged that plans be made for marking the Oregon trail across Nebraska, and called upon Mrs. Charles Oliver Norton who had been appointed chairman of the Oregon trail committee to present the subject to the conference.

In April, 1909, Mrs. Oreal S. Ward of Lincoln was elected state regent and Mrs. S. D. Barkalow of Omaha was reëlected vice-regent. In 1910 Mrs. Ward was reëlected state regent with Mrs. Charles Oliver Norton as vice-regent.

The eighth state conference was held at Beatrice October 28-29, 1909. At this conference it was voted to present two marble pedestals to Memorial Continental Hall. It was resolved to vigorously prosecute the efforts to secure an appropriation from the legislature for the marking of the Oregon trail. Mrs. Charles B. Letton, during her last term as state regent, had endeavored to have the

legislature of 1909 appropriate money for marking this trail, but no action was taken by that body until the session of 1911, when, through the efforts of Mrs. Oreal S. Ward, who had been elected state regent, \$2,000 was appropriated "for the purpose of assisting in the procuring of suitable monuments to mark the Oregon trail in the state of Nebraska." This money was to be expended under the direction of a commission composed of "the state surveyor of Nebraska, the state regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution in the state of Nebraska, and the secretary of the Nebraska State Historical Society." This act was approved April 7, 1911. On April 10th following, the above-named commissioners met and organized as the "Oregon Trail Memorial Commission," with Robert Harvey president, Mrs. Oreal S. Ward vice-president, and Clarence S. Paine secretary-treasurer.

During Mrs. Ward's term as state regent she organized four chapters, St. Leger Cowley chapter, Lincoln, December 3, 1909; Niobrara chapter, Hastings, October 12, 1910; Otoe chapter, Nebraska City, February 15, 1911; Major Isaac Sadler chapter, Omaha, March 1, 1911.

The ninth annual state conference was held in Seward, October 19-20, 1910, and Mrs. Charles Oliver Norton of Kearney was elected state regent, and Mrs. Warren Perry of Fairbury vice-regent. They were reelected at the tenth state conference, held at Kearney, October 23-25, 1911. The following eleven chapters were organized during Mrs. Norton's administration: [338]

Platte chapter, Columbus, October 20, 1911.
Reavis-Ashley chapter, Falls City, January 5, 1912.
Superior chapter, Superior, January 12, 1912.
Thirty-seventh Star chapter, McCook, February 21, 1912.
David City chapter, David City, March 5, 1912.
Pawnee chapter, Fullerton, March 28, 1912.
David Conklin chapter, Callaway, February 22, 1913.
Josiah Everett chapter, Lyons, February 26, 1913.
Bonneville chapter, Lexington, February 26, 1913.
Nancy Gary chapter, Norfolk, February 27, 1913.
Stephen Bennett chapter, Fairmont, February 28, 1913.

Mrs. Norton attended the third meeting of the Oregon Trail Commission, held May 2, 1911, and was elected vice-president in place of Mrs. Oreal S. Ward whom she had succeeded as state regent. During her term Mrs. Norton vigorously prosecuted the work of marking the Oregon trail, with the assistance of Mrs. Charles B. Letton, whom she had appointed as chairman of the Oregon trail committee. During her administration the contract was made for regulation markers to be used in marking the trail, and several were erected. There were also several special monuments erected ranging in cost from \$100 to \$350. The first monument to be planned for during this period was the one on the Kansas-Nebraska state line, to cost \$350, which, however, was not dedicated until later, and the last monument to be dedicated during Mrs. Norton's term was the one on the Nebraska-Wyoming line, costing \$200, for which Mrs. Norton raised the money from the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution in Nebraska and Wyoming. During this time there was also a very careful survey made of the trail and sites for monuments were selected.

In April, 1910, Mrs. Andrew K. Gault of Omaha was elected vice-president general from Nebraska at the national congress and reelected in 1912, serving, in all, four years.

The eleventh annual conference was held in Lincoln, October 22-24, 1912. Mrs. Mathew T. Scott, president general, was the honor guest. Amendments to the by-laws were adopted in harmony with the by-laws of the national organization and the date of the state conference was changed from October to March. It was provided that all state officers should serve for one term of two years, and the per capita tax was raised from ten cents to twenty-five cents. Mrs. Warren Perry of Fairbury was elected state regent and Mrs. Charles H. Aull of Omaha vice-regent. [339]

The twelfth annual state conference convened at Fairbury, March 17-19, 1914. During Mrs. Perry's term of office there were organized the following chapters:

- Oregon Trail chapter, Hebron, October 20, 1913.
- Jonathan Cass chapter, Weeping Water, January 23, 1914.
- Elijah Gove chapter, Stromsburg, February 16, 1914.
- Fontenelle chapter, Plattsmouth, April 21, 1914.
- Reverend Reuben Pickett chapter, Chadron, March 4, 1915.

At the close of her administration twelve organizing regents were at work: Mrs. Eleanor Murphey Smith, Crete; Mrs. Capitola Skiles Tulley, Alliance; Mrs. Mabel Raymond, Scottsbluff; Miss Jessie Kellogg, Red Cloud; Mrs. Alice Dilworth, Holdrege; Mrs. Clara King Jones, Wayne; Mrs. C. M. Wallace, Shelton; Mrs. Charles Brown, Sutton; Mrs. Margaret Orr, Clay Center; Mrs. Viola Romigh, Gothenburg; Mrs. Leona A. Craft, Morrill; Dr. Anna Cross, Crawford.

The most important work to engage the attention of the state society during the administration of Mrs. Perry was the erection of monuments on the Oregon trail, and the accumulation of material for the present volume of reminiscences. A large number of the regulation markers on the Oregon trail were erected during this time; several special monuments dedicated and others arranged for.

The thirteenth state conference was held in Omaha, March 17-19, 1915. Mrs. Charles H. Aull of Omaha was elected state regent, and Mrs. E. G. Drake of Beatrice vice-regent. Three chapters have been organized under the present administration:

- Capt. Christopher Robinson chapter, Crawford, June 16, 1915.
- Butler-Johnson chapter, Sutton, June 17, 1915.
- Three Trails chapter, Gothenburg, December 31, 1915.

At the present time plans are being formulated for marking the California trail from Omaha and Florence along the north side of the Platte river to the Wyoming line. This work will be carried forward by the Daughters, through the agency of the Nebraska Memorial Association of which the state regent is vice-president. [340]

FINIS

"The moving Finger writes, and having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it."

—*Omar Khayyam*

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Transcriber's Notes:

Punctuation has been standardised.

Minor printer errors (e.g. omitted, superfluous or transposed characters) have been fixed.

Kearny and Kearney are both used in this text.

Page 13, "Rhoderic" changed to "[Roderick](#)" (Roderick Lomas) [per internet search]

Page 25, "Eldorado" changed to "[El Dorado](#)" (trip to the new El Dorado)

Page 96, "Asch" changed to "[Asche](#)" (A. Dove Wiley Asche) [per internet search]

Page 125, "benumed" changed to "[benumbed](#)" (being benumbed myself) [per Webster's 1828 Dictionary]

Page 170, "daguerrotype" changed to "[daguerreotype](#)" (daguerreotype of Mr.) (daguerreotype of George)

Page 171, "1833" changed to "[1633](#)" (colony in 1633)

Page 219, "repellant" changed to "[repellent](#)" (seemed repellent, irksome)

Page 226, "repellant" changed to "[repellent](#)" (and repellent fear)

Page 226, "arborially" changed to "[arboreally](#)" (arboreally interred)

Page 227, "markmanship" changed to "[marksmanship](#)" (no deft marksmanship)

Page 281, "Nemeha" changed to "[Nemaha](#)" (grazing in the Nemaha)

Page 308, "Ottoes" changed to "[Otoes](#)" (the "Ottoes, Pawnees)

Page 315, the spelling of "[delf](#)" was retained (per Webster 1828 Dictionary)

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