

Butler County Where Peace and Plenty Follow the Plowman's Trail



DAVID CITY HIGH SCHOOL.



NORTH SIDE OF SQUARE, DAVID CITY.



BUTLER COUNTY COURT HOUSE.

THE early pioneer struck Butler county just when the Hudson Bay Fur company failed in the line of settlement and civilization. One carried in the trap-line and the trader, the other, the home maker and his wife. One his traps and rifle, the other his seed wheat and plow. One shot an Indian for killing a beaver out of season and the other paid the wolf and the coyote. One hunted and traded for what he could carry out of the county, the other planted and bulled for what he could leave in it for his children. One counted his muskrat nests and the other his hills of corn. One his bale of furs, the other his bushels of grain. In short the fur trader paddled his boat on every stream and drove his dog team over every trail along the Platte river, to bring out furs and peltries, while the American emigrant hauled in with his prairie schooner the twentieth century civilization. Morning in David City dated from that time.

It is generally the opinion that the exploring expedition under the command of John C. Fremont, "the Pathfinder," was the first visit of the white men to the territory now comprised within the limits of Butler county. The Mormons in their transcontinental march from Nauvoo to Utah passed through the county, leaving a plainly marked road, well known to the old settlers as the "old Mormon trail." This entered the county in the southeastern part, what is now Richardson township, on the east, then following up one of the continuous divides to the table land, and from there, round its northern edge, to the point where Deer creek leaves the hill, from which it descended to the Platte bottoms.

During the excitement attendant on the discovery of the precious metals at Pike's Peak in 1859, thousands of adventurers passed through this part of the state on

William Butler and S. D. Shinn, who both located in the vicinity where Savannah was afterwards laid out. Most of these and their successors in the following years located on the bottom lands near the Platte river, close to wood and water, the prime necessities of life. A few made settlements each year thereafter, but during the civil war their number was quite small, but on the cessation of hostilities the tide of emigration again commenced to turn north and each year saw the population of Butler county considerably increased. During the early years the settlers experienced many hardships, independent, and while they yet reside on their farms they are taking life easy.

A few years ago the grade or breed of cattle was not a question; now it is different. Farmers are constantly searching for the finest and most perfectly bred cattle and horses; in fact, stock of all kinds that can be procured. As an illustration of what can and has been done in this line, a few weeks ago State Senator C. H. Aldrich held a sale of Hereford cattle. Forty-four head was sold at an average price of more than \$100 per head. Sixteen of those were less than 6 months old. One cow sold for \$300. Most all of this was bought by farmers

of Nebraska. The Union Pacific, Chicago & Northwestern, and Burlington and Missouri river railroads all cross its limits and have depots. It has three hotels. The Perkins, built by a stock company, is the largest, being a three story brick structure. The original plat of the city, the property of Phoebe W. Miles, laid out by N. T. Richardson, was filed for record June 28, 1872. To this have been added about sixteen additions. The city was legally incorporated March 5, 1874. The court house, located on a block of ground in the center of the city, is a structure second to none in this part of the state. It was built

Brannard each support newspapers, each of them having a large subscription list. The ninety-two school districts of Butler county employ 142 teachers, twenty-six male and 126 female. Wages are comparatively good, the highest paid in the country district being \$5 a month, lowest, \$3. There were 160 eighth grade graduates last year. This county has a flourishing teachers' association. The educational feature of the year is the educational convention held each year toward the last of March.

In 1857, the county owned one log school house. In 1876 it possessed fifty-four, of which forty-eight were neat and commodious frame structures, well finished. The first teacher's certificate was issued to Allen Dixon, October 29, 1858. The first school district was formed December 5, 1858. In 1858 Mahala city was made county seat by special act of legislature. August 5, 1859, a patent was issued following the first entry of land, which was made by J. W. Seelye. In 1859, the United States government granted 97,000 acres of land to the Union Pacific Railroad company. April 10, 1871, and April 14, 1872, are remembered as the days of the great snowstorms and 1873 is marked as the year of the great prairie fires.

David City has a system of water works, and is just completing a system of sewerage. The city is lighted by electricity, the plant being owned by private parties. It also has two telephone systems, and a large majority of the farmers of the county have telephones in their homes.

Besides David City, sixteen other towns are located in the county. Bellwood on the north, Rising City on the west, Ulysses on the south, and Brannard on the east, each having a population of about 750, are thriving villages. Bellwood has one bank, Rising City two, Ulysses two and Brannard two. Brannard also has a steam flouring mill of 100-barrel capacity, and an electric light plant. Ulysses has a water power flouring mill. Other villages in the county, all of which are good markets for grain and live stock, are: Loma, Yanka, Foley, Garrison, Linwood, Octavia, Millerton, Surprise, Dwight, Bruno, Able and Nimburg.

Surprise has a water power flouring mill and a bank. Garrison, Linwood, Octavia, Dwight, Bruno and Able each support a bank. Able, a thriving little village in the east part of the county, also has a steam flouring mill with a capacity of 100 barrels. Rising City, Ulysses, Bellwood and about twenty years ago, at a cost of \$58,000.

All kinds of business is represented and the merchants all seem to be prosperous. Two department stores are doing business here, and each employs a large number of clerks. Three national banks with abundant capital, are doing a profitable business. In the manufacturing line, there are two flouring mills with a combined capacity of 25 barrels per day and a brick yard, employing eighteen men and turning out 3,000,000 brick annually.



CITY NATIONAL BANK.



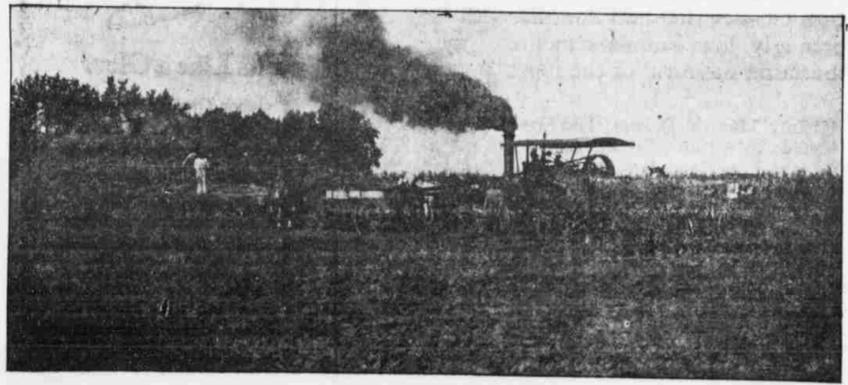
CENTRAL NEBRASKA NATIONAL BANK.

ships, particularly when the grasshoppers came and devoured everything in sight. Since then a new Nebraska had developed and Butler county has done its share in this development and has also shared in the beneficial results therefrom. That farming and its allied industries is profitable is no longer a question that can be successfully contradicted. The farmers of Butler county have been wonderfully successful in the last few years. Many of them who eight, ten or twelve years ago were in moderate circumstances are now

residing in Butler county. The last report shows Butler county has within her borders, live stock as follows: Cattle, 22,584 head; sheep, 1,536 head; hogs, 31,574 head; horses, 10,277 head; mules, 263 head. The various products raised in the county in the year 1908, are as follows: Corn, 3,721,787 bushels; winter wheat, 1,311,754 bushels; spring wheat, 24,642 bushels; oats, 1,174,000 bushels; barley, 2,354 bushels; rye, 6,646 bushels; potatoes, 51,595 bushels; tame hay, 54,765 tons; wild hay, 43,298 tons; alfalfa, 6,600 tons.

Butler county has seventeen banks, three national and fourteen state, the combined capital of which is \$24,900; surplus, \$16,000; deposits, \$2,467,000. That the mortgage indebtedness is on the decrease is evidenced by the following, copied from the reports for the years 1906 and 1907: 1906 farm mortgages filed 332, released 243; average rate of interest 5 1/2 per cent; 1907 farm mortgages filed 198, released 279, average rate of interest, 5 per cent; 1906 city mortgages filed eighty-one, released eighty-nine, average rate of interest 8 per cent; 1907, city mortgages filed seventy-six, released 126, average rate of interest 7 per cent. Farm lands have increased in value at a rapid rate, the average price being from \$100 to \$150 per acre.

A further evidence of the rapid development and increase in wealth of the county is its cities and villages. Of those there are seventeen, all railroad stations. David City, the county seat, is located within half a mile of the center of the county, and has a population of more than 2,500. With its natural and railway advantages and the enterprise of its citizens, it promises to largely increase in the future and assume importance among the larger cities



THRESHING ON KOVAR FARM, EAST OF DAVID CITY.



SCENE ON FARM OF ALFRED KNAPPS, SOUTHWEST FROM DAVID CITY.

Gossip and Stories About Noted People

Judicial Experience of Taft Family. BELIEVE it is true," writes President Taft in McClure's, "that I am the only successful candidate for the presidency who ever had extended judicial experience. Mr. Van Buren had been a surrogate or probate judge early in his career, and Andrew Jackson, I believe, did serve as a judge of the supreme court of North Carolina, but it was a very unimportant part of his life, and his service did not bring into the issue of his campaigns any discussion of his work as a judge.

"Judge Parker, as far as I know, is the only other candidate who had been for any number of years on the bench, and while there was some reference in the campaign to his judicial opinions, they did not involve any issues made in the platform and were not given special prominence on the stump or in political editorials.

Marse Henry's Memory. Gus Thomas was spending an evening with Marse Henry Watterson in Louisville, relates the New York Press, and around 2 a. m. they began to feel tired. By 3 they were exhausted. By 4 they were all in and had to quit, separating and going their different ways. Thomas tumbled out of bed the next afternoon at dinner time and looked up Marse Henry, so they could go to breakfast together.

Hall Caine on \$500 a Year. Shortly after Rosetti's death, writes Hall Caine in Appleton's, I took two rooms I called them "chambers" in the old, now demolished Clement's Inn, and there devoted myself to my work as a journalist, which consisted chiefly of my work on the Liverpool Mercury.

Tolstoy at Home. A German tourist who recently visited Tolstoy writes: "The venerable man makes heroic efforts to disregard the pain which is the natural accompaniment of the malady from which he is suffering, and when he can do so he takes long walks, knowing full well that the next day he must pay the penalty in his armchair. His industry is unchecked. He is writing a history of the revolutionary movement of 1905-06 and labors diligently on his book entitled 'Children's Wisdom', which consists of questions asked by children of their elders and the answers. He is writing also a treatise on Confucius and a book on India. His correspondence is tremendous, but he directs it personally and enjoys doing it."

Plucking a Lover. While on a business trip to Amarillo, Tex., last January, Alexander Quist, 60 years old, a retired farmer of Rock Island, Ill., met Mrs. Julia Johnson, 43 years old, of Nashville, Tenn. Friendship ripened into love and the couple planned to get married in Kansas City.

Engineer Crusen Turns Evangelist in His Old Days



W. J. CRUSEN, North Platte, Neb.

WILLIAM J. CRUSEN, a retired Union Pacific engineer, is spending the closing years of his life seeing what good he can do for his fellow-men. At North Platte, where he lives, and all along the Union Pacific he is known as the engineer preacher.

Penitence by the Union Pacific railroad, he is now a local preacher with the Methodist Episcopal church and gives his time and talent for the good of mankind by helping pastors in revival work. Since he gave up his engine and entered the service of the church as a volunteer he has been connected with meetings where over 1,500 souls have been converted. He has just finished a revival meeting at Curtis, Neb., where 129 were converted, and before that at Ravenna, where seventy-five were converted.

Crusen holds the respect of all the Union Pacific trainmen and the officials of the road and people all along the line know and respect Crusen, the engineer preacher. He was a good soldier for Uncle Sam during the civil war; he was a good engineer for the Union Pacific and for the other roads he worked for prior to that time, and now he is doing the best he can for his fellow-men.

On March 18, 1848, on a farm in the Licking valley in Ohio, twenty-six miles up the stream from Zanesville and four miles from Newark, Crusen was born. At the age of 6 he attended a country log school and for five years gathered a little knowledge of the three Rs when he was forced to give up school and help out on the farm. For three years he did the best a boy could do to help grow the crops and he then started out to make his own way in the world. He soon secured employment in a hardware store as fireman and engineer, a position which required some skill and to which he had to exert his best efforts.

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