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History of Sarpy County

S. D. Bangs

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HISTORY OF SARPY COUNTY.

BY S. D. BANGS.

At the time that Napoleon was first consul of France, the French possessions in North America were exposed to the maritime power of Great Britain, with whom France was at war, and were really a source of weakness to the mother country from their remote situation and their liability at any moment to fall into the hands of the enemy.

In this emergency Napoleon resolved to abandon his cherished notion of colonial dependencies, which could not be protected, and entered into negotiations with the United States for their relinquishment.

In 1803 a treaty was consummated between the two countries, which secured the whole of this vast territory for the sum of \$15,000,000.

The Louisiana purchase (although unauthorized by the Constitution) is an imperishable memorial of the wisdom of Jefferson's administration.

It extended the broad domain of the republic from the Mississippi to the Pacific. It opened out its immense resources to the struggling masses of the Old and New World, and states and territories have arisen within its borders, possessing every variety of soil and climate and rich in mineral and agricultural wealth.

In 1804 an expedition was fitted out by the United States government, under command of Lewis and Clarke, for the purpose of exploring this newly acquired territory, and a vivid description is given in their journals of their descending the Missouri river in boats from St. Louis, and touching at a point nine miles above the mouth of the Platte river, within the present limits of Sarpy county.

It is stated that in 1805 Manuel Lesa, a Spanish adventurer, with his party, visited the site on which Bellevue is now situated, and upon viewing the magnificent panorama that was spread before them, Capt. Lesa, with a spontaneous burst of admiration, exclaimed, "Belle vue!" (or beautiful view) a name by which it has since been recognized.

In 1810 the American Fur Company established a trading post at Bellevue, and appointed Francis DeRoin Indian trader, who was succeeded by Joseph Roubideux, who served a term of six years, when his place was supplied by John Cabonne, until superseded in 1824 by

Col. Peter A. Sarpy, the distinguished Indian trader, who continued in that capacity for about thirty years.

In 1823 Council Bluffs Indian agency at Fort Calhoun was removed to Bellevue, and included in its limits the Omaha, Otoe, Pawnee, and Pottawattamie tribes of Indians.

In 1834 the Rev. Moses Merrill, a Baptist missionary, erected a mission house among the Otoes. A stone chimney still remains to point the spot where a faithful missionary sacrificed his life in the discharge of his duty. He died in 1835, and at the request of his wife was buried on the Iowa side of the Missouri. His wife and child returned to the New England states, and the river has long since washed away all traces of his last resting place.

The property upon which the mission stood is now owned by John F. Payne, who has resided there thirteen years.

In the fall of 1834 Samuel Allis and Rev. John Dunbar, under the directions of the Presbyterian board of missions, arrived at the agency at Bellevue, in company with Major John Dougherty, Indian agent to the Otoes, Omahas, and Pawnees, where these Indians were paid their annuities. Messrs. Allis and Dunbar opened a school among the Pawnees at Council Point, up the Platte, which was afterwards abandoned on account of the hostility of the Sioux, and Mr. Allis returned to Bellevue and taught the children of the Pawnees at the agency.

Gen. Fremont, after exploring the South Pass, stopped at the Indian agency on his return in 1843, and sold his mules and wagons at auction and then descended the Missouri river on boats to St. Louis.

In the fall of 1846 Rev. Edward McKinney, acting under instructions of the Presbyterian board of foreign missions, selected a site on the south-east part of the plateau at Bellevue for a mission house and school for the Otoes and Omahas, which was approved by the Hon. Walter Lowry, the secretary of the board, on his visit in the spring of 1847, and the buildings were commenced in the fall of 1847 and completed in 1848.

In 1847 the first detachment of Mormons under Brigham Young, their leader, reached the Missouri river on their journey to Salt Lake, in a weak and destitute condition, but were relieved by the generosity of Col. Sarpy, who furnished them supplies, sheltered them from the storms of winter, and in the spring crossed numbers of them over his ferry at this point free of expense.

Council Bluffs or Bellevue (as it was now called) had become an important point on the Missouri river, and the present Council Bluffs was known as Mormon Hollow or Kanesville.

The trading post at Bellevue received the furs and robes collected from the trappers and traders along the upper Missouri and Yellowstone rivers, which were floated down the Missouri in Mackinaw boats, and afterwards reshipped to St. Louis.

Freights and merchandise directed to Council Bluffs landed at the trading post.

In 1849 the Nebraska post office at Bellevue was established. This year Col. Sarpy's ferry boat from St. Mary's to Bellevue was kept constantly employed in passing over gold hunters on their way to California.

In 1852 Major Barrows, Stephen Decatur, and others projected a town organization at Bellevue, which seems to have existed only in name. In this year the Rev. Mr. McKinney built a log dwelling house some distance north of the mission house, where he resided with his family, but shortly after resigned, and the vacancy was supplied by Rev. Wm. Hamilton, who arrived with his family June 6, 1853.

In 1853 the Indian agency buildings and blacksmith shops were erected on the plateau south of the mission lands, under the direction of Major Gatewood, the Indian agent.

On the 9th of February, 1854, the Bellevue Town Company was formally organized, with Col. P. A. Sarpy, Stephen Decatur, Hiram B. Bennett, Geo. Hepner, James M. Gatewood, Geo. T. Turner, P. J. McMahon, A. W. Hollister, and A. O. Ford as the original proprietors of the town, known as the "Old Town Company."

About this time Col. Maypenny, commissioner of Indian affairs, and Major Gatewood, Indian agent, held a council with the Omaha chiefs with reference to selling their lands to the United States. The Indians appointed Logan Fontenelle, a half-breed, as their head chief to assist in negotiating a treaty, and a delegation of chiefs, headed by Fontenelle, proceeded to Washington. A treaty was entered into March 16, 1854, and ratified June 21, 1854, which extinguished the Indian title to a large portion of Nebraska.

On the 27th of May, 1854, a bill was approved by congress organizing the territories of Kansas and Nebraska, which received the sanction of the president. The territory of Nebraska, extending

north of the Kansas line to the British possessions, opened up a country that is unsurpassed for fertility, although at one time regarded as part of the great American desert.

The 4th of July, 1854, was observed with much enthusiasm. An immense vine-clad arbor was erected near the agency buildings; the star spangled banner floated in the breeze, and a salute was fired for each state in the Union, including one for the new territory. D. E. Reed acted as chairman. Among the toasts was one by L. B. Kinney, viz., "Bellevue, the belle of the West, the center of our Union," which was responded to in appropriate terms. Another toast by Stephen Decatur, viz., "Nebraska! the keystone of the federal arch," elicited the wildest applause.

Bellevue has the credit of publishing the first newspaper in the territory, which appeared on the 15th of July, 1854, and was entitled *The Nebraska Palladium*, D. E. Reed editor and, proprietor. It was printed at St. Mary's, Iowa, until the middle of November, 1854, when it was brought over the river and placed in the south wing of the McKinney house. Dr. E. N. Upjohn, now residing in the county, struck off the first paper, and Thomas Morton set up the first column of the first newspaper printed in the territory. It died a natural death in April, 1855.

In October, 1854, the territorial officers appointed by President Pierce for this territory began to arrive.

Gov. Francis Burt, of South Carolina, and his staff landed at Bellevue on the 8th of October, 1854, followed shortly by the secretary, Hon. Thomas B. Cuming. On the 11th Chief Justice Fenner Ferguson arrived at the same place, each of whom were received with the honors due their respective stations. Gov. Burt exhibited symptoms of disease on his arrival, which proved fatal on the 18th of October, 1854. He died at the mission house of a disease that baffled the skill of his physicians, who bestowed on him the most unremitting attention. He also received the utmost care and kindness from Rev. Wm. Hamilton, with whom he was staying as an invited guest. His remains were taken to Pendleton, South Carolina, his former home, under a suitable escort.

Deputations and citizens from Nebraska City, Plattsmouth, and other points waited upon Gov. Burt, each urging their respective claims for the location of the capital, and it was his intention to have

examined each point and then decided on the most meritorious one for its location; but being prostrated by sickness, he was unable to do so, and after his death a public meeting was held, at which the acting governor made a proposition to locate the capital at Bellevue, providing the mission and town company would donate to him 100 acres off the north end of the mission reserve, which was indignantly refused, and in a few days Omaha was selected as the future capital of the territory.

As emigration poured into the territory, it was deemed necessary to organize claim clubs to protect actual settlers in the possession of their claims on the public lands, and the first claim club north of the Platte was organized at Bellevue in the fall of 1854, with Judge Gilmer as president, and James Gow, C. T. Holloway, and Abner W. Hollister as committee to draft a constitution and by-laws.

The boundaries of the various counties in the territory having been defined, Douglas county included all of what is now Sarpy county, and on the 20th of November, 1854, were appointed four councilmen and eight representatives, in accordance with the first census returns made by the acting governor. The county of Douglas was divided into two election precincts, viz., the Omaha and Bellevue precincts.

November 30, 1854, having been appointed by the acting governor, T. B. Cuming, as Thanksgiving, it was observed at the mission house with services by Rev. Wm. Hamilton.

At the election for representatives to the territorial legislature, held December 12, 1854, Bellevue precinct polled ninety-three votes, and elected S. A. Strickland, Chas. T. Holloway, Stephen Decatur, A. W. Hollister, and Philander Cook to serve as members at the first session of the territorial legislature, which convened at Omaha, January 16, 1855, but were not allowed to take their seats.

At this session of the legislature Bellevue was incorporated as a city.

In the latter part of January, 1855, D. E. Reed was appointed postmaster. The post office was held at the mission house, where his wife taught the first white school in the territory.

Nebraska Lodge No. 1 of A. F. and A. M. was instituted at Bellevue in March, 1855, although meetings were held at the old trading post in 1854.

A number of complaints were made to Major Hepner, the Indian agent, that depredations were being committed by the Omahas on the persons and property of the whites, and a council was held at the mis-

sion house in Bellevue in April, 1855, at which were present White Cow, Yellow Smoke, Standing Hawk, and other chiefs, with Henry Fontenelle, a half-breed, as interpreter. The agent told them that the tribe must not stay longer to harass the whites, but must leave for their reserve provided for them in the treaty. The chiefs replied by stating their grievance in having to leave their old hunting grounds and home; that they could not restrain their young braves from stealing from the pale-faces when away from the village, and appealed to their father to ask the father at Washington to send them more ponies and guns, as they were poor and needed them to defend themselves when attacked by the Sioux.

In an interview the writer had with Chief Logan Fontenelle the day before the Omahas left for their reserve, in June, 1855, he expressed himself as dissatisfied with the government in sending a weak and defenseless tribe of less than 1,000 souls to be massacred by the Sioux, having thousands of warriors; and that a company of troops should be sent with them to afford protection. "But," he added, pointing to his Colt's revolver, "if attacked I am good for six of them." The sequel proved his fears were true.

Logan Fontenelle was a half-breed, his father being French. He was educated in St. Louis; spoke English fluently, and was at this time about thirty years of age, of medium height, swarthy complexion, black hair, and dark, piercing eyes. In the middle of the summer of 1855 a procession might have been seen wending its way towards the old home of Logan Fontenelle on the bluffs overlooking the Missouri river, and above the stone quarries at Bellevue. It moved slowly along, led by Louis San-so-see, who was driving a team with a wagon, in which, wrapped in blankets and buffalo robes, was all that was mortal of Logan Fontenelle, the chief of the Omahas. On either side the Indian chiefs and braves, mounted on ponies, with the squaws and relatives of the deceased, expressed their grief in mournful outcries. His remains were taken to the house which he had left a short time before, and now, desolate and afflicted, they related the incidents of his death. He had been killed by the Sioux on the Loup Fork thirteen days before, while on a hunt with the Omahas. Having left the main body with San-so-see, in pursuit of game, and while in a ravine that hid them from the sight of the Omahas, they came in contact with a band of Sioux on the war path, who attacked them.

San-so-see escaped in some thick underbrush, while Fontenelle stood his ground, fighting desperately and killing three of his adversaries, when he fell, pierced with fourteen arrows, and the prized scalp lock was taken by his enemies. The Omahas did not recover his body until the next day. It was the wish of Col. Sarpy to have him interred on the bluffs fronting the house in which he had lived, and a coffin was made which proved too small without unfolding the blankets which enveloped him, and as he had been dead so long it was a disagreeable task. After putting him in the coffin his wives, who witnessed the scene, uttered the most piteous cries, cutting their ankles until the blood ran in streams. An old Indian woman who looked like the Witch of Endor, standing between the house and the grave, lifted her arms to Heaven and shrieked her maledictions upon the heads of his murderers. Col. Sarpy, Stephen Decatur, Mrs. Sloan, an Ojibwa half-breed, and others stood over the grave when his body was lowered, and while Decatur was reading the impressive funeral service of the Episcopal church, he was interrupted by Mrs. Sloan, who stood by his side and in a loud tone told him that "a man of his character ought to be ashamed of himself to make a mockery of the Christian religion by reading the solemn services of the church." He proceeded, however, until the end. After the whites, headed by Col. Sarpy, had paid their last respects, the Indians filed around the grave and made a few demonstrations of sorrow; the whites dispersing to their homes, and the Indians to relate their own exploits, and the daring of their dead chief.

COL. PETER A. SARPY.

In April, 1855, Col. Peter A. Sarpy was keeping a store at St. Mary's, Iowa, then a station on the stage route from St. Joe to Council Bluffs. As my destination was Bellevue, Nebraska, I stopped here and alighted from the stage with Col. Gilmore, a friend of Sarpy; who received us with a cordial and affectionate greeting. We were invited to the store, where refreshments were served, and I had a good opportunity to observe the eccentricities of our worthy host. He was about 55 years of age; rather below the medium height; black hair, dark complexion; well-knit and compact frame, and a heavy beard that had scorned a razor's touch for many a year. His manner was commanding; his address fluent, and in the presence of the opposite sex

polished and refined. Col Sarpy was of French extraction, and educated in St. Louis, where his relatives occupied high social positions. He preferred the freedom of the western prairies to the society and refinement of civilized life, and was never happier than in visiting the Omaha wigwams under the bluffs near the old trading post, the Omahas regarding him as their Ne-ka-gah-he, or big chief. To one of their number—Ne-ko-ma, his reputed wife—he was more than once indebted for the preservation of his life when attacked by hostile Indians. She had been the wife of Dr. Cole, the surgeon of the post at the Indian agency at Fort Calhoun. Her influence with the tribe was unbounded, and to please her they were often feasted at Sarpy's expense. She is now living at the Omaha agency, enjoying a pension from his estate. But I am digressing. The conversation turned upon the action of the acting governor in removing the capital from Bellevue to Omaha; the killing of Hollister by Dr. Henry, and other topics of general interest in the newly organized territory; and while Sarpy portrayed in glowing colors the noble traits of the red man and the injustice and wrong they had suffered at the hands of the whites, he was interrupted by a tall, gaunt looking specimen of humanity, who approached him and said: "This talk about the Indians as good, brave, and intelligent may suit you traders who have been enriched by exchanging your gewgaws for their valuable buffalo robes and defrauding them of their annuities, but I have lived among them, too, and I know them to be a lying, thieving, treacherous race, incapable of distinguishing right from wrong, and the sooner they are exterminated the better it will be for the country." Sarpy advanced to the front of the speaker, and in an excited manner addressed him in reply "Do you know who I am, sir?" with emphasis: "I am Peter A. Sarpy, sir! If you want to fight, sir, I am your man, sir! I can whip the devil, sir! Choose your weapons, sir! Bowieknife, shotgun, or revolver, sir! I'm your man, sir!" He snapped his pistol at the lighted candle on the table, a distance of about three paces, which left us in total darkness, when the stranger availed himself of this opportunity to make his exit by the side door, glad to have escaped the unerring marksman, who might have extinguished him in like manner.

At the fall election in 1855 General L. L. Bowen was elected councilman from this part of Douglas county, and the next spring he secured a separate election district embracing the present limits of Sarpy county.

Our first justice of the peace was Squire Griffin, who was an eccentric character, and had peculiar notions of the dignity of his position. In appealing to his legal knowledge, he used to say: "If the court understands herself and she thinks she do, the law reads thus." His form of an oath was also peculiar, rounded as it was with the "financial period." Commanding the witness to hold up his right hand, he proceeded: "You do solemnly swear that the evidence you shall give in this case shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as you shall answer at the great day twenty-five cents." In the trial of a suit before him in which B. P. Rankin and S. A. Strickland were opposing counsel, they became very excited and personal in their remarks, and liar and other epithets were freely used by both parties, when the court felt it his duty to assess a fine of \$5 each for contempt of court. Rankin advanced to the desk and threw down a \$5 gold piece, saying: "Your Honor, there is the five dollars, and I beg you to understand that I have always felt, and do still feel, the most profound contempt for *this court*." Before the court could recover from its surprise, Rankin had disappeared, and was allowed to go in peace. Strickland was stung to the quick and begged imploringly of the court to remit the fine, as his reputation was at stake, but the Squire was inexorable, and when the fine was paid his Honor remarked that "the dignity of this honorable court must be upheld."

The first Indian scare was in 1855, when John Saling rushed into Bellevue on horseback and reported that thirty-three head of cattle had been stolen at Saling's Grove by the Indians, and been driven off. Everybody turned out, armed with every kind of weapon; some on horseback and others in wagons. The Bellevue delegation met the Omaha delegation, commanded by Col. Thayer (since Gen. Thayer), at Saling's Grove. Scouts were sent in every direction to find the trail, but no traces of it could be found. A council of war was held and these *hardy veterans* commanded to make *forced* marches to the Pawnee village, recover the cattle, and strike terror into the ranks of the redskins. At night they camped near a stream in a grove about eight miles south-west, known as Lang's grove, and at present Aver's grove, and, as many were tired and hungry, loud murmurs of discontent arose when a few stale crackers and a piece of rusty bacon were apportioned by the commissary as rations for each recruit. While they were sleeping on the dead leaves, with a stump of a tree for a pillow,

some dreamed of home, others of the morrow. A few who were awake, heard the tinkling of the cow bells not far from camp. In the morning a courier arrived with the news that the whole of the cattle had been found near the mouth of the Platte river, but that during the night a number of Jonas Mitchell's cattle had been driven off by the Pawnees, who must have passed close by the camp.

This baffled the generalship of the whites, and further pursuit of the Indians was abandoned. Those who participated in the campaign were afterwards known as "the survivors of the Pawnee war."

Charles Child claims to have built the first flouring mill in the territory, in 1855, at a point on the Missouri three miles north of Bellevue, since known as "Child's mill."

In January, 1856, the mission reserve was incorporated within the limits of Bellevue by an act of the legislature, being a section of land reserved in the treaty with the Omahas to the Presbyterian board of foreign missions, and for which the government afterwards granted a patent.

The Fontenelle bank was incorporated in 1856, and transacted business in Bellevue until the financial crash of 1857. During this year the Benton House was completed and kept as a hotel by George Jennings, and the mission house converted into a hotel kept by James T. Allen, and known as the Bellevue House.

A city organization for Bellevue was effected in the election of Reuben Lovejoy, mayor; and Wm. D. Rowles, J. T. Allen, and A. H. Burch, aldermen. *Young America*, a newspaper printed at Bellevue by Wm. M. Thompson, figured about this time, but was short-lived. It was succeeded by the *Bellevue Gazette*, which launched its first number to the public October 23, 1856.

The Presbyterian church was completed in 1856, and Rev. Wm. Hamilton installed as minister in charge.

At an election held in November, 1856, Gen. L. L. Bowen and J. S. Allen were elected councilmen of this election district, and S. A. Strickland, C. T. Holloway, John Finney, and Joseph Dyson representatives; and through their exertions Sarpy county was set off from Douglas county and its present boundaries defined by an act of the legislative assembly of Nebraska, approved February 7, 1857. Gen. L. L. Bowen, C. T. Holloway, and S. A. Strickland were the commissioners appointed to locate the county seat, and Bellevue was selected.

The first election after the organization of the county was held May 25, 1857. Wm. H. Cook was elected judge of probate; C. D. Keller, register of deeds; S. D. Bangs, county clerk; W. F. Wiley, county treasurer; H. A. Lansdorf, superintendent of common schools; H. W. Harvey, county surveyor; John M. Enoch, sheriff, and John B. Glover, Robert McCarty, and Philander Cook, county commissioners.

The county commissioners held their first session, which was a special session, on the 19th of June, 1857, at the court house in Bellevue. They next met in regular session July 6, 1857, and divided the county into three commissioners' districts and two election precincts, known as the Bellevue and Plattford precincts. The clerk was instructed to issue notices of the general election for territorial and county officers, to be held August 3, 1857.

At this election the Hon. Fenner Ferguson, of Sarpy county, having received the highest number of votes, was elected delegate to congress. He resided at Bellevue until his death, which occurred November 11, 1859. His successor as chief justice was the Hon. Augustus Hall, of Iowa, who arrived in Bellevue with his family in March, 1858, and died at his residence near that place February 1, 1861.

Bellevue lodge No. 4, I. O. O. F., was instituted August 9, 1857, W. H. Cook, N. G.

We have said this much in reference to the early history of Bellevue, as it is intimately connected with the history of the territory before and since its organization. We have many historical facts and reminiscences relating to other portions of Sarpy county, which must necessarily be omitted in this article for want of time, but which will appear in the complete history of the county.

LA PLATTE.

The original town of La Platte was situated directly on the Missouri river, between the Platte river and the Papillion creek, and east of its present location. In 1855 the proprietors of the town, Gen. W. Larimer, Col. R. Hogeboom, B. P. Rankin, and Gov. Cuming, erected a double log house as a hotel, and built a steam saw-mill costing \$7,000. Daniel Turner, Rev. John Hughes, and G. W. Tozier were among the first settlers. The town, from its proximity to the

river, was subject to periodical overflows, and in 1856 was abandoned for higher ground. A new town, west of there, extending to the edge of the table-land, was organized and platted by Larimer and Hogeboom, who purchased the land owned by Turner & Hughes, and it was named Larimer, in honor of one of its founders. The first hotel was built by Col. Hogeboom and kept by Mr. Shannon.

Between this place and the Missouri river a town named Platona was surveyed and platted by Daniel Gantt, who built a hotel. This town has long since ceased to exist.

Another town east of this and the Missouri river, called Triaqua, shared the same fate.

The present town of La Platte was laid out by the O. & S. W. R. Co., in 1870, and is situated nearly in the south-east corner of the county, embracing a portion of the original Larimer town site. It may be said to command the key to the Platte valley, being not far from the junction of the Platte river with the Missouri. The limestone quarries, a short distance above town and south-west, afford employment to large numbers. The stone is shipped to Omaha, Lincoln, and other points by the B. & M. R. Co., who have an excellent station at this place. There is a hotel, grist mill, store, blacksmith shop, and other buildings, and a good shipping trade is carried on in grain and other articles of merchandise.

The railroad bridge crosses the Platte river near this place, and is on the line of the B. & M. railroad.

FAIRVIEW

Was designed by its originators as a suitable location for the county seat. It is about ten miles from the mouth of the Platte river, on a high and beautiful plateau, and surrounded by well-improved farms. The Methodists have a flourishing church and Sunday-school in operation. As a town it has proven to be a failure.

PAPILLION.

As early as 1857, John L. Beadle, of New York, visited this county and pre-empted a portion of the land on which Papillion now stands. He was a practical man and had studied the topography of the country with a view to its future development. He considered this point in the Papillion valley as the natural outlet to the rich agricultural country extending south and west to the Platte river, and be-

lieving that the nation's highway to the Pacific would, in time, traverse this valley to reach the Platte, his faith in its future prosperity was unbounded, and had he lived he would have seen his fondest wishes realized in the beautiful little town which is now our county seat, and around which, in future, the historical associations shall cluster.

The first building erected was by Dr. D. E. Beadle (a brother of John L. Beadle) in November, 1869, and the town was surveyed and platted in October, 1870. He also started the first store in January, 1870, and sold his interest to Sander & Bro. in August of the same year.

S. M. Pike, who owned the land adjoining on the south, had a portion of it surveyed and platted as "South Papillion," and from this time its growth has been steady, until now it reaches about 400.

The *Sarpy County Sentinel*, edited by Geo. T. Hatfield, was published here; afterwards edited by J. C. Newberry, until its removal to Sarpy Centre during the exciting canvass for county seat in 1875.

The *Papillion Times* commenced its publication in November, 1874, with A. R. Kennedy as editor, who has continued in that capacity ever since.

The court house and public school, both built of brick, are ornaments to the town. There are also a number of tasteful private residences. There are two good hotels, several stores, a flouring mill, warehouses, shops, public hall and post office. Also a German Methodist church. Several other churches are in contemplation.

This being an important station on the U. P. railroad, a large amount of grain is annually shipped at this point.

SARPY CENTRE

lies nearly in the geographical centre of the county. The idea of laying out a town was first conceived by Capt. J. D. Spearman, who purchased the land. A company was organized and the town surveyed and platted in 1875. For a time it disputed gallantly with Papillion for the county seat, but was defeated at the last general election.

There is a good hotel, store, blacksmith shop, and other buildings. The *Sarpy County Sentinel* is published there.

There are good roads converging at this point from every direction, and an excellent business is carried on with the surrounding country.

FOREST CITY

was organized as a town April 18, 1858, with Barney Scott, Peter Forbes, Matthew J. Shields, Wm. Sayles, and Geo. B. Ackley as trustees. It is a town of modest pretensions and has never boasted of a large population. It is settled by an industrious, thriving people, and as its natural resources become developed the town will improve, and should the projected bridge across the Platte, connecting Saunders with Sarpy county, be built at or near this point, its future prosperity is doubly assured.

GILMORE,

on the U. P. railroad, ten miles from Omaha, was laid out by the U. P. R. R. company, which built a substantial depot on the line at that point. David Leach afterwards laid out an addition to the town. These parties have since succeeded in having it vacated.

Papillion City, laid out in 1857, at a point about two and one-half miles north-east of the present town of Papillion; Plattford, Hazelton, towns in this county, organized in an early day, have long since returned to their primitive state.

We have thus taken a retrospective view of some of the events that have transpired in the early history of Sarpy county, preferring in this centennial year to omit its later history, as this will eventually be embodied in the general history of the county.

SKETCH OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN FREMONT, NEBRASKA.

BY REV. I. E. HEATON.

October 28, 1856, I arrived in Fremont. Sabbath, November 2, I preached the first sermon in this vicinity. This was at the house of Seth Marvin, a mile and a half west of Fremont. No house in Fremont was sufficiently finished to contain an assembly of twenty-five. The next Sabbath we commenced a service in Fremont in the house of Robert Kittle (in a little shanty just south of the knoll on Military Avenue on which E. Abbott's house now stands). From that time Sabbath services were continued with special exceptions.