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### History of Cass County

A. L. Child

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## HISTORY OF CASS COUNTY.

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BY DR A. L. CHILD.\*

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In March, 1876, the U. S. Congress passed a joint resolution recommending throughout the republic a general observance of this hundredth anniversary of our national independence, and that, in addition to the usual observances, each county and town cause an historical sketch of said county or town, from its foundation to the present day, to be prepared, and that a copy of it be filed in the clerk's office of the county, as also in the office of the librarian of congress, to the intent that a complete record may thus be obtained of the progress of our institutions during the first centennial of their existence.

This resolution was approved by President Grant on March 13, and he issued his proclamation to this effect, further recommending that the governor of each state and territory also issue a like proclamation to the people of said state or territory, that notice might thus be brought directly to the mass of the people.

In accordance with this recommendation Governor Garber issued his proclamation from Lincoln on the 25th of April, 1876.

The conception of this idea, with whomsoever it originated, and these acts of our authorities, are worthy of all praise. The importance and value of such a photograph of our country at this peculiar time, which finds the whole country aroused and excited on this subject, and on every side pondering upon and pouring forth reminiscences of the past, will be above all price. It is a most happy time for such a purpose.

On May 10, 1876, the Plattsmouth city council, through his honor the mayor, Gen. Livingston, proposed to me that I should undertake to prepare a sketch of the history of the city of Plattsmouth, including so much of a history of Cass county as might be necessary to show its connection with and relation to the city.

The county commissioners had neglected to undertake any action

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\*The original pamphlet of Dr. Child is entitled, "Centennial History of Plattsmouth City and Cass County, Nebraska, with an Appendix from the Records and Files of the Pioneer Association of Cass County, Nebraska." On account of lack of space the editor has been able to reprint only that portion relating to the county proper.

under the above recommendations for a history of the county, and the city council, of course, could act officially only for the city. As I felt the great importance of a more extended history of the county than the action of the council indicated, I obtained permission of that body to enlarge and extend the history of the county, and thus make it a sketch of the history of Cass county and the city of Plattsmouth.

It is needless to say that much very important and interesting matter, requisite for such a sketch, is already lost, or exists in such a mutilated and contradictory form that it is not available; while what was written, that still remains, was so imperfectly executed that it conveys but little reliable information. And yet our task in Nebraska as compared with that of the older states is light and easy. We have the history of the youth but just arrived at the years of manhood (22 years) to record, while they have that of the hoary veteran of from one to two and a half centuries.

In the following sketch much care and labor have been expended in sifting and authenticating the information obtained, and only that has been recorded which seemed most reliable; yet with the many conflicting recollections and imperfect records it will be strange indeed if errors are escaped.

A treaty between the U. S. government and Indians, in which the Indians relinquished their title to the lands bordering on the west bank of the Missouri river, was concluded and ratified on April 17, 1854, and proclamation by President Pierce, of this treaty and the extinguishment of the Indian title, was made on the 24th of June following. Previous to this, however, large numbers of people, in expectation of these events, had gathered along the east bank of the river, ready at a moment's warning to "jump the river" and drive their stakes for "claims" on the long coveted grounds of Nebraska, the government having up to this date rigorously blockaded the passage by military posts on both sides of the river, and this blockade seems to have been decidedly more effective than that attempted during the year past around the Black Hills. No person was allowed to settle or remain on Nebraska soil except by special permit of the secretary of war.

The first permit of this kind within the bounds of Cass county was obtained by Samuel Martin, to establish a trading post on the Missouri river, below the mouth of the Platte. Under this permit, Samuel Martin, assisted by James O'Neil and others, early in the spring of

1853, built the old two-story log house at the foot of Main street, on the north side, on lots 6 and 7, block 31, so well remembered by all our old settlers. It was placed on nearly the same ground now occupied by the brick erected by Wm. Herold in 1864, and subsequently used as the printing office of the *Nebraska Herald*. The "old barracks," as this was more generally called, was subsequently used for different purposes—stores, offices, post-office, etc., till it was removed to make room for the brick. The logs of the "old barracks" were from an old house in Iowa, and brought over on the ice before it broke up in the spring of '53. In the fall of '53 James O'Neil also built for the same Samuel Martin the smaller log house, a little north and west of the first, which in later days was largely used for county offices, and where many of us in 1857 and '58 paid our first tax in Nebraska, which, in consequence of illegality of proceedings in assessment, was subsequently refunded.

The occupation of this trading post in the spring and summer of '53 by him made Samuel Martin the first white settler in Cass county.

On the extinguishment of the Indian title, June 24, 1854, a rush was made for the most valuable claims, and but a few days passed before most of the more desirable lands in Cass county near the Missouri river were staked and marked with the claimants' names.

I do not propose to cumber this record with the names of those who came here simply for the purpose of speculating in "claims," and who often forced the real pioneer to pay two, three, or half a dozen prices for his homestead, and then returning to his home in other states, or else passing on to repeat the same process in newer fields, left the pioneers to fight their own battles and endure all the privations and hardships incident to such life. The claims of these two classes to the regard of the later population of Nebraska are widely diverse.

The speculator and claim jumper, in violation of all right and justice, and almost invariably by perjury, seized upon the just and legal rights of the real settler, and by forcing him to pay two or more prices for his land, thus stripped him of his small means which were necessary to enable him to successfully accomplish the task he had undertaken, and to him, living meanwhile in a "dug-out" but little better than a hole in the ground, scantily clothed, and oftentimes in need of food he could not obtain, the real pioneer (whose name let us honor), we owe the Nebraska of 1876.

Before the legal organization of the territory of Nebraska, some 250 men had penciled their names on stakes within what is now Cass county. As this matter of "claims," and "club law," which attended it, is not as familiar to the later population as it was to the old settler, a few words in explanation may not be amiss. A claim was any subdivision of a section (a square mile), as a half, a fourth, or an eighth of a section, the lines conforming to and parallel with the lines of the section, if already surveyed. If not surveyed, the claimant fixed his own boundaries, but after the survey was made by the government he must adapt his lines to those of the survey.

The U. S. laws allowed a claim only of 160, 120, 80, or 40 acres, unless it was in case of a fraction, when the whole fraction might be claimed. The clubs generally allowed and protected claims of 320 acres, looking to further legislation by congress to authorize such entries.

To take a claim was to stake out any of the above described quantities and write the claimant's name and perhaps a description of the land upon the stakes, then have this description filed and recorded by the secretary of the club, and this constituted a "claim."

To "jump a claim" was to remove the stakes already set, and put up others with the jumper's name upon them.

Club law was the personal government of the settlement by the settlers themselves in club meeting assembled.

Before the organization of our territorial government it was found necessary to have some tribunal for the settlement of disputes, and each settlement defining its own boundaries formed itself into a "club" for this purpose. A president, secretary, and treasurer were elected, a constitution and by-laws adopted, and provision made for regular and special meetings. The secretary kept a journal of the proceedings of the meetings, also a "claim record." To make a claim valid it must first conflict with no other member's rights, and then be recorded with the number of section, township, and range, also the date. Most of the clubs also required the positive assurance that it was intended for a bona fide settlement. These clubs varied much in character, according to location. The earlier settlements near the river were largely composed of speculators, who often equaled, if they did not outnumber, the real settlers; while farther back from the river the number of pioneers largely predominated. Of course the differ-

ent clubs varied in character. On the one extreme self-interest ruled largely in most of the proceedings ; while on the other the general interest and welfare of the settlement was the ruling principle.

An offender against the laws or decisions of the club was generally summarily dealt with. There was no machinery for assessing fines ; no jails or prisons ; hence little or no attempt was made to grade the punishment according to the offense. In the clubs controlled by real settlers the offender had a fair trial and was informed what he *must* do to retain his membership, and the penalty of refusal to conform at once to the judgment of the club. The penalty of obstinate and unyielding disobedience was "removal from the territory," or, in the language of the day, to be "put over the river," and in extreme cases the word "over" did not reach the other side. Very few had the hardihood to resist the judgment of the club, for it was well known that persistent offenders would be so effectually *removed* that they could cause no more trouble.

There was probably but one case in Cass county when it became necessary to resort to this extreme penalty. This one, but too vividly remembered yet by many citizens of Plattsmouth, was when four unhappy men were started on their last journey *over* the river ; but their arrival on the other side has never been reported, nor have they been seen or heard from since.

Other clubs had hard cases to deal with, but they yielded or left before coming to this last fearful resort.

Much has been said and published over the country of these clubs. They have been called mobs, lynchers, and many other bad names. Some of this talk was probably justified and deserved by wrongful and abusive acts, but in the main it was not. Some of them, in the vicinity of the Missouri river, were largely composed of speculators and outlaws, congregated there and remaining only long enough to secure claims, perhaps several, raise what they could upon them and then return to their homes. Devoid of truth, honor, or integrity they obtained titles to land by perjury. They had no interest in the country except what they carried out of it in their pockets. Sometimes outnumbering the real settlers in the clubs they overruled its action in their own interest, and thus brought disgrace and scandal upon "club law." But the settlements more remote from the border were less infested by this class, and here club law, although very ex-

pensive from the amount of time required of each member in personal attendance, formed the best government, in my judgment, that I ever knew.

Before seeking Nebraska I had heard much of the lawless crowd congregated here, and really expected to find little else than ruffians and blacklegs on my arrival. On the evening after I first saw Cass county I learned that a club meeting was to be held near by on the same evening. Full of curiosity I attended the meeting, expecting to see an assemblage of anything *but men*. As they gathered in, to the number of some forty-five or fifty, I watched closely for the cloven hoofs, and scanned the faces for the features of the outlaw and ruffian. But my search was in vain; I discovered none of the characteristics for which I sought. I was much surprised, and still more so by the tone, order, and character of the proceedings—and after some two years' of membership in that club I should to-day have no hesitation in submitting any question in which I had an interest, of whatever importance, even of life or death, to that club, in preference to any legal court I have ever known, either in Nebraska or elsewhere.

The speculator has been the *curse* of Nebraska. Not only did he demoralize our clubs. His object was "claims," and no course, however vile or rascally, was too low if it led to this object. He sneaked around through the settlements talking of his "great desire for a fixed home," of his "wife and children who would be delighted to come into *such a settlement*," thus adding to the society and helping to build up schools, churches, roads, bridges, etc. This, he well knew, was the weak side of the pioneer, who with his wife and children were homesick and lonely. It was impossible with his scanty means to build school houses and support schools, and it was a severe trial to see his children growing up without education. Many were also deeply anxious for the gospel privileges left behind; and bridges, an absolute necessity, it was often impossible to supply—and more settlers only could supply these demands, and remove the evils. To obtain them and this relief he threw his cabin or "dug-out" door wide open to strangers, divided his last meal with them, perhaps not knowing where the next could be obtained; gave up his bed and slept upon the floor, if he was so fortunate as to have one; left his work and went out over the prairie to hunt up a claim for the promising stranger; or perhaps showed him the fine one he had picked out and been writ-

ing back to the old home, urging the relative or friend to come out and occupy—anything and everything to increase the settlement.

Well, our wolf in sheep's clothing, hugging himself and chuckling over his own shrewdness and the greenness of the pioneer, procures four stones, puts them in his pocket, and goes out to take possession of his claim. He drops the stones at the supposed four corners of a house, takes a small stick, splits one end, puts a bit of window glass in the split and sticks it on one side of the house for a window; borrows a blanket or two and perhaps a bit of plank from his host and goes out at night to his new home, throws down his plank, places his blanket over it and lays down to sleep. Then, with the most positive assurance that in so many days or weeks he will be back with his family to settle down for good, he leaves for the land office and solemnly swears that he has taken a claim, so and so; that he has built a dwelling house upon it with glass windows and a plank floor; that it is for the sole purpose of a *home*; that he wishes to enter it, and that it is his home and he has moved into it as such. He gets his duplicate, steps out, and leaves for his home and family, if he has one, congratulating himself on his sharpness as a speculator. He has entered a fine tract of land at a cost of sixty to eighty cents per acre, which he assures himself will soon sell for \$10, \$20, or perhaps \$50 per acre.

Some may think this is an exaggeration or overdrawn sketch. But if you doubt it ask any old pioneer for the facts in the case, and he will duplicate it as many times as you wish. The result of such operations to the pioneer was disheartening and disastrous. He was thus gradually hemmed in and blockaded by speculators' lands, which, by reason of falling prices, remained on their hands unsold and unimproved. He had by his own generosity and kindness helped these vampires to isolate himself from neighbors; and he had not only to paddle his own canoe alone, but he was forced by long and severe privation and toil, gradually improving and enhancing the value of his own land, to also paddle the canoe of his adversary, by raising the value of surrounding lands till they could be sold at a satisfactory price.

And yet this movement did not result in such entire success to the speculator as he had anticipated. He overdid himself. The times were not favorable to a rise of land values; and again, he grabbed so



largely and crippled the pioneers and hemmed them in so closely that they could not open up and improve land enough to increase the values of surrounding lands to much extent. Hence many were obliged to sell at prices far below the cost of entering, interest and taxes. And large quantities are held to-day in Cass county by those who have nearly if not quite lost all hope of ever recovering the money expended.

But for these men there would have been to-day but few, if any, acres of unimproved land in Cass county, and the county would have been millions richer than it now is. For twenty years emigrants have been rolling through our county who would gladly have pitched their tents with us, and often with large capital. But there was no room for them.

Am I not fully justified in denouncing the land speculator as a *curse* to our county?

From my own recollections, aided by several kind friends in different parts of the county, I give the names and time of settlement of a few of the pioneers. Many of the first on the ground in several precincts were merely speculators, or of a transitory character, selling out their claims and passing on; I therefore omit them; many entire precincts and settlements are omitted also, as letters of inquiry remain unanswered.

IN MARTIN'S PRECINCT, now Plattsmouth, the following names are found in 1854, viz.: Samuel Martin, Jacob Adams, Wm. H. Shafer, J. W. O'Neil, W. Mickelwait, C. H. Wolcott, Levi Walker, Stephen Wiles, A. J. Todd, and Wm. Gullion.

ROCK BLUFFS—N. R. Hobbs, Wm. Young, F. M. Young, sen., Wm. Gilmour, sen., Abram Towner, Benj. Albin, J. McF. Haygood, 1854.

FOUR MILE CREEK—Lorenzo Johnson, 1855; Thomas Thomas, Wm. L. Thomas, Samuel Thomas, Peter Beaver, Capt. D. L. Archer, 1856.

EIGHT MILE GROVE—John Scott, 1855; John Mutz, Geo. S. Ruby, J. P. Ruby, 1856.

LOUISVILLE—Adam Ingram, James Ingram, 1856; A. L. Child, 1857; Wm. Snyder, Conrad Ripple, Pat. Blessington, Fred. Stohman, 1858.

AVOCA—John Kanoba, J. G. Hanson, 1856; Amos Teft, sen., Amos Teft, jr., Orlando Teft, 1857; Geo. W. Adams, 1859.

LIBERTY—Joseph Van Horn, 1854; Samuel Kirkpatrick, 1855; L. Sheldon, J. F. Buck, Stephen Hobson, 1856.

The dates indicate the time when the pioneer planted his stakes for a home, although his family might have still been left behind; yet then and there he identified his interests with that of the county, as proved by continued residence up to the present time. Some, however, have changed their residence to other parts of the county, and several stood faithfully at their posts till mustered out of service for their final settlement.

As before said, the Indian title was extinguished in June of 1854, and soon after Francis Burt was appointed governor of Nebraska Territory, and Thomas B. Cuming, secretary. On October 10, 1854, Gov. Burt arrived and made his headquarters at the old Mission House, Bellevue, but delayed in his arrival by sickness, he continued to fail till Oct. 18, when he died. T. B. Cuming, then acting governor, immediately set about preparing the machinery of a territorial government. He appointed marshals and ordered an enumeration of the population. The enumeration to be commenced Oct. 24, 1854, and returns to be made on or before November 1. His instructions to the marshals were to be very cautious and careful to include no one in this enumeration but actual and *bona fide settlers*, with stringent oaths in case of doubt.

Under this census Cass County returned — inhabitants. On this enumeration he apportioned, out of the twenty-six representatives allowed for the territorial legislature by the organic act, three members to Cass county, and one councilman out of thirteen, and ordered an election to be held for a legislature on December 12, 1854. In the proclamation calling this first election, Cass county was described as "the county lying between the Platte river on the north and the Weeping Water on the south, and from the Missouri river on the east to the limit of the ceded lands on the west" (about 100 miles). It was divided into two voting precincts, viz., Martin's precinct, voting at the Old Barracks, with James O'Neil, Thos. G. Palmer, and Stephen Wiles as judges, and T. S. Gaskill and L. G. Todd, clerks; and the second, "Kanosh" precinct, to vote at the house of Col. Thompson, J. S. Griffith, Thos. B. Ashly, and L. Young, judges,

and Benj. B. Thompson and Wm. H. Davis, clerks. At this first election in Cass county on Dec. 12, 1854, I find the poll books for Martin's precinct (now Plattsmouth) and the number of voters 78. The Kanosh poll books I do not find, but infer from figures and calculations made about the election, that there were some sixty votes polled there.

N. P. Giddings was elected as Nebraska's first delegate in congress, Lafayette Nuckolls, councilman from Cass county, and J. M. Latham, J. D. N. Thompson, and Wm. Kempton, representatives. It is said that this J. M. Latham sold out the interests of his constituents for a consideration, and not long after died drunk in a ditch in St. Joe.

Of the voters whose names are recorded at this first election in Martin's precinct, who are still with us or remained with us till the close of their lives, I find Samuel Martin, who died three days after, viz., Dec. 15, 1854, thus being not only the first white settler in the county, but filled the first white settler's grave. He was buried on the hill where several other graves now are, in Young & Hayes Addition, west of the High School building.\*

The other voters were Jacob Adams, Wm. H. Shafer, Broad Cole Wm. Gullion, James O'Neil, W. Mickelwait, John Watson, Henry Watson, Joshua Murray, A. J. Todd, Samuel Hahn, L. G. Todd, Levi Walker, Stephen Wiles, Joshua Gappen, and 63 others, most of whom had no legal right to vote but still remained and intended to remain citizens of other states.

Acting Governor Cuming convened the first legislature, January 16, 1855, which adopted a large part of the Iowa civil code, which gave the probate judge a very important part to play in the administration of county affairs. This legislature also further defined the boundaries of Cass county as follows, "On the north by the Platte river, east by the Missouri, south by Pierce county (now Otoe), and extending west twenty four miles on the south line." Pierce county, the northern line of which now became the southern boundary of Cass, was to commence one and a half miles north of the mouth of Weeping Water, and thence running twenty-four miles west.

The register of deeds was required to act as clerk to the probate

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\* The bones disturbed a few years since while grading the street east of the Episcopal church were those of a woman passing through, westward, who died and was buried here in 1852 or 1853.

judge, and the two performed all the present duties of county commissioners, recorder, and county clerk. On March 30 the governor appointed Abram Towner probate judge, and Thomas J. Palmer register of deeds, as also Thomas B. Ashley, justice of the peace for Kanosh precinct. On the same day Judge Towner opened his court and by order divided Cass county into two precincts by the following lines: "Beginning at the mouth of Rock Creek, then up the creek to the main fork near John Clemmons', thence up the north fork to the old emigrant road, and thence westward along the same to the west line of the county." North of this line to be Plattsmouth precinct, and south of it Rock Bluffs. He also ordered the first county election to be held on April 10, 1855, and appointed James O'Neil, Elias Gibbs, and Stephen Wiles as judges, and Charles Walcott and P. Shannon as clerks of Plattsmouth precinct; and Thos. B. Ashley, Frank McCall, and Curtis Rakes, judges, and Wm. H. Davis and John Griffith, clerks of Rock Bluffs precinct. No returns or poll books are to be found of this election, but I learn from Judge Towner that L. G. Todd and Allen Watson were elected as justices of the peace for Plattsmouth precinct; and Thos. B. Ashley and Thos. Thompson for Rock Bluffs; and Bela White county treasurer.

On May 1, 1855, Thos. J. Palmer was removed from the office of register of deeds, because he was not a resident of the county, and Wm. H. Davis appointed in his place.

June 4, 1855, A. C. Towner, previously appointed sheriff by the governor, was ordered to assess the county. Of this assessment I find no record. The first legislature (of January 16 to March 16, 1855) provided for an annual general election on the first Tuesday in November, for which the probate judge was required to appoint judges and clerks.

At this, the second general election, H. C. Wolph was elected probate judge, and Wm. Young, county surveyor. No record is to be found of the members of the legislature, but there was a tie vote on sheriff. Allen Watson and Moses Jackson were elected justices for Plattsmouth precinct, and Matthew Hughes for Rock Bluffs. A special election was ordered for a sheriff, with a second tie as the result; and a third election was ordered. A little skillful maneuvering this time detached a few of Mr. Lucas' supporters on a surveying trip, and returned W. R. Ellington as sheriff.

On January 7, 1856, H. C. Wolph entered upon his duties as probate judge. On March 3 he divided Rock Bluffs precinct into Cassville and Kanosha. He also appointed a grand and petit jury preparatory to the holding of a district court in the county in April. The names of these jurors are missing.

Judge Edward Harden presided at this first session of the district court in Cass county in April of 1856, and A. C. Towner seems to have acted as sheriff, although W. R. Ellington was elected in November previous.

On May 5, 1856, Sheriff Ellington was ordered to assess the county; and on September 10, on petition of several citizens of Clay and Lancaster counties, the probate judge created the precinct of Chester, and on the same day divided Cass county into three commissioners' districts named Plattsmouth, Kanosha, and Cassville, preparatory to the election of county commissioners, as the legislature of 1855-'56 had repealed the previously adopted Iowa code, and provided for a board of county commissioners. Hence, with the general election of November 4, 1856, or rather on January 1, 1857, when the newly elected officers entered upon their duties, the large powers of the probate court came to an end.

The choice of lands in 1854 was confined almost entirely to the vicinity of the Missouri river; few, if any, were taken at any considerable distance from it.

In 1855 a few settlers reached out to Four Mile creek, Eight Mile grove, and a short distance up the valley of the Weeping Water; but in 1856 there was a more general extension. The several earlier settlements were much enlarged, and in addition the Weeping Water, up to and above the Falls, Cedar, Thompson's Fountain, and Salt creek, had considerable settlements.

The frontier wave of settlers has rarely if ever become fixed and made a permanent settlement. After a few years, and sometimes only months, for recuperation and rest, it rises again and rolls on toward the west.

This class of pioneers has held a prominent position in our national history from the earlier settlements on the Atlantic to the present day—a class but too generally intolerant of the restraints of law, order, or civilization, and not greatly noted for love of industry, truth, right, or justice, yet including many sturdy, upright, and honest men, who

cannot endure the artificial trammels of society nor the technical quibbles of law, by which honest men so often suffer and rogues and villains fatten.

This class has generally gathered on the western border of the settlements (as there was always room there, but not always in any other direction), and as the hated habits, forms, and powers approached, they receded from them. Like Cooper's old "Leatherstocking," they could not endure the white man's clearing or his wasteful ways.

They have moved, moved, and moved again, till the great barrier, the Pacific ocean, 3,000 miles from their starting point, has arrested the movements of some, but not of all; for some, with a great bound, have reached the Sandwich Islands, and others, with a still greater, have landed in the Russian possessions in northwestern Asia.

Many of this class, moved by their natural impulse, and others under the excitement of the newly discovered gold fields, left the county from 1858 to '60-'61; but the vacancies were filled, or perhaps overfilled, in the two or three following years, by the crowd from the east, hurrying from the "wrath to come" in an expected draft into the army.

In all new settlements hardship, privation, and severe toil are almost always necessary attendants, and though often talked of and most acutely felt by the old pioneer, are seldom realized by the inexperienced hearer. Some of these were peculiar to our situation. In 1854, '55, '56 money was plenty and easily obtained by those who had means; but probably here for the first time many realized that money, although the pocket might be full, would not stop the cravings of hunger nor shield the body from the fierce winter winds and snows. We were not on the frontier of an old productive country, but on a frontier of a frontier.

A new settlement is usually composed of industrious, hardworking men and women, nearly, if not all, bees, and no drones. Our population was at least one-half non-producing speculators—drones, who consumed the larger part of what the bees produced or procured. They were here to make money, by taking claims and selling them at large profits; to plat cities on paper, sell corner lots, and then perhaps find a location to drop the plat upon, and some never found an abiding place on which to rest, while many with a price current for lots, quoted daily, never had a building upon them; a legion of them in this

county flourished under wonderful acts of incorporation, had splendid and costly lithographs and engravings of them, exhibiting their magnificent parks and public buildings. While many held the location of the state or territorial capital, none had less than the county seat and county buildings.

Thousands of dollars were invested in these cities, in which somebody surely made money, and just as surely somebody lost, for to-day, with the exception of some half-dozen villages, their names and locations are only in the history of the past.

This large portion of our population with ready means secured a large proportion of the provisions and other necessary articles which could be obtained, and left the pioneer to get what he could, which was often little or nothing. Under these circumstances, with but few real producers, and those necessarily much restricted in their farming operations by the first demand of a shelter for the family, where there was but little if any material to construct one of, and the further task of providing food, during at least the first year, from outside his farm, and often nothing to be obtained at any price within a day's travel, and with the average pioneer but little if any surplus of money to buy with, you will see he had a hard row to hoe.

Permit me to give you a brief history of one pioneer of 1856, who well represents the class, except in one point—he brought more money with him than the average pioneer, hence could command assistance and necessaries which many could not. Money enabled him to defend rights which others were obliged to yield to the rapacity of the speculator, and again, he was near a point in the county where such supplies as could be obtained were more easily reached. At some forty-five years of age he had sold his farm in an eastern state, which he had cut out of the solid timber, and this is generally considered equivalent to the life work of a man, viz., to clear up and put in running order a heavy-timbered farm. The man who has done it is rarely worth much, physically, after.

He crossed the Missouri with a large family late in the summer of 1856, with some \$2,800 in his pocket, but the speculator was ahead of him. He could find no land unclaimed without going far out from the river. He therefore yielded his rights to these robbers and gave them \$305 for the privilege of buying a homestead—that is, he bought a claim of them—and then set himself to work to make a home. A

few cottonwood boards from Clark's saw mill, over near St. Mary's, in Iowa, enabled him to build a shanty 10x15 feet square, a rather roomy place for a family of eight or nine, with household goods, beds, furniture, etc., but he soon found large opportunities to fill up the extra room with travelers, wayfarers, and new settlers, who else would have been forced to camp on the open prairie.

He had brought with him a large load of provisions, but his neighbors, less provident or able, had nearly or quite exhausted their stores, and as only chance supplies could be obtained from passing boats, he was obliged to divide out, so that as winter approached his stores were nearly exhausted also. A much-traveled road passed his place, and a constant train of newcomers and old settlers from more distant settlements were continually calling for food, and often a night's lodging. It was not the habit of the pioneers to pull in the latch string, and the hungry traveler must have his meal, even if it left but a scanty supply for the farmer or the family on the morrow. Further supplies must be had, and his team was sent—not down into Egypt, but over to the already badly-ravaged land of Iowa. After considerable search, however, they were successful in loading their wagons; but on their return, on reaching the river, they found it impassable from floating ice. A cold snap since they passed over had filled the river with ice, and our friend Mickelwait, who then as now ran the ferry, a flat-boat at that time, dared not venture in the heavy ice. Well, there was nothing to do but to—wait. Meantime our pioneers, and many others, nearing the point of destitution of food, were watching and waiting on the bank of the river for the time when the boat would venture out. At length the time came, after days of delay. The boat ventured out, and landed the teams in safety on the Nebraska shore, and the threatened famine was for a time postponed.

In March of 1857, after much difficulty from high water and peril from floating ice, he succeeded in reaching the land office at Omaha, entered his land, and received his duplicate; but his troubles were far from over yet. A gentleman (?) speculator, a member of the club, fancied he saw a chance for a speculation. In a club meeting, of which both parties were members, he alleged he had a prior claim to the entered land. A majority of the club were speculators, and sympathized with the brother shark. The record book bearing the evidence of our pioneer's membership and rights under club law very



conveniently disappeared, and was not to be found, and after a one-sided investigation, the club decided that the pioneer was not a member of the club and had no rights which the club were bound to respect, and that he must deed 160 acres of the land to the speculator. He had first paid a heavy price to the speculator for it as a claim, then paid the full price to the government and held the land office duplicate for the money, and now must yield it to the speculator. It was fully proved in the club trial that the speculator held like claims on over 1,000 acres, while no club law authorized over 320 acres, and that was double the amount allowed by U. S. law. But this produced no effect; the judgment had been decided upon before the trial took place, and now the deed must be made or the offender would be "put over the river."

A council was held by the real pioneers, and it was decided to submit to no further outrage of this character. They were well armed; they saw that their homes, families, and even lives, were at stake, and furthermore they were of the class who do not scare easily. The clubs, that is, the speculator portion, aided by such others as they could control, as they advanced to put their judgment in execution learned that they were to be received at the muzzles of rifles and revolvers, and that some thirty shots were ready to greet them from under a good cover. Further, our speculator friends well knew that the small band thus entrenched and armed were the very men to offer very decisive arguments in defense of not only their rights but their lives. This information and the situation had a very soothing effect upon the speculator and his allies; they concluded it was not a good time to try on the "over the river" movement. But the judgment of the club—as inflexible as the laws of the Medes and Persians—what could be done with the judgment? An adviser, long since gone to his last rest, suggested further search for the lost record book, which *might* develop grounds for the removal of the judgment. This kind of a crowd, generally much more ready to creep out of some back door than stand up and make a fair fight, readily seized upon the suggestion. The record was as conveniently found as it had been previously lost, and lo! all was found right and plain; the pioneer was after all a member, his claims were all right, and the judgment was reversed.

But the speculator, mortified and disgusted by the failure of his scheme, resolved to try it on again, but in a shape less perilous to his

own person. He appealed to the land office, and tried to break the entry of the lands. But there, although he succeeded in causing the pioneer an expense of some hundreds of dollars in defending his rights, he again met with a signal defeat, and soon after in great disgust left the settlement; and the grief at his departure was not great, even with the wife and children then and there deserted.

The general features of this case are the same as those of very many, only that with less or no means they could not defend and maintain their rights, where money was required, and to procure necessaries of life and buildings was more difficult. Unable perhaps to procure any material for building, they resorted to the "dug-out" till they could raise the means of living above ground. The "dug-out" is a room excavated generally in the side of a hill, a couple of rails or posts make a door frame, and a wall of square cut prairie turf forms the front and fills up the angles between the front wall and the side hill. A roof, sloping back on to the hill, of rails or poles covered by a thick layer of prairie grass and then with earth, makes a not uncomfortable shelter for summer or winter. But they are not particularly nice or clean, especially in long or heavy rain storms.

A prominent feature in our pioneer life from 1854 to '59 '60 was the Indians.

In early days the Indians were in the habit of roaming through the settlements, from the single individual up to fifteen or twenty in number. I have no knowledge of their ever attempting any personal injury to any settler in our county. Still, with the record of their horrible and savage deeds in most all of the early settlements of our country, handed down and too vividly remembered, they were a source of great terror to women and children, as also to husbands and fathers, lest they should attack the family in his absence; and, possibly, many of them were not so totally devoid of personal fear; but then it would never do to own this.

The Indians very much preferred the absence of the men in their visits to the settlers' houses, as they found that the women when unprotected by the men were much more ready to yield to their ever unsatisfied and unlimited demand for food. In a settlement, however large, they would enter every house they could get into, and eat all they could get, repeating this operation from house to house. If they found a door unfastened they walked in, asking no leave, and then it

was "eat," "eat," "eat," or if they could command a little more English, "Me heap hungry." If they were seen in their approach, and the door fastened, they would seek a window through which the family inside could be seen, flatten their noses and faces up against the glass, and there, with the patience only of an Indian, often stand for hours watching the proceedings of the family, till the poor woman, frightened almost to death, would unfasten the door and feed them in order to get rid of them.

The Indians cannot well be dismissed without a brief reference to our Indian scares, which were generally the result only of panic founded on the morbid fears and imagination, fostered for a century or more by the barbarities of these cumberers of the ground. The several scenes connected with them made an impression too deep on the memories of the people to be soon forgotten, but the particular dates are much mixed up. As these, however, are not very essential I give some of them as near their time and order as I am able to trace them.

The Whitmore scare occurred late in the summer or fall of 1856. A Mr. Whitmore had built a cabin in the vicinity of the Salt Basin, in Lancaster county, and settled there with wife and children. Mr. Whitmore left for the river on business, and was soon followed by his wife and children in the night, draggled and wearied almost to death by a foot race to escape from the Indians. She made a fearful report of the atrocities and fearful deeds of the savages, in the abuse of herself, destruction of furniture, ripping open feather beds, scattering the feathers in the wind, etc., etc. Her talespread on all sides as she advanced toward the river, supplemented and enlarged by all kinds of variations that fear and imagination could supply; and as it reached the river settlements it was indeed a fearful one. The number of Indians had increased to hundreds and thousands, and not a house was left unburned or a scalp on its original owner's head. Companies were formed in hot haste at Plattsmouth, Rock Bluffs, and Nebraska City, and they hastened towards the scene of devastation. Advance scouts, sent out to reconnoiter, met the companies and reported the whole thing to be a *scare!* It is still a matter of dispute whether any damage at all was done by the Indians. We have very positive evidence on one side, that the first parties on the ground found Whitmore's house and goods all safe and unharmed; and that the scare all originated in the usual visit of the Indians for food, but that Mrs. Whitmore, terribly frightened, ran for her life.

On the other side, we have just as positive testimony that furniture was found broken up, beds ripped open, feathers scattered, etc., but no one testifies to personal injury.

A sequel to this scare, or a transaction following it, was the collision of a small company of settlers in the following February, with about the same number of Indians, between Eight Mile Grove and Mt. Pleasant, in which the whites attacked the Indians, with no other excuse that I can hear of than that these Indians *might* have been connected with the previous scare. The whites fired upon the Indians and broke one Indian's arm, took two or three prisoners and some twelve or fifteen ponies. The prisoners were brought to Plattsmouth and the ponies were put where they would perhaps do the most good; or where they would be safe from observation.

These raiders were soon followed by a company of some one hundred Indians and three chiefs. They took great care, in passing by houses or settlements, to keep the band from offering any injury or wrong, and on arriving in Plattsmouth demanded their men and ponies. After getting an interpreter down from Bellevue and having a "talk," they were allowed to take the prisoners, and hunt up and take their ponies if they could find them. They camped down in the bend just above Rocky Point for several days, and succeeded in recovering nearly if not all of their ponies, and then quietly returned.

I have no great affection for an Indian, but I cannot but think that in this case somebody ought to have suffered some, and that body not an Indian either.

During the latter part of the war, in '63 and '64, reports were current that the rebels were tampering with the Indians, and exciting them to attack our settlements. These reports caused much anxiety and uneasiness, especially in the more exposed neighborhoods; and almost every settlement had formed regular organizations for drill, defense, rendezvous, etc.

In the fall of '64, word swept through the county with more than the speed of Sir Walter Scott's "Cross of Fire," that the Indians were on Salt creek in large force, perpetrating their usual atrocities, and sweeping down towards the Missouri, with the purpose of exterminating the white settlements. The writer, whom please consider your "war correspondent" for the hour, hastened to the rendezvous at Louisville, where some forty-five men were soon gathered all

armed and equipped for war. But for the presence of some upstarts who called themselves "veterans" from service in the civil war, then near its close, your correspondent might have obtained some befitting office in this movement (a sutlership at least).

Crowds of fugitives were rushing past, some with some household goods, others with none, some with proper clothing and others quite the reverse. But all with an eye over their shoulder, while lashing and punching up the team; urged to stop and help in the coming fight, "No!" "No!" they must take care of the women and children. Well, where were the Indians? "Close behind"—"just in sight!" came from them in the distance as the furious whips played upon the teams.

With teeth set, muscles strained to almost cracking tension, and indomitable resolution, we waited the onset—till——we——were tired. We then sent out a scout of ten men to ascertain where the bloody rascals really were; and then we "rested on our arms" and—waited still.

After some eight hours of this lively kind of life (which, as we had counted time, had stretched over as many days), our scouts returned bringing in ten scalps—on their own heads, and that was *all*. No Indians had been seen—no houses rifled or burned—no lives lost and nobody hurt.

The whole scare originated with an Irishman at old Mr. Barnhill's ranch, a little above Ashland. He had been left alone at the ranche and a couple of Indians came along and wanted whiskey. He sold to them till they raised a war dance, when the Irishman incontinently fled and yelled: "Indians!" "Indians!"

Meanwhile, while the yell was ringing and echoing over the whole of Cass county, the Indians had got over their "drunk" and gone quietly on their way.

The legislature of '55 and '56, as before said, repealed the law giving to the probate judge such extensive jurisdiction, and provided for a board of county commissioners to transact the county business. At the general election of November 4, 1856, J. Vallery, Jr., R. Palmer, and W. D. Gage were elected as our first board of county commissioners. They have been succeeded as follows:

1857—Wm. Young, R. R. Davis.	1867—Jas. O'Neil.
1858—Geo. Mayfield.	1868—J. B. Moore.
1859—John Mutz.	1869—Benj. Albin.
1860—L. G. Todd.	1870—J. Vallery, Jr.
1861—J. Vallery, Jr.	1871—L. H. James.
1862—Wm. L. Thompson.	1872—T. Clark.
1863—Isaac Pollard.	1873—M. L. White.
1864—M. L. White.	1874—W. B. Arnold.
1865—D. Cole.	1875—B. S. Ramsey.
1866—A. Carmichael.	1876—E. G. Dovey (to fill vac'y).

Our county clerks have been as follows, each election being for two years :

1857—J. N. Wise.	1869—Isaac Pollard.
1859—D. H. Wheeler.	1871-'73—D. W. McKinnon.
1861-'63-'65-'67—B. Spurlock.	1875—C. P. Moore.

Our sheriffs, also elected for two years :

1855—A. C. Towner (appointed).	1863—P. P. Gass.
1855—W. R. Ellington.	1865—A. B. Taylor.
1857—W. D. McCord.	1867-'69-'71—J. W. Johnson.
1859—W. D. McCord.	1873—M. B. Cutler.
1861—C. H. King.	1875—M. B. Cutler.

Our treasurers, also elected for two years :

1855—Bela White.	1861-'63-'65-'67—S. Duke.
1856—Welcher Cardwell.	1869-'71—W. L. Hobbs.
1857-'59—J. D. Simpson.	1873-'75—J. C. Cummins.

The population, by enumeration at different periods, shows as follows :

September, 1855—712.	1870—8,151.
1856—1,251.	1874—10,397.
1860—3,369.	1876—10,885.

The valuation of property as assessed for taxation has been as follows :

1857 .....	\$1,062,962	1868 .....	\$1,896,432
1859 .....	1,096,074	1869 .....	2,136,835
1860 .....	975,456	1870 .....	3,099,856
1861 .....	1,013,570	1871 .....	3,704,874
1862 .....	828,019	1872 .....	4,016,950
1863 .....	3,737,184	1873 .....	3,767,472
1864 .....	1,137,486	1874 .....	4,219,969
1865 .....	1,746,829	1875 .....	3,593,017
1866 .....	1,592,678	1876 .....	2,891,242
1867 .....	1,729,052		

The items of the assessment for 1874, the latest itemized list obtainable, are as follows, showing 313,331 acres at an average value of \$7.96 per acre :

Land .....	\$2,492,600	Wagons, carr'ges (1601) .	\$ 61,668
Town lots.....	313,872	Money and credits.....	85,655
Merchandise.....	104,394	Mortgages.....	27,023
Manufactures .....	39,300	Stocks.....	51,170
Horses (5,962) .....	309,943	Furniture .....	20,957
Mules and asses (438)..	62,873	Libraries .....	1,680
Neat cattle (15,598)...	206,586	Other property.....	94,742
Sheep (659).....	1,223	Railroads.....	343,897
Swine (25,202).....	31,438	Telegraph lines.....	950

The foregoing list does not embrace ordinary house furniture, libraries under \$100, tools of mechanics and artisans, but a small share of the agricultural implements on the farm, or the stores of the produce of the farm still on hand ; and when it is considered that property is rarely assessed for taxation at more than sixty or seventy-five per cent of its real value, we may safely add twenty-five per cent to the foregoing value, which would increase it to over five and one-half millions. In the valuations of the property of Cass county it will be noticed that there are great fluctuations. Probably much of this is owing to the various modes of assessment by the different assessors, ranging all the way from one-half up to the supposed cash value. But this, even wide as the margin is, will not account for the showing of 1862-'63-'64. From 1862 to 1863 it is more than quadrupled, or increases about four and one-half times, and then in the following

year, 1864, falls off to less than one-third of 1863. One reason for this extraordinary increase of 1863 is that the assessors in the spring of 1863 caught large amounts of property with the crowds coming into the county to escape the draft into the army; and then, as a large portion of this property remained in the county only long enough to be assessed, and then passed on westward, it would in like manner diminish the values of the next year. This movement unquestionably produced considerable change in values, but that it alone worked such changes is hardly credible. The number of acres (313,331) assessed in 1874 shows nearly 30,000 unentered, or if entered, not yet liable to assessment, as the county embraces about 339,200 acres. I find no data of the number of acres under cultivation since the U. S. census of 1870, which gives the number as 55,520.

So far as can be ascertained, the first marriage in the county was that of Elza Martin to Sarah Morris, on November 16, 1854, by Abram Towner, and recorded by Joseph Lousignont, register of deeds, the first appointment to that office by Governor Cuming.

The second marriage that appears on record was Thomas Hammond to Permelia A. Walker, on May 20, 1855, by L. G. Todd, J. P.; and the third, J. McF. Haygood to Mary E. Brown, August 28, 1855, by W. D. Gage.

The first white child born in this county was Nebraska Stevens, son of Wm. Stevens, in December, 1854, or January, 1855.

The second, Levina Todd, daughter of L. G. Todd, in February of 1855, now the wife of Thomas J. Thomas.

[It is stated that Samuel Martin and A. J. Todd had each a child born previous to the above. Such may be the case, but I can obtain no reliable evidence of the dates of their births.]

From the meager statistics to be found on the subject of agriculture in our county, it seems hardly worth the while to name the subject. That Cass county is one of the best, if not the best agricultural county in the state, is by all conversant with the subject admitted; but the statistics to prove this fact are wanting. The early pioneers seem to have taken a deeper interest in the matter of associations and fairs than the citizens of later days. Under an act of incorporation by the legislature of the territory, an association was organized August 30, 1856, with H. C. Wolph, president; Wm. H. Davis, secretary; Timothy Gas-kill, treasurer; and a membership of fifty-seven names, each of whom,



under the requirements of the by-laws, paid their membership fee of \$1. A very interesting fair was held at Rock Bluff's in September, 1856, and again in 1857, with a membership of fifty-two. After this, notwithstanding the earnest efforts and labors of several individuals, the society languished and died. It has been revived in later days, but it is only by persistent and continuous effort of a few individuals that it yet lives. The mass of the people seem to feel but little interest in the matter.

The production of the county is large, yet at a most unprofitable cost. Land in new counties is plenty and cheap, and, especially in prairie counties, easily opened; and an immediate return to the pioneer for his investment in land is not only desirable, but often seems necessary, and the great temptation is to bleed the land to extreme weakness, if not to absolute death—that is, to open as large an area as he can scratch over, and take what he can get from the land and make no return to it.

The soil is rich, and even the subsoil full of the elements of vegetation; still there is a limit to the best soil, beyond which this kind of farming becomes a dead loss. The returns will not pay for seed and labor, and farm and money invested in it are sunk. The old Virginia farms, long since abandoned as worthless, as also to-day the seemingly inexhaustible valleys of the Miamis and Scioto, of Ohio, prove this position but too plainly; nor is it necessary to leave our own county for this proof, as of the farms here for only twenty years in cultivation under this system, but few, if any, produce now more than forty to sixty per cent of their first crops.

The records of our schools are probably as deficient and mutilated as the records of other departments of our history, and what remain have been carried away from the county seat, and are thus, without time and labor which could not be spared, inaccessible for the purposes of this sketch. Application for information by letter to the present county superintendent of schools, procured a—promise, nothing more. But were these records accessible and entire, they would not be likely to serve much purpose here.

The rise and progress of school systems, from pioneer efforts in widely scattered settlements, composed of residents also widely scattered and usually of limited means, present much the same features throughout the whole country. The parent is anxious that his chil-

dren should be educated, but they *must* be fed and clothed; hence the school must wait for a time. A record would be interesting and valuable, as it might perpetuate the memory of those who have more earnestly and vigorously labored and developed our present system. The means and progress are little other than a repetition of what has occurred in other places again and again.

Under the circumstances I do not see that I can do better than reproduce a tabulated report, made by Prof. U. W. Wise, late superintendent of our public schools for the county, and kindly furnished to me for this use. The report is as yet unpublished, having been prepared for the state superintendent at the close of the year 1875.

Figures are generally dry reading, but the reader who has but a slight interest in education will note much of hope and promise as well as much of actual possession in this report. It embraces a comparative showing of progress for four years. It is as follows:

	1872.	1873.	1874.	1875.
Number of school districts.....	75	79	79	81
“ “ school houses.....	49	60	70	84
“ “ school children.....	3315	3329	3555	3749
“ “ children attending school..	2056	2380	2706	2952
Per cent of children attending school..	62	71	76	78
Number of teachers employed.....	114	133	136	123
Aggregate number of days taught by all	7537	9006	9421	10349
Number of visits of superintendent....	42	117	96	128
“ of district officers.....	149	227	237	240
District tax to pay teachers.....	\$ 394 51	\$ 1221 20	\$2488 94	\$ 1957 56
“ “ to erect school houses.....	4735 25	27860 10	7124 23	11869 21
“ “ for other purposes .....	109 90	1110 25	2134 27	8246 12
Money paid for apparatus, etc.....	233 25	141 02	188 00	2160 90
Paid male teachers.....	6553 18	9519 00	8640 00	10433 96
Paid female teachers.....	4533 95	5303 27	6573 72	9307 06

Since writing the above I have received the following items from G. B. Crippen, county superintendent:

Number of school houses in Cass county, June, 1876: stone 2, brick 10, frame 67, total 79.

Number of school districts in Cass county, June, 1876, 83.

Number of school children, 4135.

Number of children attending school, 3342.

The first sermon preached in the county was in October, 1854, at the house of Thos. B. Ashley, by Abram Towner.

## HORSE THIEVES AND LYNCH LAW.

I think no well-informed and dispassionate person will dispute the proposition that a "community will prosper in all their surroundings only as it *enacts* and *faithfully executes* good and wholesome laws."

Yet it is well-known that general laws cannot be made to fit with exact justice to special cases; as also, that through the agency of money and subtle lawyers a large proportion of our vilest criminals escape the just penalties of their villainous deeds, while many an innocent person is made to suffer cruel and grievous wrong, or is perhaps brought to a horrible and disgraceful death. This uncertainty in the administration of criminal law has induced many intelligent and otherwise law-abiding citizens to enter upon acts and deeds from which they shrink with aversion and horror, and which, under other circumstances, they would utterly refuse.

The peculiar circumstances attending the stealing of horses and the facilities for the escape of the thief, on the borders of new settlements, has indicated the class of horse thieves as one demanding sure and speedy extinction. From hasty action under this feeling probably many innocent men have suffered, while a much larger number, taken red-handed in the act, have speedily been put beyond the reach of further offence.

During several years preceding 1864 a number of citizens of Cass county suffered much loss and hardship from this class of villains. About the first of June of that year—1864 (some say 1863)—two horses were taken from Capt. Isaac Wiles and one from John Snyder, of this county. Pursuit was immediately made. A quarrel between the thieves about the division of the horses induced one of the three to betray the other two. The informer was secured, and on the information given the two were followed and found secreted in a loft at "Mullen's Ranch," on the divide south of South Bend. They were secured and the party returned with them to Eight Mile Grove. In the trial of the men which followed before the self-constituted court, there was not nor could be any denial of guilt. They were horse thieves taken in the very act. No possible mistake in their identity, design, or act. A plea was offered for the one who betrayed the other two. But it was considered that, as no repentance or better feeling had induced this action, but only revenge and malice toward his fellow criminals, it

gave no shadow of an excuse for sparing him, perhaps to repeat the offence before another day ; and without a dissenting voice, sentence was passed and followed by immediate execution. And death then and there closed the career of those three miserable men.

#### PRECINCTS.

Previous to 1874 the precincts of Cass county were arranged to accommodate the settlements, but in 1874 the county commissioners rearranged them, conforming their boundaries to those of the congressional townships of the county, except the fractional townships in range 14, which were included in the precincts of range 13, as per map.

Plattsmouth, the county seat of Cass county, will be found described in the "History of the City of Plattsmouth."

Rock Bluffs, on the Missouri river, in Rock Bluffs precinct, was settled and laid out about the same time as Plattsmouth, and was for a time a somewhat formidable rival to Plattsmouth, but it is now in a decline. With a population of 175 it has two trading houses, a mill, smith shop, and post office, Joseph Shera, P. M.

Kanosha and Liberty, on the Missouri, below Rock Bluffs, were towns in early days of considerable promise, Kanosha with some thirty houses, and Liberty with fifteen or twenty. They are now deserted.

Cleveland, still lower on the river, a town which *was to be* but *never was*.

Union, or Folden's Mills, hardly a village, but rather a compact settlement gathered about the Mills, on the lower Weeping Water, in Liberty precinct, has a population of about sixty, with a post office established.

Factoryville, also on the Weeping Water, a short distance above Union Mills, has a population of some twenty-five.

Weeping Water, at the Weeping Water Falls, in Weeping Water precinct, was settled in 1857. A mill and a few houses were built, after which, for several years, it had a struggle for existence, till 1869-'70 it was roused up and commenced a new life. It has now a population of some four hundred, six trading houses, a hotel, and livery stable, two well-built churches, a high school building, and three mills in the vicinity, and a post office.

Louisville, at the mouth of Mill or Thompson's creek, in Louisville precinct, was laid out in 1856, and one log cabin built, and thus slept until 1870, when, under control of Capt. J. T. A. Hoover and brother, and the B. & M. R. R. Co., it was re-surveyed and commenced life anew. It now has a population of some two hundred, four trading houses, a hotel, station house on the B. & M. R. R., a grain warehouse, lumber yard, and three smith shops, J. T. A. Hoover, postmaster.

South Bend, in South Bend precinct, also of early date, slept till the railroad revived it. It has now a grain warehouse and trading house, and a population of twenty-five or thirty.

Eight Mile Grove, a close settlement on the corners of the four precincts of Plattsmouth, Rock Bluffs, Eight Mile Grove, and Mt. Pleasant, has a population of about one hundred, two churches, a school house and a post office, C. H. King, postmaster.

Glendale, a traveling post office in Eight Mile Grove precinct, after four removals, expired in 1875.

Greenwood on the B. & M. R. R., in Salt Creek precinct, has a population of about fifty, three trading houses, two churches, a grain warehouse, a hotel, two smith shops, school house, and post office, H. H. Alden, postmaster.

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## HISTORY OF DODGE COUNTY.

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BY DR. L. J. ABBOTT.

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We meet to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of our national birthday. To-day, we as a nation exhibit to the world a solution of the problem that not only in numbers, in wealth, in the advancement of commercial and agricultural prosperity, in our ability to protect ourselves from both foreign and domestic enemies, but also in age, in permanency, a government "of the people, for the people, and by the people" can endure. The history of the world for the past two thousand years has been marked with the successive rise and fall of republics. Greece and Rome, Venice and Genoa have, for short periods, assumed republican forms of government, but it is reserved for the United States of America to mark the epoch in modern history of a