

HISTORY OF HOLT COUNTY, MISSOURI.

THE PLATTE PURCHASE.

When Missouri was admitted into the Union, in 1820, the western boundary of the state differed from the present. It was a line crossing the Missouri river at the mouth of the Kansas, where Kansas City now stands, and running north and south from Arkansas to Iowa. South of the Missouri the state line was identical with the present—north, instead of the boundary following the course of the river as it now does, it was a continuation of the line south of the Missouri, and extended north, coinciding with the line running between the present counties of Clay, Clinton, DeKalb, Gentry and Worth on the east, and Platte, Buchanan, Andrew and Nodaway on the west.

The long, triangular strip of country lying between the original western boundary of the state and the Missouri river was known as the Platte country, and afterward on its being bought by the United States government, as the "Platte Purchase." It included the present counties of Platte, Buchanan, Andrew, Holt, Nodaway and Atchison. This tract of country had been selected by the Indians, with their usual sagacity, as a reservation; and not till after the year 1830 was it given up to the occupancy of the white settlers. Of the physical characteristics of this region it is only necessary to state that they were such as made the Platte Purchase the natural garden spot of the Missouri valley. A fertile soil, an agreeable climate, numerous streams affording an abundance of water and advantageous sites for mills, alluvial bottoms rivaling the far-famed country of the Nile in their richness, rolling land covered with a heavy growth of timber, and beautiful stretches of prairie—all combined to make the Platte country the paradise of the pioneer. It is no wonder that the early settlers of the bordering counties of Northwest Missouri looked with longing eyes on this favored country. Before the Indian title was extinguished white settlers advanced over the border, and here and there erected a cabin and cleared a piece of land, from which they were often driven by the United States soldiers, the government endeavoring as far as possible to preserve inviolate the treaty rights with the Indians.

As the adjacent counties, Clay, Clinton and others, became somewhat thickly settled, the demand became imperative that the Platte country should be taken from the Indians and given up to the requirements of civilization. Thomas H. Benton, that far-seeing statesman, whose illustrious public career reflected credit on his state, lent his influence to this measure, and in 1833 the passage of a bill by Congress was secured, annexing to the state of Missouri that part of the Indian Territory since known as the Platte Purchase. In 1837 a treaty with the Indians was concluded, by which they were removed west of the Missouri river, and the newly acquired territory opened up to the occupancy of the white settlers.

Immediately thereafter occurred such an influx of settlers, particularly in the southern portion of the Purchase, as scarcely has a parallel in the history of the West. As soon as the news spread that the Platte country was opened for settlement, pioneers poured in from all directions, each anxious to be early on the ground in order to secure an advantageous location. Many from Clay and other counties had visited the country while it was yet in the possession of the Indians, and had selected the site of their future settlements to which they returned as soon as possible after permission was given by the government, not a few of them arriving during the deep snows and severe cold of winter. They came from Clay county, from Jackson, and other parts of Missouri; from Kentucky, from Virginia, and from Tennessee, and only a short time was required to transform the country from the abode of Indian tribes to a comparatively thickly populated region. The above remarks apply particularly to the southern counties of the Purchase—Platte and Buchanan.

A division into counties was soon effected. Platte county was organized December 31st, 1838; Buchanan county, six weeks later, on the 10th of February, 1839. The same month all that portion of the Platte Purchase north of Buchanan county was organized, and attached to Buchanan for civil and military purposes under the name of the

TERRITORY OF NEATAWAH.

This territory contained about three thousand two hundred square miles, and extended ten miles north of the present state line between Iowa and Missouri; so that the Buchanan county court held sway over a territory larger than the combined states of Rhode Island and Delaware. The act organizing Neatawah provided that all taxes collected within the limits of the territory, after paying the expenses of collection, should be expended in internal improvements within the boundaries of Neatawah itself; the Buchanan county officials, disregarding this provision of the legislature, misdirected the funds (principally upon skins and beaver) which flowed into the public coffers from Neatawah's wide domain, appropriating them to illegitimate purposes; and it was not till years afterward that the passage of a bill through the legislature was secured (principally through the efforts of James Foster, representative from Holt county) requiring Buchanan county to refund the amount thus unlawfully obtained. The settlement of what is now Holt county had begun in the year 1838, and increased with some degree of rapidity during 1839 and 1840. The inhabitants were obliged to go to the county-seat of Buchanan, then the old town of Sparta, nine miles south of St. Joseph, to pay their taxes, or transact any legal business; and the residents of this part of the county were informed that, as soon as twelve legal voters could be found west of the Nodaway river, a township would be formed, and then a constable and justice of the peace of their own could be elected. Nodaway township was accordingly organized, the twelve legal voters having been ascertained to be in existence; and William Thorp was chosen justice of the peace, and Judge R. H. Russel, constable. This measure furnished the machinery for legal proceedings at home, and we may suppose that the scattered inhabitants slumbered more peacefully in the enjoyment of their sacred rights.

ORGANIZATION OF HOLT COUNTY.

New settlers having crowded into the old territory of Neatawah in great numbers it became necessary to provide a form of government better adapted to their wants. Accordingly on the 29th of January, 1841, the legislature organized the counties of Nodaway and Andrew, the former embracing all of the Platte Purchase west of the Nodaway river, and the latter all east of the river and north of Buchanan county. The death of David Rice Holt, a member of the House from Platte county, induced the legislature to change the name of Nodaway to Holt.

Holt county, therefore, when first formed embraced the present Atchison county, that part of Nodaway lying west of the Nodaway river, and extended north beside ten miles into the state of Iowa—Missouri claiming jurisdiction over a strip of country ten miles wide along the southern line of Iowa—the dispute concerning the boundary line not at that date having been settled. In January, 1843, all that part of Holt county lying north of a line running from a point on the Missouri river opposite the house of H. Wallace (now known as the G. Schlute place) to the main crossing of the Big Turkio, about

a mile above Craig, thence northeasterly to the state line, was cut off by the legislature, and named Allen county, but left under the jurisdiction of the Holt county court in the same manner as the territory of Neatawah had previously been attached to Buchanan. February 14th, 1845, Allen county was abolished, Atchison and Nodaway were organized, and Holt county was thus reduced to its present limits.

The first circuit court in the county held its sessions at the house of William Thorp, on the place now owned and occupied by the heirs of John Stephenson, three miles and a half southeast of Oregon. It convened on the 4th of March, 1841. David R. Atchison was judge, Richard M. Barkhurst was sheriff, and the first grand jury ever impaneled in the county was composed as follows: Harman G. Noland, Joshua Adkins, Isaac Massie, Gilbert Ray, George Drane, Green B. Thorp, B. Grigsby, R. H. Russel, Thomas Crowley, Roland Barnett, John Gibson, John Russel, John Sterret, James Kinsey, Henry Holden, John Morgan, and David Jones. Harman G. Noland served as foreman. Of these grand jurors only three, R. H. Russel, Roland Barnett and John Gibson, are now residents of the county. The others have either died or moved away.

The first county court was also held at William Thorp's house, and met March 29th, 1841. Harman G. Noland, James Crowley and Joshua Adkins composed this body, and Noland was presiding justice. Bayless R. Griggby was the first county clerk. Among the actions of this body was the granting of a dram shop license to George Drane and Blank Stephenson, with the residence of the latter the place for the sale of the intoxicating liquors. The court recognizing the importance of providing unobstructed access to such an institution, decreed that a public road should be established from the northeast corner of Spence's grove to the southwest corner of section five (township 59, range 37), thence by Blank Stephenson's to Jeffrey's Point, afterwards called Iowa Point, and now opposite the town of Iowa Point, Kansas. The first ferry license was granted to R. M. Barkhurst, at the Rapids, or Toole ferry, on Nodaway river. George Borchers who was the first merchant in Holt county was the first person naturalized.

At the session of the court, Col. John W. Kelley was enrolled as an attorney. Afterwards in 1855 he represented the county in the legislature, and in 1856, on the Benton ticket, was a candidate for lieutenant-governor.

The county court in November, 1841, licensed Francis Doraway, generally known as "Jeffrey" Doraway, to reside in the state. He was a free person of color, and individuals of that class were only allowed to reside in Missouri at that time by virtue of a license from the county court.

We give below the list of county officers from the organization of the county:

MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY COURT.

March, 1841—September, 1841.	(Harman G. Noland, Joshua Adkins, James Crowley.)
September, 1841—September, 1842.	(Harman G. Noland, James Crowley, James Kinsey, John W. Kelley, John Stewart, James Kinsey.)
September, 1842—July, 1845.	(John W. Kelley, James Kinsey, John W. Kelley, James Kinsey, Samuel Watson.)
July, 1845—October, 1845.	(Samuel Watson, T. V. Dickey, John Gibson.)
October, 1845—October, 1850.	(Samuel Watson, John Gibson, John Dozier, John Dozier, John Gibson, John Gibson, John Dozier.)
October, 1850—February, 1854.	(Samuel Watson, John Gibson, John Dozier, John Dozier, John Gibson, John Dozier.)
February, 1854—May, 1854.	(Samuel Watson, John Gibson, John Dozier, John Dozier, John Gibson, John Dozier.)
May, 1854—November, 1854.	(Samuel R. Canon, Michael Byrd.)
November, 1854—June, 1860.	(Charles E. Canon, William L. Gordon, John T. Williams, John T. Williams, John T. Williams, J. P. Harris, John T. Williams, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Andrew Meyer, I. H. Iddings, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Harvey L. Williams.)
June, 1860—March, 1862.	(John T. Williams, J. P. Harris, John T. Williams, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Andrew Meyer, I. H. Iddings, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Harvey L. Williams.)
March, 1862—May, 1862.	(John T. Williams, J. P. Harris, John T. Williams, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Andrew Meyer, I. H. Iddings, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Harvey L. Williams.)
May, 1862—February, 1863.	(John T. Williams, J. P. Harris, John T. Williams, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Andrew Meyer, I. H. Iddings, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Harvey L. Williams.)
February, 1863—March, 1865.	(John T. Williams, J. P. Harris, John T. Williams, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Andrew Meyer, I. H. Iddings, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Harvey L. Williams.)
March, 1865—May, 1865.	(John T. Williams, J. P. Harris, John T. Williams, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Andrew Meyer, I. H. Iddings, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Harvey L. Williams.)
May, 1865—December, 1866.	(John T. Williams, J. P. Harris, John T. Williams, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Andrew Meyer, I. H. Iddings, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Harvey L. Williams.)
December, 1866—December, 1870.	(John T. Williams, J. P. Harris, John T. Williams, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Andrew Meyer, I. H. Iddings, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Harvey L. Williams.)
December, 1870—December, 1872.	(John T. Williams, J. P. Harris, John T. Williams, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Andrew Meyer, I. H. Iddings, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Harvey L. Williams.)
December, 1872—December, 1874.	(John T. Williams, J. P. Harris, John T. Williams, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Andrew Meyer, I. H. Iddings, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Harvey L. Williams.)
December, 1874—December, 1877.	(John T. Williams, J. P. Harris, John T. Williams, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Andrew Meyer, I. H. Iddings, R. H. Russel, R. H. Russel, Harvey L. Williams.)

CIRCUIT JUDGES.

David R. Atchison.....	1841-43.
Henderson Young.....	1843-46.
Solomon L. Leonard.....	1846-51.
Harman B. A. Land.....	1851-52.
Elijah H. Norton.....	1852-60.

Silas Woodson.....	1860-64.
William Heron.....	1864-69.
Isaac C. Parker.....	1869-71.
Barnett Pike.....	1871-72.
Henry S. Kelley.....	1872 to present.

CIRCUIT CLERKS.

Andrew S. Hughes.....	March, 1841-June, 1841.
Bayless R. Grigsby.....	1841-46.
John Collins.....	1846-53.
E. Van Buskirk.....	1853-65.
A. N. Raley.....	1865-66.
E. L. Allen.....	1866-75.
William A. Gardner.....	1875 to present.

COUNTY CLERKS.

Up till the date of John Collins' term (1853) the circuit clerk filled the offices of county clerk and recorder. The first election for county clerk occurred in 1852.

Alfred B. Mullins.....	1853-56.
James Scott.....	1856-65.
Warren B. Davis.....	1865-70.
Albert Roecker.....	1870-75.
John H. C. Curtis.....	1875 to present.

RECORDER.

W. F. Taylor, the present recorder, is the first person who has ever occupied that office, and was elected to the position in November, 1874.

SHERIFFS.

Richard M. Barkhurst.....	1841-42.
Robert H. Russel.....	1842-46.
Frank A. Pollock.....	1846-50.
William D. Beeler.....	1850-54.
John L. Dozier.....	1854-56.
Galen Crow.....	1856-60.
Robert G. Emerson.....	1860-62.
William Kaucher.....	1862-66.
Albert Roecker.....	1866-70.
Moses M. Smith.....	1870-72.
William G. McIntyre.....	1872-74.
Stephen T. Lucas.....	1874 to present.

COLLECTORS.

The sheriffs filled the collector's office up till 1872, when the offices were separated. The following have filled the position:

Moses M. Smith.....	1872-74.
William G. McIntyre.....	1874-76.
Sammel M. Morrison.....	1876 to present.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.

The duties of this office were at first performed by the circuit clerk, and after the formation of the office of county clerk, by the latter officer. Since 1865 the position has been filled as follows, a separate office having been created:

Edgar L. Allen.....	1865-66.
Stephen Blanchard.....	1866-70.
Frank Gordon.....	1870-72.
Erastus S. Eyerly.....	1872-75.
Edward Anibal.....	1875-77.

The first assessor, Dr. G. B. Thorp, died during the war of the rebellion. Gilbert Ray was the first county treasurer; David Templeton, first county surveyor; Zachariah Davis, first coroner; John Thorp, first county seat commissioner; Peter H. Burnett, the first prosecuting attorney; and Col. J. W. Kelley, the first attorney admitted to practice at the Holt county bar. The first marriage recorded in the county was that of John A. Benson to Miss Kinsey. The ceremony was performed on the 18th of April, 1841, by Rev. G. B. Thorp, an Old School Baptist minister. The first indictments of the grand jury were against Joseph Roberts for unlawfully trading with the Indians, and Henry Casner for robbery. The first entry in the trial docket of the circuit court reads as follows:

The State of Missouri }
vs. } Trading with Indians.
JOSEPH ROBERTS. }

The sheriff failed to find Roberts, and doubtless feeling the necessity of using some Latin phrase made a return to the court of *nolle prosequi*, probably confounding that term with *non est*.

EARLY SETTLEMENTS.

The pioneers in the settlement of Holt county were Blank and Peter Stephenson, from Parke county, Indiana, who, in the spring of 1838, settled about five miles southeast of the present town of Oregon. Their locations were on section seven of township 59, range 37. The succeeding year several families moved into the same neighborhood. In the spring of 1838, Judge R. H. Russel, John Sterret, John Russel and James Kee, set out from Indiana for the Platte Purchase. Judge Russel proceeded by steamboat to Clay county, Missouri, where in August, he was joined by the three others who had come overland. The whole party then came on to Holt county, and settled near where Blank and Peter Stephenson had already located. Blank Stephenson is said to have been the first constable in the county, and some time in the year 1839 assumed the duties of that office. It is related that he undertook to catch a horse thief passing through the county. He followed him to the northern part of the county, and being mounted on a good horse soon arrived in the neighborhood of the thief's rendezvous. The latter learned from confederates the business which brought Stephenson to the neighborhood. It was about dark when the constable arrived, and putting up his horse for the night he went to bed and slept soundly till morning. The enterprising horse thief improved the time by adding another to the list of his adventures. He stole Stephenson's horse and ran it off during the night, leaving the officer of the law to make the best of his way home, a distance of about forty miles, on foot in the morning.

HISTORY OF HOLT COUNTY, MISSOURI.

Judge R. H. Russel was the first postmaster in the county. The post-office was called Thorp's Mill, and was kept at Judge Russel's house. Thorp's Mill was so called from one John Thorp, who came in 1840, and built a mill on Mill creek, two miles southeast of Oregon. Judge Russel carried the mail to Andrew county once a week. Postage in those days was twenty-five cents, collectable on the delivery of the letters. The postmaster would set out and deliver only an average of three or four letters each trip; as for newspapers they were things unknown. John Baldwin came from Parke county, Indiana, in the fall of 1839, and settled on section eighteen of township fifty-nine, range thirty-seven. George McIntyre came in the fall of 1839, and made a settlement on section five, same congressional township, where he still lives. Smith McIntyre came at the same time and settled on the same section. John M. Briggs, the widow Jackson and family, were other early settlers of this part of the county, arriving in 1840. The first store ever started in Holt county was established by George and Augustus Borchers, in the fall of 1840, on the south line of section seven. The Borchers were Germans, and were the first citizens of that nationality who ever came to Holt county. George is deceased and Augustus is residing at Hanburg, Iowa.

Roland Burnett, Harmon G. Noland, John Gibson and others in 1839 settled in the vicinity of Oregon, and established a claim on what afterward became the town site of Oregon, but it was subsequently decided that the county possessed the title, and Mr. Burnett moved to the farm north of the town. The Blairs and Baldwins were the earliest settlers of Benton township. John M. Blair, with his sons Uriah and James Blair, reached Holt county April 12th, 1839, at that date settling near the bluff line south of Mound City on section 20, of township 61, range 38. The Blairs came from Indiana, about 1827 removed to Pike county, Illinois, subsequently to Iowa, and came to Holt county in 1839. John M. Blair died in the summer of 1840, on Caron river, at the foot of the Sierra Nevada mountains, while en route to California with an expedition from Holt county. James and Uriah Blair are still citizens of the county, and the former resides on the place where his father first settled. Jeremiah Baldwin, his brother Daniel Baldwin and his son Lambert Baldwin, settled in the fall of 1839, in the neighborhood of the Blairs. Jeremiah Baldwin is still living on the place of his first settlement. John Hughes and son, also named John Hughes, in 1839 in the neighborhood of the Blairs and Baldwins, and additional settlements were made in the same locality in 1840.

The Sharps, W. A. and Abraham, settled Sharpe's Grove, in the neighborhood of Craig, in 1841, and about the same time Robert and John Nickells gave their name to Nickell's Grove in the eastern part of the county. These settlers were the first to begin the improvement of the extreme northwestern part. John H. Roselius was the pioneer, and Henry Dakers, Henry Peters, and Andrew Buck followed shortly after. The descendants of these men are still mostly living in that part of the county, and are among our most substantial and influential citizens. While taking the only route to California, where the political sentiments of the inhabitants seem to have been so marked as to leave a record in the name of the locality. Theodore Higley and other early settlers of that part of the county were Whigs, and gave the name of that section great to the beautiful and fertile valley which they occupied.

In the histories of the several townships will be found detailed accounts of the early settlement of each part of the county.

PHYSICAL FEATURES.

The area of Holt county is about 426 square miles, or 272,761 acres. Its greatest breadth is twenty-two miles, and at the southern end it is only three miles wide. Its greatest length is about thirty-eight miles. The Missouri bounds it on the west and south; and the Nodaway river, the eastern boundary is, some seasons of the year, navigable for flats and small steamers for a short distance above its mouth. The fortieth parallel of latitude (the boundary line between the states of Kansas and Nebraska) divides the county into nearly equal parts.

The surface of the country is diversified, and is admirably adapted to agricultural purposes. The bottom lands of the Missouri are level, and bounded by a line of bluffs approaching close to the river near the northern and southern lines of the county, and at Mound City reaching so far inland that ten miles of wide bottom intervene from their foot to the river bank. The bottom at this point is the widest on the Missouri river in the state, the next widest bottom following the river being the Wakarusa bottom in Carroll county. The bluffs in places are bald, devoid of timber growth, and cut up into fanciful, cone-like mounds; elsewhere they are covered with a dense growth of oak, walnut and other deciduous trees. Back of these bluffs the country is rolling, nowhere too steep for cultivation, and everywhere affording sufficient surface inclination to give good drainage. The Nodaway river is reached by a succession of gentle slopes, securing beautiful sites for farms and making the landscape highly attractive.

SOIL.

There exist in Holt county three distinct classes of soils. About one-fifth of the county is what is known in the west as "bottom land," and consists of alluvial that has been deposited by the annual overflows of the Missouri. Of this bottom land there are two varieties of soil. First, a silicious alluvial, intermixed with clay and humus, or vegetable mould, this is a peculiarly excellent soil, capable of producing immense crops of corn, hemp, tobacco, &c. It is light, friable and easily worked; withstands drought remarkably well, and is but little injured by wet. The second variety is known, in our local nomenclature, as "gumbo land," and is a tenacious vegetable mold, that after being soaked with water, cracks in drying, and leaves a hard lump and difficult to cultivate. This "gumbo," however, is very fertile; and, as it lies over at strata of sand that can be reached, usually, within twelve to fifteen inches, only needs subsiding to become the very best soil in the bottom.

"There are numerous shallow lakes in these bottoms, in which vast quantities of marly loam are accumulated, which will eventually become very valuable for the improvement of poor or exhausted soils."—Prof. Swallow.

The first-mentioned soil is modified, near the bluffs, by a deposit of wash from them that forms what is sometimes called "bottom prairie." Some of these tracts commence near, but above, the foot of the bluffs, and have an inclination toward the river of about one foot in one hundred, and are considered by some the most desirable lands in the county.

The Missouri bottom of Holt county extends from a point about two miles above the mouth of the Nodaway, at which point the bluff comes down to the water's edge, to the northwestern extremity of the county, where the width is nearly four miles. The broadest part of the bottom, as here before stated is opposite Mound City, where it is ten miles wide. Thousands of horses and cattle are annually fed upon the rich grasses which grow in the bottom, and when taken into winter quarters in November, are in fine order for market. A perennial variety of grass, known in the bottoms as winter grass, grows in the timbered districts, and affords forage for many cattle during the winter months. The Nodaway bottom lands comprise an area of about twenty square miles, and are no less valuable and productive than those of the Missouri. The Tarkios and other streams have a bottom area of ten square miles. The bottom lands of Holt county, and indeed of the entire Platte Purchase, must eventually become the garden of Missouri. The rain fall is sufficient without the aid of irrigation to produce on these lands from ninety to one hundred bushels of corn per acre. The lands lose nothing from cultivation, as they are almost continually replenished by washings from the uplands. A system of ditching is only requisite to make the Missouri bottom in Holt county one of the finest agricultural districts in the state, and the time is not distant in the future when it will support a large and thrifty population.

Immediately contiguous to these "bottom lands" is a geological formation that is said to be peculiar to Missouri and some portions of Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska that adjoins and lies along the Missouri river. This is known as the "bluff formation," and is characterized by Prof. Swallow in his Geological Report, as the "best of all soils." Usually bluffs are barren, covered but scantily with a thin and unproductive clay soil. Not so Holt county; the bluffs are beds of marl, varying from fifty to one hundred and fifty feet in depth, and of equal fertility from the surface to the bottom of the formation. These marl beds are perforated with orifices from the surface to the bottom, connecting with each other, and with the language of Professor Swallow, "constitute the most thorough system of drainage imaginable." To illustrate the completeness of this drainage, the fact may be mentioned that here ice is kept during summer in pits from ten to twenty feet deep, not even lined with boards, simply

covered over, and yet is never troubled with water, and its own drippings, if any, are completely removed through these tubes and holes that nature has so liberally provided. This bluff formation is exceedingly light and mellow, and is full of all the elements required to sustain vegetation. It is very friable, and there is probably no soil in existence that, under the plow, becomes more loose and mellow; yet from its superior natural underdrainage, it can be worked after a week's rain with but a few hours of sunshine. Plows can run the first fair day after three days' steady rain, and the ground be dry enough to work without detriment to the soil. Professor Swallow describes this soil as "a fine pulverulent, absolutely stratified mass of light grayish buff, silicious and slightly indurated marl, its color usually variegated with deeper brown stains of oxide of iron." These stains, or discolorations, are caused by an impregnation of the marl with oxide of iron, aluminum, and carbonate of lime, while the walls of these tubes are composed of calcareous clay-ironstone. Professor Swallow says that in this formation rest the very best farms of the Missouri valley, sustained by a soil of absolutely inexhaustible fertilizing resources.

Comparison of chemical analysis of this formation with the loss or bluff formation of the river Rhine, in Germany, establishes a striking coincidence in these widely separated formations. This formation wherever found, is the very choicest of all soil for fruit, as it is perforated from the surface to the gravel substratum with orifices that effectually carry off every drop of surplus moisture, leaving it the best drained soil on earth. Wherever this "loam" is found there will be no need of tubular drains, tile drains, or any other expensive and troublesome system for carrying off the surface moisture. From its deep impregnation with oxides and salts of iron, it is peculiarly well adapted to pear culture. The success that attends the cultivation of this fruit is remarkable. For grapes this soil is believed to equal the soil of the Rhine, in Germany, while for wheat, corn and other cereals usually cultivated in this latitude, it is equally superior. Recollections of the barren prairie and unproductive knobs along the bluffs of eastern streams have deterred farmers from opening farms in the rough hills along the Missouri, but where they have been opened up the result has been of the most gratifying character. The day is coming when the bluff lands of Holt county will be the most sought after of any lands in the country.

About one-fourth of the superficial area of the county is upland rolling prairie. Its soil is the usual black, vegetable mould, consisting of the accumulated debris of decayed vegetation, which for centuries has been piled, layer on layer, until it has reached a depth of two or three feet. In this county the vegetable mould of the prairie rests on the rich marls of the bluff formation. The result is an absolutely inexhaustible soil. The prairie soil is not a good wheat soil without the addition of some fertilizer rich in silica. The mould is too rich and fat for small grain. I do not wish to be understood as asserting that the small grains do not succeed in Holt county; on the contrary, I have sufficient evidence that as high as forty bushels of wheat have been produced per acre quite frequently, and that our estimated average yield of small grains is fully equal to the average of most western counties. Still, wheat does not succeed so well as upon a poorer and more silicious soil.

Corn is the staple crop, and yields as well as in any country on earth. I feel entirely safe in placing the average yield per acre one year with another, at not less than fifty bushels, while, with superior cultivation one hundred bushels may easily be obtained in any ordinarily propitious season. Barley, rye and oats do reasonably well so far as they have been cultivated. Sorghum succeeds most admirably. Our soil is well adapted to the productions of the entire list of garden vegetables. Potatoes are especially fine; indeed in size and flavor I have nowhere seen them surpassed. The yield, with proper cultivation, will probably reach an average of one hundred and fifty bushels per acre, and when it is remembered that on account of contiguity to excellent markets they have sold for a number of years past at prices never less than forty cents, and from that to two dollars per bushel, it will be seen that potato culture is exceedingly profitable.

ADAPTABILITY TO STOCK RAISING.

As yet there is considerable range for stock on the upland prairies, which are covered with a most excellent and highly nutritious wild grass. This range will not last long; already the prairie plow is turning it under, and before many years there will be no vacant prairie in the county. In the bottom, there is room for stock to graze until the last June. The bottom is subject to annual overflow, and the margins of the bayous and lakes will furnish free pasturage for a long time to come for an immense number of cattle. Portions of bluff lands, too precipitous for cultivation, will yield pasturage to no inconsiderable amount. Timothy has been cultivated and does well. Clover, on bluff lands, does well also, but in the prairie the soil is thought to be too loose and friable for it to succeed. It is said, however, by eastern farmers, that it only needs to be well rolled after being sown, to make it succeed. Dairy farming here would prove a profitable employment.

Sheep have had but little attention. Hogs are extensively raised, and form a principal source of revenue to the farmers of the county. Imported hogs have been introduced by the more enterprising farmers, and the annual shipments foot up to an enormous amount.

The geographical and isothermal position of Holt county, as well as the peculiar adaptability of her soil, must render fruit raising and orcharding at some day the leading business. North, northwest, and west lies an immense fertile country, destined to become the seat of a dense population, that from its lack of protecting timber belts and low average temperature can never supply its own demand for any but a very few of the most hardy fruits. That country will depend upon Missouri for its supply, and fortunately for us, ours is the first fruit-producing county they will strike, who sooting to Missouri for their supply. The magnitude of our fruit trade, in the future, will become apparent to any one who is aware of the amount of the present demand. Blackberries and Raspberries may be produced with great profit. It is calculated that, taking into consideration the cheapness of good fruit-growing land, the certainty of abundant crops, the abundance of soft timber for fruit crates, the facilities for shipping, the high price of fruit, the durability of trees (especially the peach), Holt county will, for profit to fruit growers equal, if not exceed the far-famed fruit growing regions of Delaware, New Jersey, Michigan and Southern Illinois. Apples are a rare crop, and are moreover superior in quality. It has been frequently remarked by Eastern men that varieties which are successful, and are being cultivated to a considerable extent. All the small fruits and favor that they are scarcely recognizable as the fruit they knew at home. Of late years numerous orchards have been set out in different parts of the county, and have proved successful and remunerative. Peaches are not a sure crop, and are being cultivated to a considerable extent. All the small fruits have been pronounced successful by horticulturists. The facilities for reaching market are certainly such as to hold out the most flattering prospects to fruit-growers, and all that the fruit-growing interest of the county needs is development.

FORESTS.

The timbered lands of Holt county comprise about one-fourth of the entire area. The northeast portion of the county is almost entirely prairie, and the timber growth is principally along its margins. The following table shows the kinds of forest trees, and the proportionate amount of the growth of each on a scale of one hundred:—

Table listing tree species and their proportions: Cottonwood (18), Black Oak (14), Burr Oak (3), White Oak (3), Red Oak (1), Scarlet Oak (3), Chinquapin Oak (2), Shellbark Hickory (2), Figure Hickory (2), Cornus (1), Hawthorn (1), Thick Shellbark Hickory (2), Red Bud (1), Willow (1), Black Walnut (2), Aspen (1), Honey Locust (1), American Elm (8), Slippery Elm (2), Coffee Bean (1), White Birch (1), Linden (2), Cornus asperifolia (3), Rock Chestnut Oak (1), Sumac (7), American Plum (1), Hackberry (1), White Maple (2), Sycamore (3), Mulberry (2), Crab Apple (2), Black Elm (2), Gray Ash (1), Buck Eye (1).

Table listing tree species and their proportions: Black Cherry (1), Ironwood (1), Pin Oak (2), Black Locust (1), Washoe (1), Kinkikink (1).

The rapidity with which timber is reproduced, where it has once been cut off, is remarkable. Cottonwood grows at the rate of one and a half inches in diameter per annum, honey locust averages about one inch, elm three-fourths, soft maple one inch, apple three-fourths of an inch and other varieties in proportion. Immense quantities of timber are yearly taken into the adjoining counties of Acheson and Nodaway in Missouri; Richardson in Nebraska; and Doniphan, Brown, and Nemaha in Kansas, where it is used for fencing and building purposes. The saw mills at White Cloud and Iowa Point in Kansas and elsewhere, have received a large part of their supply of logs from this county.

STREAMS AND LAKES.

Imnumerable springs exist in every part of the county, and there is scarcely a quarter section of upland which is not thus supplied with never-failing water. Along the foot of the Missouri bluffs are several springs seldom surpassed either in purity, or volume. These springs are often the sources of streams which afford an abundance of water for stock purposes throughout the county. Of the streams the principal is the Big Tarkio which has its rise in Montgomery county, Iowa; enters the county within a few miles of the northwest corner, and meanders through the Missouri river bottom, a distance of not less than twenty-five miles, before it flows into the Mississippi. It affords sufficient water power for several mills. Guilliams' Mill was formerly known as the Helsenstadt Mill from the fact that in 1840 a mill was built at that point by Luke M. Dawson and H. Helsenstadt. The United States surveyors of the Little Tarkio stream from its mouth to the north line of township sixty-two (nearly two miles above Craig) thus making it by law a navigable stream. No navigator, however, has ever ruffled its placid bosom with any other craft beside the skiff or canoe and, in flood time, the raft.

The little Tarkio rises in the central part of Acheson county, enters Holt about eight miles east of the northwest corner, emerges into the Missouri river bottom a mile east of Craig, and thence winds through the bottom, and enters a slough half a mile above Forest City. This stream formerly emptied in the Missouri river several miles below its present mouth, but changes in the course of the river cut it off opposite Forest city about 1860. The Harrell Mill was the first mill built on its banks, and was put in operation several years before the late war. Squaw creek is tributary to the Little Tarkio. It flows in a southwest course from the northern line of the county through a rich upland prairie, enters the Missouri bottom two miles above Mound city, and flows into the Little Tarkio near Bigelow. Its tributaries are Ross branch, Hog branch, Dore's branch, and Forter's branch. Davis' creek rises in the northeast part of the county, and enters the Missouri bottom at Mound city. It formerly terminated in an immense sink a little over a mile below Mound City, but principally through the instrumentality of Galen Crow, formerly Sheriff of the county, the stream was conducted by a dike into Squaw creek, and was thus made to drain a large tract of wet bottom. The celebrated Mineral Spring, a short distance northwest of Mound city, is on this creek. Pierson's branch has its source in the central part of the county, flows westward, and strikes the Missouri bottom three miles and a half below Mound city. Its waters assist in making up the sloughs terminating in the lake above Forest city. Kinney creek flows into the Little Tarkio a mile and a half above Forest city. Its branches water a large tract of country. Lockhard's branch flows into the old bed of Little Tarkio a short distance below Forest city.

Mill creek, one of the most important streams in the county in a manufacturing point of view, is formed by the junction of East fork, Kunkel's fork and Thorp's branch. As its name indicates, its waters have in times past run the machinery of several mills, some of which were built in the early days of the county and have now gone to decay. Foster's mill was on East fork, two miles east of Oregon, and was built by Samuel Foster many years ago. Watson's woolen factory, three-fourths of a mile farther down the stream, formerly did an extensive business, but for many years past has not been in operation. Three-fourths of a mile, still farther down, George Scott in 1840 established the old Scott mill, which now also is numbered among the things of the past. As late as 1858 an extensive machinery, including six run of burrs, four saws, four looms, one spinning jack, one picker, four carders, and condensers, with falling mill, containing and including the machinery, was in successful operation, but has given way to a new order of things in which steam is the ruling power. Easter branch is a small stream in the southern part of the county emptying into the Lower Tarkio.

The tributaries of the Nodaway are Hardin's branch, Mickell's creek, Hickory creek, Hog creek, Higley creek, and Rolling fork. Hardin's branch has a large perpetual spring for its chief supply; and on the farm where Samuel Hardy formerly resided is an intermittent spring, which begins to flow in the spring after the frost has disappeared, and continues to discharge clear and very cold water till August, when it ceases entirely till the next spring, seemingly unaffected by either wet or dry seasons. Higley creek flows through Whig valley.

The lakes in Holt county are usually the result of a cutting off, or abandonment, of an old channel by the rivers. The lake above Forest city which has been known as Shallow, Gordon's, and Tarkio lake, was left unsurveyed by the government surveyors, and the Forty-third Congress granted the entire tract to Holt county. The county court surveyed the tract, and undertook the work of draining it. A number of settlers have made homes on the drier portions. Clear Lake in the northwest part of the county contains about 840 acres, and abounds in fish, of which great quantities are caught in the spring and fall. Wallace lake in the northwest part of the county, and Lovelady lake in the Nodaway bottom are the principal smaller lakes. In the early spring, fall, and beginning of winter water flows abound in immense numbers.

RAILROADS.

The first railroad begun in Holt county was the Platte county railroad, the construction of which commenced before the war. The road was built as far as Savannah in Andrew county when the breaking out of the war caused a suspension of further operations. The grading and nearly all the masonry was completed through the southern part of Holt county to Forest city. The route ran three-fourths of a mile southeast of Oregon. The county court had subscribed \$7,000 toward the building of the road, and bonds were issued for half that amount. After the war the county paid these bonds promptly, though the railroad was never completed, and the county, of course, never received the slightest benefit. The Kansas city, St. Joseph and Council Bluffs railroad was completed through the county in the year 1869. It enters the county at the southeast extreme, and winds its way at the foot of the bluffs to a point four miles above Forest city. It here strikes out into the bottom and makes but one deviation from a straight line for a distance of nearly thirty miles when it reaches a point two miles below Phelps in Acheson county. There are 37.38 miles of this railroad within the limits of the county, and five stations. No money was ever voted by the county to aid in its construction. Good prospects exist for the building of other roads through the county; and within a few years railroad facilities will doubtless be increased.

CLIMATE.

The climate of Holt county will favorably compare for health with any portion of the Missouri valley. For two years and a half previous to July, 1876,

HISTORY OF HOLT COUNTY, MISSOURI.

HISTORIES OF TOWNSHIPS.

CLAY TOWNSHIP.

the death rate in a tract of country about Oregon was calculated to be 8.4 to the thousand—a rate remarkably low, the annual death rate of Philadelphia, one of the most favored of Eastern cities, being a fraction over twenty in each thousand of the population. In the period referred to twenty-two deaths occurred in a population of over one thousand, of which four resulted from accident, and two of the persons deceased were non-residents who died from diseases contracted elsewhere.

The average annual temperature, as shown by meteorological calculations made by William Kaucher at Oregon from data collected for twenty-one years ending with 1875 was 51.25°. In this period the coldest weather ever experienced was on the 18th of January, 1857, when the thermometer sank to 39° below zero. The warmest weather occurred on the 2nd of August, 1850, when the thermometer registered 108°. The first light frost generally falls from the middle to the last of September. For the last twenty-two years it fell the earliest (in 1855) on the 17th of August, and the latest (in 1866 and 1867) on the 19th of October. The first heavy frost, and the formation of ice, generally occur from the last week of the September to the middle of October. In the year 1865 there was no heavy frost till October 28th, and no ice formed that year till that date.

Near the last of October snow commonly falls. In 1855 the first snow was on the 4th of October, and in 1861 not till the 24th of November. The last heavy frosts are from the middle to the last of April. Very seldom, however, are fruits even when in full bloom, injured by these late frosts by reason of the unusual dryness of the atmosphere.

Judge R. H. Russell states that in October, 1838, before the leaves had fallen, a heavy wet snow fell, breaking down a large number of trees. The following winter was open and mild, and cattle subsisted on winter grass in the bottoms. John Gibson states that the winter of 1839-40 began with a snow storm about the 14th of November, and the weather grew exceedingly cold. Snow continued to fall at intervals all winter; six inches fell on the 2nd of April, 1840, but disappeared in a few days. The hill sides to the north along Kimsco creek did not thaw till the beginning of May. Samuel Watson, S. C. Collins, and B. F. Potter recollect that the fall of 1841 was unusually mild and pleasant, as was also the following winter. Cattle grazed on winter grass in the bottoms through the winter months. Old settlers state that snow began to fall November 11th, 1842, and continued to fall at intervals of a few days all through the winter. The average depth was from twelve to fifteen inches. In April, 1843, it went off with rain, producing great floods in the Missouri river and smaller streams. The June "rise" of 1843 was also very high and equal to the spring flood. The winter of 1843-44 was mild. The spring flood was very high, and the June rise of 1844 is famous as being the highest ever known, overflowing the bottoms, and has since had no parallel. The people in many parts of the bottom were forced to abandon their cabins and seek shelter on the high lands. The trees of the bottom for many years afterward bore the marks of this remarkable inundation, and many of the old settlers of the West have occasion to remember the "flood of '44."

The mean rain fall for the last twenty-one years and six months ending with 1876, has been 35.36 inches. The rain fall was greatest in 1859 when it reached 49.25 inches, and the least in 1860 when it was 23.12 inches. Average depth of snow fall 39.95 inches. The greatest depth of snow was in 1859, 58.5 inches; and the least 1875, 20.14 inches. In the rain fall mentioned the snow fall melted has been included.

Western Missouri, from the Northern boundary, is supposed, by some persons, like Kansas and Nebraska, to be subject to terrible drouths, that entirely destroy growing crops, and induce much suffering. No idea can be more mistaken. The drouth comes, but, strange as it may seem, NOT THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CROPS IN CONSEQUENCE. Here, notwithstanding the extreme dry weather, we have good corn crops. In 1840, it will be remembered, Kansas and Southwestern Missouri were visited with a drouth induced famine. Holt county, indeed the counties of the Platte Purchase—were subject to the same lack of rain, but produced more than enough corn for home consumption. Corn was planted that was not raised from the time it was planted until after it was in roasting ear, and YET MORE THAN AN AVERAGE HALF-CROP OF CORN WAS HARVESTED. Our farmers assert that with one good rain in May or June, and a light rain in August, they can make full average crops, although not another drop of rain falls. The same drouth that would leave Eastern States desolate would not be noticed here. It will be difficult to find, anywhere, a soil so capable of resisting the extremes of moisture as that of the counties of the Platte Purchase. In some of the Western States, every few seasons, wet weather comes in to destroy the harvests of the farmer. We are equally able to laugh at "wet seasons" as at dry—for our soil is so porous that whenever the rain ceases to fall, even for a few hours, we can start the plow.

GRASSHOPPERS. The first invasion of grasshoppers was on the 21st of September, 1866, when they came from the west, laid their eggs and died. The following spring grasshoppers hatched from the eggs in immense numbers, but as soon as they could fly went away, but were succeeded during the summer by another invasion from the west. These deposited large quantities of eggs which hatched out in the spring of 1868. This new breed left, and were again followed by others from the west. These in turn deposited eggs in large quantities which hatched out in the spring of 1869, and succeeded in doing considerable injury to crops, but were finally destroyed by a parasite with which they were infested. The fall of 1874 they visited the county, and laid eggs, that autumn destroyed all the fall wheat, and the following spring hatched out in such immense numbers that vegetation was entirely destroyed, and in the latter part of June, 1876, the fields of Holt county resembled a desert for barrenness and the absence of every green thing. On the disappearance of the insects the farmers began planting, and the remainder of the season was unusually favorably to the production of heavy crops. Corn planted as late as July 3d, made a good crop, and turnips grew in some cases to be ten to fourteen pounds in weight. The grasshoppers again made their unwelcome appearance in the fall of 1876, and deposited their eggs, most thickly in the northern part of the county, but at the date of this writing it is impossible to state the damage to be done in the spring of 1877.

INCREASE IN POPULATION AND WEALTH.

The population of the county in 1842 was about 500, and the number of votes cast 300. The United States and the state census reports for 1850, 1860, 1864, and 1870, show the following figures:

Population.	Votes For Congress.	Slaves.
1850 3,957	523	127
1860 6,550	1,202	309
1864 6,654	782	
1870 11,652	1,217	

It is believed that the population now amounts fully to 18,000. Below is given the valuation of real estate, personal property, and total tax each year for the last twenty-three years:

Years.	Value Per Prop.	Value Real Est.	Total Value.	Total Tax.
1853	\$139,704	\$147,200	\$286,904	\$1,084.59
1854	212,375	172,821	385,196	1,346.39
1856	159,803	460,993	620,796	1,767.98
1860	263,120	1,360,993	1,624,113	
1862	253,260	813,665	1,066,925	12,457.96
1863	142,065	721,630	863,695	6,105.21
1864	204,375	1,004,000	1,208,375	20,371.86
1865	299,045	867,610	1,166,655	
1866	376,625	906,115	1,272,740	25,377.68
1867	917,550	1,665,580	2,583,130	28,589.36
1868	903,690	2,092,271	2,995,961	35,355.95
1869	1,021,185	2,460,191	3,481,376	52,235.86
1870	1,247,200	2,789,419	4,036,619	85,446.29
1871	1,411,410	3,616,889	5,028,299	75,753.36
1872	1,325,203	2,225,203	3,550,406	49,857.85
1873	1,746,821	2,524,105	4,270,926	51,131.83
1874	1,291,541	2,509,310	3,800,851	54,199.68
1875	1,233,198	2,524,108	3,757,306	43,758.58
1876	1,421,915	2,329,135	3,751,050	39,586.04

The first settlers of the northeastern part of Holt county were Whigs, who with devotion to their party characteristic of the members of that once powerful organization, named the locality which they settled Whig valley, and the name of Clay was given to the township. The pioneer of Whig valley, was Theodore Higley, who in the year 1846 made the first settlement on the northeast quarter of the section eighteen, township 62, range 37. In 1848, about two years later, W. C. Higley returned from the Mexican war, and settled near his father. About the same time Thomas J. Evans settled on the northeast quarter of section nine in the same congressional township, but soon afterward sold to Joseph White. This place was long known as "White's ford" from a crossing on the Nodaway river at this point. About the year 1850, Charles Scholer settled on what has long been known as the Scholer farm, which occupies part of the southeast quarter of section sixteen, township 62, range 37. About the year 1852 William Montgomery McDonald came from Kentucky. The settlers previously mentioned were all from Indiana. From the last date mentioned on till 1860 several farms were improved, and Joseph White, John S. Peters, and David Bender from Indiana, and Lewis Garnett from Kentucky, John and William King, were early residents.

The first settlers were all Whigs, and making their home there at a period when the Whig party was at the height of its prosperity, they named a small portion of Clay township bordering on the Nodaway river, not more than two miles in extent from north to south by about the same distance from east to west, Whig valley. During the war most of the old settlers left; and the present population is mostly composed of settlers from Ohio, who form an intelligent, enterprising and thrifty part of the population of the county. The soil is extremely fertile, and the land of the county affords beautiful situations for farms which are among the best improved in the county. Whig Valley is the name of the post-office, and a town was laid out in the fall of 1876; and a store established. The first store in Whig valley was established in 1870 by E. A. Bennett and Bro., and stood on section nine of township 62, range 37. It was purchased by E. F. Weller, who in 1876 built the present store on the town site of Whig valley. A fine bridge crosses the Nodaway to the east. This is one of the finest agricultural portions of the county. The soil is extremely fertile, and the land of the county affords beautiful situations for farms which are among the best improved in the county.

KOSOKO is the post-office at King Grove in the northern part of Clay township near the county line. King Grove was the site of the earliest settlements in the extreme northern part of the township.

LIBERTY TOWNSHIP.

This township occupies the northern part of the county, and is almost entirely prairie. The extreme southwest corner of the township touches the bottom. Anderson McCoy about 1841 or 1842 settled near where Judge George P. Sheels now lives. A. Hobbittz lived there after McCoy. Robert Ross was the pioneer of the part of the township where he now lives, on section six of township 62, range 37. Spruce creek flows in a southwest direction through the township. It is said to derive its name from the tradition that an Indian squaw was once drowned in its waters.

UNION TOWNSHIP.

Sharpe's grove in this township is the oldest settled place in the northwest part of the county. W. A. and Abraham Sharpe came from Virginia in the fall of 1841, and settled in this locality north-west of the present town of Craig. Both are still living. Daniel Hogreffe arrived from Tennessee in 1842, and settled where he now lives three miles east of Craig. Jacob Rugh came from Pennsylvania in 1841, and settled in Sharpe's Grove; Robert Taylor, a Virginian, settled in Sharpe's Grove in 1842 and is still living there. The other early settlers of Sharpe's grove were Samuel Thompson, a man named McDonald who died long years ago, and Simon Parrish, Samuel Russell, and his father-in-law, named Hughes, were the first permanent settlers in the bottom in the southern part of Union township. The first farm along Little Tarkio going southeast along the bluff, was improved by Abner Norris who located there at a very early date. The farm was one of the first settled in that part of the county. Norris removed to Iowa. J. B. Wright first settled in the bottom and afterward became a resident of Sharpe's grove. There were no early settlers in the bottom in this township except in the neighborhood of old Marietta. MARIETTA was formerly a town along the Missouri, and contained a couple of stores and a steamboat landing. Barlow H. Lewis was one of the first settlers of Marietta, and came there about 1844. J. G. Lewis, his brother, arrived at the same time. William Parrent and Elisha Freeman settled in the vicinity of Marietta about 1844. RUST BERTON was also a post-office formerly in existence along the Missouri in this township.

For many years prior to the completion of the K. C., St. Joe & C. B. R. R., goods were hauled from St. Joseph to Council Bluffs and Omaha by wagons. The route usually traveled was from St. Joseph over the hills via Savannah, Fillmore and Hollister's mills to North Point, afterwards Mound City, whence the road followed the foot of the bluffs to the crossing of Little Tarkio, from which the road ran fair and true to the crossing of the Missouri at the foot of the bluff, passing, soon after leaving Little Tarkio, what was known far and near, as "The Big Spring," where every teamster halted to water his team and quench his own thirst. Near the spring, or rather at the crossing of Little Tarkio, where the State road branched off to Rock Port, there was established a trading post and post-office, named Tarkio. A heavy traffic in all kinds of goods was built up here by R. W. Francis, who was the last merchant of Tarkio. In 1870, Tarkio and the Big Spring were eclipsed, and the business of the former absorbed by the

TOWN OF CRAIG.

established by Christian Shults on the banks of Big Tarkio and a half mile west of the Big Spring. The town was laid out early in the year 1869, and was named in honor of Gen. James Craig the president of the St. Joseph and Council Bluffs railroad company. The town has grown rapidly. From its situation on the railroad at the point where the Little Tarkio enters the Missouri bottom, it is naturally the outlet for a large tract of upland country extending into Atchison county. It contains five general stores, all of which with one exception deal largely in grain; two large drug stores; boot and shoe store; harness shop; two blacksmith and wagon shops; two hotels; furniture establishment; lumber yard; dealer in stoves, tin ware, hardware and agricultural implements, &c., &c. An immense quantity of grain is shipped annually from this point; a large steam flouring mill is in successful operation, and Messrs. Johnston and Myers have the only elevator now in active use in the county. The benevolent orders are represented by Craig Lodge, No. 341, A. F. and A. M.; Craig Lodge, No. 211, I. O. O. F. and the Reform League.

LINCOLN TOWNSHIP.

This township occupies the extreme northwest part of the county. When Holt county was organized the county line extended from the residence of Henry Wallace on the Missouri river to the old crossing of Little Tarkio, and thus the present site of Cornsaw and Lincoln townships was included in the old Allen county, though under the jurisdiction of the Holt county court. Atchison county was subsequently organized in 1845, the name of Allen was discarded and the old county line was changed. It will thus be seen that the early settlers on the district of country now surrounding Cornsaw were mere wards of Holt county, and did not enjoy the full rights of citizens till the organization of Atchison county. The first settler of Lincoln township was John Henry Roselius, father of Henry Roselius, who made a settlement near the Missouri river on section 36, of township 63, range 41, where Henry Roselius now lives. Roselius was a German from the kingdom of Hanover, and he was soon followed by other settlers of the same class. Henry Dankers, (father of H. A. Dankers), Henry Peters, and Andrew Buck followed in the fall of 1841, and made settlements in the same locality. Roselius was on the ground the previous spring. John Ahrens came in 1843. Henry Hemme came in 1844, and Henry Evers the same year. Conrad H. Walter, the father of Fred. W. Walter, came in 1845, and settled on section 25, township 63, range 41, on a place now in the Missouri river. Henry Betram settled in the bottom near the river in 1846; James Thompson, 1847; Robert Hawke in 1848; and

Thomas Lowell in 1852. They all settled in the vicinity of Hemme's Landing. John H. Hogreffe is an old resident of the bottom, and in 1850 settled on the farm which he now owns. Harman Schulte was an early settler of the bottom in Lincoln township. The Jacob Volman farm, on Big Tarkio creek, is the oldest farm on this stream in Lincoln township, and was improved by Joseph Waits.

Henry Hemme, of the kingdom of Hanover, nearly two miles west of where Corning now stands, established the landing which was long afterwards known by his name, and where was soon after established one of the most important trading points between St. Joseph and Council Bluffs. David Greer was the first merchant at the Landing, and opened his store in 1845. He was succeeded in the same year by Henry Hemme, who, in 1847 was followed by Vernie Thompson. Thompson sold to Robert Hawke in 1848, and for more than ten years the Hawkes and Dillon carried on a heavy traffic, filling their shot bags with gold and silver, then almost exclusively the medium of exchange, if we do not take into consideration the wolf scalps and beaver, used by the tax collectors for small change. The Hawkes and Dillon having established themselves at Nebraska City, sold their stores at Hemme's Landing to Thompson, Roland & Co., who moved the goods to Rock Port in 1861. In 1849, Thomas & Lowell had established themselves in a storehouse further down the river. John F. Lowell succeeded to the business in 1851 and sold to J. F. Taylor and others of St. Detroit, who were in turn succeeded in 1862 by E. W. Holly, of St. Joseph. In 1864 Holly sold to Adrian Hobbittz & Sons. Conrad Grab in a short time after gained possession. When Grab came into possession, the encroachments of the river had driven occupants of buildings back from the landing towards the present site of Corning nearly three-fourths of a mile, and in the spring of 1869 he determined to pack up and leave for Corning, then just laid out by James F. Joy on the railroad. The settlers at the Landing do not seem to have been disturbed by the encroachments of the river until 1858, when the banks began to fall in rapidly, and at this time more than one mile of an advance eastward has been made by the river, and the old site of Hemme's Landing is now more than a half mile within the limits of Nebraska. Hemme's Landing at one time had two stores, two blacksmith shops, a wagon-making shop, and besides it was a post-office. It commanded the trade of a large scope of country.

CORNING.

Corning, the most northern town in Holt county, was laid out in the fall of 1868, and has since had a rapid and thrifty growth. Conrad Grab established the first store, and the next was started by the Sanders brothers and Mr. Farris. The town is situated at a favorable point for commanding a large trade, and there are a large number of business houses including two general stores; two drug stores; two blacksmith and wagon shops; two livery stables; lumber yard; boot and shoe, harness and furniture establishments; rope and wire factory, and saw mill and flouring mill. All the principal business houses buy grain, of which a large quantity is annually shipped. The first physician to locate in the town was Dr. Noel, and now a medical profession is represented by a number of members. There are two good school-houses, one German and one American. There are no church buildings but Methodist and Lutheran congregations. A meteorological observatory is kept by Horace Martin, who reports his observations to the Smithsonian Institute, and the Chief Signal Officer of the United States Army.

BIGELOW TOWNSHIP.

Joshua Kelso was one of the earliest settlers in the bottom in this township and located about a mile from the river. About the same time his step-father, Joseph Scott, settled in the same neighborhood. William and John Scott were the sons of Joseph Scott. Daniel David came from Switzerland county, Indiana, and settled on section three of township 61, range 40. Nelson Rodney, C. G. Hopkins, and a man named Galloway were early settlers. A man named Galloway made a settlement just west of Bigelow, and lived there till 1844, when he was driven off by the flood of that year, and never came back. A man named Morris settled two miles and a half south of Bigelow at an early date, and his family still live in the township. At an early date some traders located along the Missouri river, and dealt with the Indians. About 1852 Drury T. Easley and R. J. Poindexter started a store on the river bank, above Langdon's place, opposite Bigelow. The store was burned in 1857 or 1858. There were formerly a post-office kept at the same place called Olive Branch. Charles Mann came to the township in 1852 or 1853, and above where he now lives Mrs. White settled with her family in 1850 or 1851. In 1858 J. W. Bridgeman settled where he now lives on section seventeen, township 61, range 39. J. Q. Shepherd came to the township in the fall of 1856, and has since resided near Bigelow.

This is the only township in the county entirely composed of bottom land. From Big Tarkio west to the Missouri river this bottom was formerly covered by a dense growth of rushes. The farmers of Holt and adjoining counties were accustomed to bring their cattle here and keep them through the winter on the rushes; the cattle, the following spring, would be in good order. A great fire subsequently swept through the bottom, destroying the rushes which never afterward grew to such an extent as to afford sustenance to any considerable amount of stock.

BIGELOW.

Was laid out in October, 1868, and as the rich and productive bottom becomes settled up in the future it will be of considerable importance. The adjacent country is as fertile as any portion of the West, and by a moderate expenditure in the way of drainage is capable of a development which will make it one of the finest agricultural districts in the state. Bigelow has several stores and business houses. It is distant three miles and a half from Mound City, of which it is the railroad station, and is also the nearest point on the railroad to Whig Valley, to the northwest portion of the Nodaway county including the town of Bigelow, and to the town of Palo in Nebraska. There are several very large mills in the neighborhood, and an immense amount of lumber is cut yearly. A number of shingle machines are also in operation in the vicinity.

BENTON TOWNSHIP.

John M. Blair, the first settler of Benton township, reached section 20, township 61, range 38, (the place where he made his settlement) on the 12th day of April, 1839. Blair was originally from Indiana; in 1827 he moved to Pike county, Illinois; in 1833 to Iowa; from there back to Pike county, Illinois, and in the spring of 1839 he emigrated to the Platte Purchase. He erected, in 1840, the first frame house ever built in Holt county, which, in a rejuvenated condition, is still standing, and occupied by James Blair. John M. Blair died on Carson river, at the foot of the Sierra Nevada mountains, in 1849, while on his way to California. His sons, James and Uriah Blair, are still residing in the township, the former on the place where the family originally settled. The Baldwins followed the Blairs. They were from Indiana and arrived in the fall of 1839. Jeremiah Baldwin settled where he still lives. Daniel Baldwin made a settlement in the bottom along the edge of the bluff about a mile below John M. Blair. The fall of 1839, John Hughes came from Illinois, and settled what is known as the Poik place, where Washington Hutson now resides. His son, John Hughes, settled the Kinney farm. In the spring of 1840 Judge John Kinsey came from Clay county, Missouri, and bought the improvement of John Hughes, Jr., and lived there till 1846, when he removed to Oregon. He was judge of county court of Holt county. John Cahill, a man named Mobley, and one by the name of Decker, all three unmarried, on coming to the county, settled in 1840, about a mile northwest of Mound City. Either in 1840 or 1841, Thomas Ferguson settled at the point of the bluff where Jacob Groshock now lives, just south of the town limits of Mound City. Ferguson lived there two or three years and then sold his place to Andrew P. Jackson. A post-office was established at this place called Jackson's Point, and the foundation laid for the future Mound City.

Jeremiah Bond, about 1840, settled the place where Jacob Mosher now lives. He brought a large number of hogs from Clay county which all went wild, and scattered through the bottom. Edward Dodge, in 1842, settled on the farm now owned by Cummins Porter. John Hughes, Jr., in 1842, began improving the farm of E. J. Steele, northwest of Mound City. George Gillis, about 1844, settled the farm which he still owns to the north of Mound City. A family by the name of Browning settled on section 19, township 62, range 38, where Mrs. Browning and her son James still reside. The farm of Ed. Gillis was first settled in 1848 or 1849, by William Marshall, who subsequently dis-

HISTORY OF HOLT COUNTY, MISSOURI.

posed of the property to a man named Brown. Mrs. Ellison, in 1841, settled where her son, Leander Ellison, now lives. David Worsham, about 1841, located on Davis's creek, south-east of Mound City. Davis's creek was so named from a man named Davis—the earliest settler on it.

MOUND CITY.

The locality now known as Mound City, was located at an early day, and has long been of great importance in a business sense. In 1840, a man by the name of Thomas Ferguson, came here and settled on the south side of Davis's Creek. In 1844 he sold the place to Andrew P. Jackson, from whom it received the name of Jackson's Point, which name continued to apply to the region of country where Davis's Creek enters the Missouri bottom for a number of years afterward. The old Lackey road which was a continuation of the road from Savannah through Fillmore, in the direction of Council Bluffs, entered the bottom here and passed up under the bluffs to the northwest. The stages from Oregon on the great mail route from St. Joseph to Council Bluffs, made Jackson's Point one of their principal stations, and freighters over the Lackey road all stopped here, making it one of the most desirable locations for profit in the upper country.

In 1857, the property having previously passed into the hands of Wm. A. Jones, a merchant of Oregon, a town was laid out on the north side of Davis's Creek, embracing a portion of the present site of Mound City. The name was changed to North Point; a post-office was established under the same name, but in the spring of the following year, the property, having passed into the hands of Galen Crow and his associates, the Mound City Town Company was formed. The old town of North Point was enlarged by the addition of more lots and blocks. The name Mound City was suggested by the mound-like appearance of the Missouri river bluffs of that vicinity.

Several stores were soon established, a mill was built, and many other improvements were made, and soon the growth of the place indicated the importance in its location that began to attract persons from all parts of the country; but the financial crisis of 1857 began to exert its influence and checked the growth of the place, and the war coming on soon after, it sunk into insignificance.

It was not until 1870, when John H. Glenn, of Whig Valley, secured a controlling interest in the town that it revived sufficiently to encourage people to improve again. In 1871 there has been a steady and healthful growth, and the town now presents a very promising appearance. A school house, containing four rooms, has been built at a cost of \$5,000. A church costing \$2,500, two steam flouring mills with five run of stones and a grinding capacity of three hundred and fifty sacks of flour, and seven hundred and fifty bushels of corn meal every twenty-four hours; besides several very good storehouses and a large number of fine dwellings, have been built by the business men and citizens of the town. Good roads lead from the town in all directions. To Oregon is twelve and a half miles; to Forest City about the same distance; Craig, nine miles northwest; Bigelow, nearly four miles a little south of west, is reached by a graded road, which, being composed of the rich, black bottom soil, is not yet in complete order for teaming, but when improved by the transport of a couple of feet of the bluff soil, will make an excellent outlet for the produce collected here.

Among the early business men of Mound City were Galen Crow, afterwards Sheriff and Representative in the Legislature. He followed Claib Jackson as a member of the Lower House, to Arkansas, and is now a resident of Austin, Texas. He was a man who stood high in the estimation of the people as a business man and citizen.

John B. McAllister, of Oregon, who at one time had more branch business houses than any other man above the Nodaway, established a store here before the effects of the financial crisis of 1857 began to influence business in northwest Missouri. The stringency of the times caught him with "too many irons in the fire," and the result was disastrous failure.

In 1871, Henry Kunkel, in prospecting for coal, on the north branch of Davis's Creek, about two miles northeast of Mound City, encountered a stream of water, forty-one feet from the surface, which flowed out at the top of the ground, and on further examination, proved to be a mineral water, possessing great remedial properties. The Kunkel springs, as the place was soon after called, became the resort of invalids and pleasure-seekers from long distances. Many invalids of long standing received permanent relief by imbibing the waters of this new celebrated locality. The property is now owned by John W. Ogle, who has, at considerable expense, built a large hotel, and otherwise improved the place so visitors may be comfortably entertained at all times.

About two years ago, some men, in endeavoring to find the same, or one similar to the streams which flowed out at Kunkel's, discovered what they thought to be a thick seam of coal at the depth of about seventy-four feet from the surface, and at once measures were adopted to sink a shaft, but, encountering large quantities of water, they were forced to abandon the proper means to remove it. A year ago, Gen. George H. Hall, of St. Joseph, took hold of the matter, secured a fund for prosecuting the work, procured suitable machinery and went to work, but, the extraordinary amount of water flowing in at a depth of about ninety feet, compelled him to abandon the effort, and since then no effort has been made to give the question of the existence of coal at Mound City a practical solution.

Mound City is an active business point, and contains four general stores; two drug stores; two flouring mills; jewelry and watchmaking; lumber yards; brickyards; dealers in hardware, agricultural implements, stoves and tinware; groceries and confectionery; harness and saddles; three physicians; seven lawyers; with the usual complement of blacksmiths, wagon makers, and men engaged in the ordinary mechanical employments.

HICKORY TOWNSHIP.

Nickell's Grove, including about thirty square miles of territory and the seat of the earliest settlements in this part of the county, is partly embraced in Hickory township. Robert Nickell and John Nickell settled here in 1835, and gave their name to the grove. Among the early settlers of the grove in Hickory township were Thomas S. Briggs, who came in 1846, and settled on section 32, of township 61, range 37, where he now resides; Peter Long, who came from Ohio, and settled on the present farm of William Shields; Isaac Massie, who located on section 31; Daniel Hudson, who came from Kentucky in 1846, and likewise settled on section 31; and John B. Ish, who came from Saline county. In 1846 there was no settlement north of the Ish farm till Whig Valley was reached. Anderson Hall and E. C. Owens came soon after the Nickells. Owens was from Kentucky, and Hall from Virginia. The farm of Thomas S. Bragg was first settled by Hiram Shurtzer about the year 1843. Henry Debolt came to this township about 1853. The Lackey road, which ran through Hickory township, was that part of the main traveled highway which led from North Point (now Mound City) to Lackey's ferry on the Nodaway, and was a part of the great thoroughfare leading from St. Joseph to Council Bluffs. Lackey's ferry was established by Andrew Lackey, and has since been called the Thrailkill ferry, and now is known as the Praisewater ferry. Lackey afterward located a short distance below the ferry, and established a trading post and saloon which was frequented by nearly all the trappers who ranged through the upper country. Myrland and James Debolt, William Nolan, John, Joseph and Noble Hodgins, Robert Morris, and Capt. Peter Price, are present old settlers of this township.

NEW POINT

was originally called Grant. The first house was built in 1869 by L. D. Barnes, who conceived the idea that a store at the crossing of the Whig Valley and Lackey roads, a short distance below the junction of the two main branches of Nickell's creek, would be a good institution. He purchased a small lot of ground and built a store house. In a short time others were attracted to the place; a blacksmith, a wagon-maker and a physician were added

to the population. These came not by the slow process of natural increase, but suddenly as though impressed with the notion that Mr. Barnes had located in the right spot. The town was called Grant in honor of President Grant. The town has since had a prosperous growth, and now has several stores and business houses. Some fine farms are in the neighborhood. It is proposed to erect a Presbyterian church at this point during the year 1877.

NODAWAY TOWNSHIP.

Frank Nickell and L. W. Jones settled a dispute occasioned by their conflicting claims for the same piece of land in Nickell's Grove, in 1843, by fighting a duel with fists. Seconds were chosen, a ring was formed, there being about two hundred persons in attendance, and the contestants commenced the battle. They were men nearly equally matched, and for a considerable time it was uncertain which would conquer, but finally Jones cried "enough" and Nickell took the claim. Nodaway was one of the two original townships into which the county was divided.

The first settlement in the present Nodaway township was made by Robert Nickell, in 1838 or 1839. Oakley Morris came in 1840, A. C. Bevan, in 1841; both settled in Nickell's Grove. The Toole ferry, afterward called the Rapids ferry, was the first ever established in the county. In 1845, Jacob Gingersy, Michael T. Simmons, and Barney Harper were authorized by act of legislature to build a dam across the Nodaway river, in the southwest quarter of section 11, township 60, range 37. This property was known for many years as "Hollister's Mills." A. G. Hollister was the owner; from 1862 to 1866 he was a member of the legislature; he was a member of the famous committee of seventy sent to Washington to secure a more radical policy in the conduct of the war in Missouri; for the last three or four years Hollister has been a resident of Santa Barbara, California. Hollister's Mills were burned down by an incendiary a few years before the war. The mill has been rebuilt, and is now in successful operation. A bridge was built by private enterprise at this place about the beginning of the war. This was the first bridge on the Nodaway in Missouri. The Nodaway river was declared a navigable stream about 1840 by the Legislature. Anemuel's mill, on the south branch of Nickell's creek, is the site of Henry Kunkel's saw mill, built nearly twenty-five years ago.

RICHVILLE

occupies a beautiful location, but its proximity to Oregon has robbed it of many business advantages. It is surrounded by an intelligent and prosperous population. It was laid out by James M. Templeton, in 1855. A church building was erected by the Baptists before the war, but has since passed into the hands of the Methodists.

LEWIS TOWNSHIP.

When the county was organized it was originally divided into two townships—Lewis and Nodaway. The first court was held in Lewis township on the farm of John Thorp, section 12, township 69, range 38. Among the early settlers of this township were Samuel Watson and Henry Watson, who came from Wayne county, Indiana, in the spring of 1841; Daniel Sykes, Morgan county, Indiana, 1841; Roland Barnett, from Kentucky, 1839; John Gibson, England, 1839; John Stephenson, Parke county, Indiana, 1840; J. F. Worley, Indiana, 1840; Felix Fraley, Germany, 1843; Daniel Hahn, Ohio, 1841; A. Bumier, 1844; John W. Kelly, Virginia, 1844; William Banks, Ireland, 1841; H. Pinkston, 1842; and Joseph Martin, Virginia, 1846. The Meyer family first settled in this township on coming to the county, two miles northwest of Oregon, where Christian and William Meyer now live. Andrew Meyer was the father, and the children were Martin, Andrew, John, Anna Mary, George, Christopher, Jacob, Gottlieb and William. Jacob is deceased, but all the others are living in the county, and have been among its best citizens. James Scott, now living in Nodaway township, came to the county in 1842 with his mother, and settled three miles and a half north of Oregon. Daniel Sykes started the first still-house in the county, which stood on the farm where Lawson Sykes now lives. The most remarkable spring in the county as far as volume of water is concerned, is Bank's spring, flowing from the rocks at a point of the bluffs two miles southwest of Oregon.

OREGON.

The site of the present town of Oregon was selected as the county-seat directly after the organization of the county, by John A. Williams, Edward Smith and Travis Findley, commissioners. The commissioners had named it "Findley," but the name was subsequently changed to "Oregon," and was so called on the records of the county court for the first time, November 21st, 1841. John Flury was appointed the first county-seat commissioner. The first survey of lots was made in the west half of the town, and the first sale of lots took place on the 21st and 22d of October, 1841. The first house was built in the spring of 1842; and in August, 1842, the county court assembled for the first time in the court-house, built on the site now occupied by W. H. Stierrett. A square, comprising about two acres and a quarter, was reserved for public buildings, on which afterward was erected the present court-house and jail. In 1853 the improvement of the court-yard was begun. Under the direction of E. Van Baskirk, court-yard commissioner, the grounds were set in blue grass and planted with very variety of trees indigenous to the soil and climate. In 1874 there were two hundred and forty trees in all, embracing thirty-two different kinds. A lovely park has thus been wisely formed.

The town has a beautiful location on the high ground, or divide, between the waters of two streams, at an elevation of about one thousand one hundred feet. William Zook was the first merchant, and brought the first goods to the town a short time before it was laid out. For upwards of fifteen years it was the most important trading point above the Nodaway. After the removal of the county seat of Atchison county, from Linden to Rockport, the latter grew to be a place of considerable business importance, and cut off a large part of the up-country trade from Oregon. The growth of the surrounding country was, however, so rapid that the business of the town suffered no diminution, but increased rapidly. Among the former business men of the town who afterward became prominent in other localities were the following: William Zook, the first merchant, afterward president of the Colman bank of St. Joseph, and interested in one of the leading packing houses of that city; Gen. James Craig, who once practiced law here, and is now a resident of St. Joseph; Patrick McLaughlin, subsequently a leading business man of St. Joseph; the Tooles, Messrs. Nave and McCord, Turner and Frazer, B. B. Frazer, John Ovelman and Hiram Patterson, all since leading wholesale merchants of St. Joseph; Paris Plouffe, wholesale grocer of St. Louis; Samuel Wood, a leading lawyer of Montana; J. H. Utz, and James Lehmer of White Cloud, Kansas; Dr. H. W. Peter of Memphis, Tennessee; R. L. Hatten of Denver; C. W. Bowman of Los Animas; and John Thatcher of Pueblo, Colorado. Many of the surrounding towns in Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska were founded by men from Oregon, among them Forest City, Mound City and White Cloud, Kansas. Brownville, Nebraska, was named in honor of Richard Brown formerly of Oregon.

There are five churches—Presbyterian, Methodist Episcopal, German Methodist Episcopal, Christian and Colored Baptist. The grounds and buildings of the Holt County Mechanical and Agricultural Association adjoin the town. Two excellent newspapers are published—the *Holt County Sentinel*, an influential journal, Republican in politics; and the *Holt County Press*, a Democratic paper which has grown rapidly in popularity. The Northwest Missouri Normal School is located here, and occupies a large and handsome brick building, completed in 1873, at a cost, including grounds and furniture, of twenty-two thousand dollars. This institution furnishes facilities for instruction of the highest order. The secret and benevolent societies are well represented, and include Lodges of Masons, Odd Fellows, Good Templars, and a Woman's Union. The legal and medical professions are filled by able members; there is a bank, with one exception the only one in the county, and a large number

of stores and business houses under the management of enterprising business men.

Among many other incidents which might be recorded in reference to the history of the town is the following:

July 8th, 1851, while a party composed of "Buck" or Daniel Sykes, then about seventeen years of age, Frank Pollock, James Fortune, John Job and James Thorpe, and a hostler and an Englishman whose names are now unknown, were in the bar-room of Pollock's hotel (which stood on the northwest corner of the public square on the site now occupied by Peter & Chadwick's store) the building was struck by lightning at about eight o'clock in the evening during a severe storm which prevailed. The lightning struck the southeast corner of the room, ran along the wall to the northeast corner, and there exploded a barrel of brandy, one of alcohol and one of bourbon whiskey. The flaming contents of the barrels instantly flooded the room, enveloping in flames all the occupants. Job was standing at the time near the corner, and was knocked down by the concussion and burned entirely up, nothing but his skull and a few scattering pieces of bone being afterwards recovered. Fortune and Pollock were badly burned, the former dying before daylight and the latter at sunrise. The hostler died in about seven days, and Thorpe a day or two after. The Englishman also died. The only one who recovered was "Buck" Sykes. Standing near the window at the time, he was completely terrified by the instantaneous and powerful results of the stroke, but retained enough presence of mind to dash out the window sash, and jump through to the outside. Thoroughly frightened, he started on a run for home, five miles and a half distant. The rain was falling in torrents, but the flames from his burning clothes were not extinguished when he reached Mill Creek, three quarters of a mile southeast of town. He plunged into the mill pond, then in existence and waded through to the opposite side, putting out the fire completely. He was burned terribly, and was confined to his bed for eight weeks. He recovered, and is still living in Forbes township, but retains to this day the traces of the terrible occurrence.

FOREST CITY.

In the year 1857, a company of enterprising gentlemen purchased a tract of land on the west boundary of Holt County, adjoining the Missouri river, for the purpose of laying out a town site. Roads were already in existence leading from the point selected in all directions and to every important settlement in the county. These roads in connection with the Missouri river which here afforded a good landing, led the company to expect that their town, once started, would soon control a large portion of the produce trade of the county. With this view the tract of land was surveyed and the first lot sale took place on the 15th day of May, 1857. Forest City was in existence—stores and dwellings sprung up rapidly, and the expectations of the company were more than realized. Forest City became at once the mart for the principal part of the produce of the county. Hundreds of wagons brought in the hemp and corn raised in every neighborhood, and no obstacle seemed likely to prevent Forest City from becoming one of the leading trading centers in Northwest Missouri. The brilliant prospects of the town were destroyed by the breaking out of the war of the rebellion. The completion of the Kansas City, St. Joseph and Council Bluffs railroad caused a revival in trade, and the town has since had a prosperous growth. Among the citizens of the town who afterward became leading residents of St. Joseph, were Hiram Patterson, William Zook, J. W. Zook, B. E. Turner, J. M. Frazer and J. S. Brittain. Forest City was formerly situated on the bank of the Missouri river, but a sudden change in 1867, in the course of that stream, placed the main channel on the west side of Rush Island, or down the old Indian chute, leaving the town about three miles inland. There is now only a slough where once floated the proudest steamers. The place is a good business point, and contains business houses sufficient for carrying on the large trade which it commands. There are a number of religious organizations, and a school-house which is an ornament to the town. With the exception of the one at Oregon, Forest City contains the only bank in the county.

FORBES TOWNSHIP

Contained the earliest settlements in the county. Blank and Peter Stephenson, the first pioneers, settled on section 7, of township 59, range 37. They were from Parke county, Indiana. John Baldwin, in the fall of 1839, came from Parke county, Indiana, and settled on section 18, of same congressional township. George McIntyre came from Parke county, Indiana, fall of 1839, and settled on section 5, where he now lives. Smith McIntyre came at the same time and settled in the same section. John Stephenson came to the county in 1840, and settled on section 7, and is still living in the township. The widow Jackson and family came in the spring of 1840, and settled on section 5, on a farm now owned by Judge McIntyre. John M. Briggs came from Tennessee in the spring of 1840, and located in the northeast part of the township; he was justice of the peace for a number of years, and a good citizen. The first store ever started in the county was established by George and Augustus Borchers, in the fall of 1840, on the south line of section 7. The Borchers were the first Germans to make their home in the county. George is dead, and Augustus is living at Hamburg, Iowa. In 1841 settlers began to come in rapidly, and among them were J. S. Pierce and his sons, Charles, Lorenzo and Silas, from Maryland; and Valentine Worley, from Morgan county, Indiana. Robert Patterson came in 1843.

The Nodaway river which forms the eastern boundary of the township was declared a navigable stream, by act of legislature, about 1840. A chute is formed by the Nodaway river and an arm of the Missouri, on the east side of Nodaway Island, and steamers frequently plied on this till steamboating was superseded by railroads. The steamer Watson, of St. Joseph, running between that city and Omaha, was sunk in the Nodaway chute ten or twelve years ago. The bell of the boat now belongs to the Christian church, at Oregon. A steamboat was built about 1865 on the Nodaway, near the State ferry, by Richard Danelsbeck. It was designed to run between points below Hollister's Mill and St. Joseph, as a wood boat. It proved a financial failure to the owner, and was abandoned.

DALLAS.

On the Missouri river, and Kansas City, St. Joseph and Council Bluffs railroad, was laid out in 1848, by Abraham Brown, and contained twenty-three blocks of four lots each. Two streets ran parallel to the river. For a time the town flourished. For several years it was the landing for most of the goods shipped to and from Oregon. But the country inland being very hilly, shippers sought other points; the place was finally abandoned, and not a vestige now remains. Abraham Brown, the original proprietor of the town, planted the first orchard ever set out in the county, on the farm now occupied by F. W. Honnen, in the eastern part of Forbes township. He brought grafts from Tennessee, and grafted on crab apple sprouts. The town of West Union was laid out near Dallas, in 1844, and it was thought at one time that it would develop into a place of importance, but it is now numbered among the things of the past.

FORBES.

Twenty miles from St. Joseph, was laid out by Levi Deourse, in 1869. It is on the Kansas City, St. Joseph and Council Bluffs railroad, where Elm Grove creek enters the Missouri river bottom. Cordwood, railroad ties, fence posts and blackberries have been important items in its trade. The largest blackberry region of the upper country is in its vicinity, and thousands of dollars' worth of berries have been shipped annually. It is adjacent to one of the finest fruit-growing districts in Missouri.