

Sec.

MADISON COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

P. O. Box 1031

Norfolk, Nebraska 68702-1031

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1ST QUARTER

ESTABLISHED JUNE, 1973

Meeting date and time - 3rd Tuesday of each month not including December
7:30 p.m. - First Baptist Church - 404 Benjamin Ave., Norfolk, NE.

OFFICERS: President - Lottie Klein V. President - Harold Lyon
Secretary - Dee Sewell Treasurer - Donald and Dorothy Munson
Newsletter editors - Joyce Borgelt and Jeanne Allison

DUES: Due September 1 of each year
\$6.00 for individual or \$8.00 per couple

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

It is hard to concentrate on genealogy during these colorful and lovely Autumn days.

Special thanks to all the members of our genealogy society who contributed food and crafts to be sold and managing the booths at the Charity Bazaar held October 5th at Sunset Plaza.

The last National Genealogical Society Quarterly had a very interesting and informative article about adventurous Americans who settled in Australia prior and during the Civil War Era. Now many of these decedents are searching for information of their American ancestors and Americans too are searching for names and information of their transplanted ancestors.

May each of you have a great Autumn season, a happy Thanksgiving Day with family and a joyful and blessed Christmas season.

Sincerely,

Lottie Klein

Lottie Klein

HALLOWEEN



DUES ARE DUE



Thanksgiving

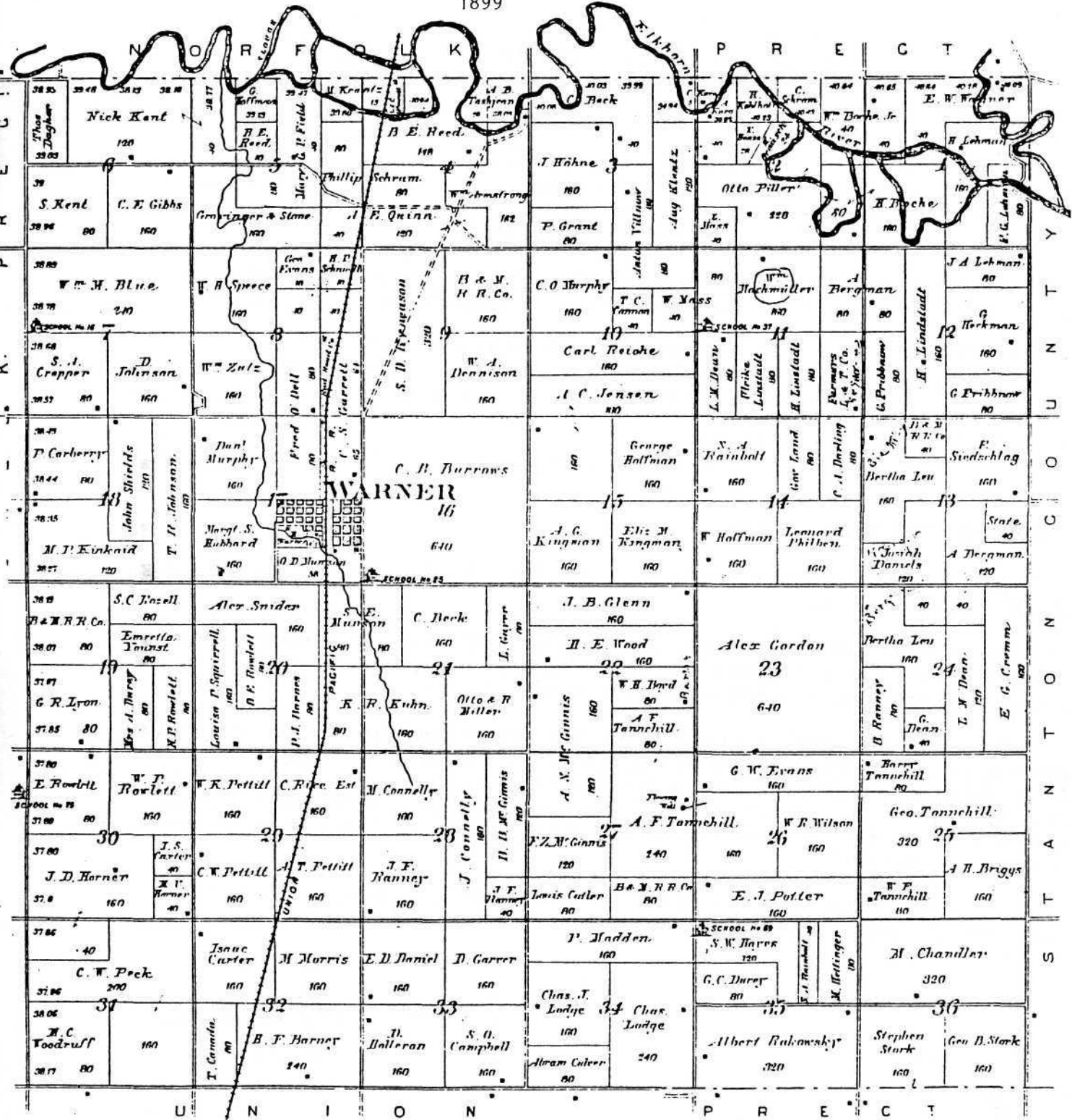
PLAT OF

WARNERVILLE

Scale 2 Inches to the Mile.

Township 23 North, Range 1 West.
1899

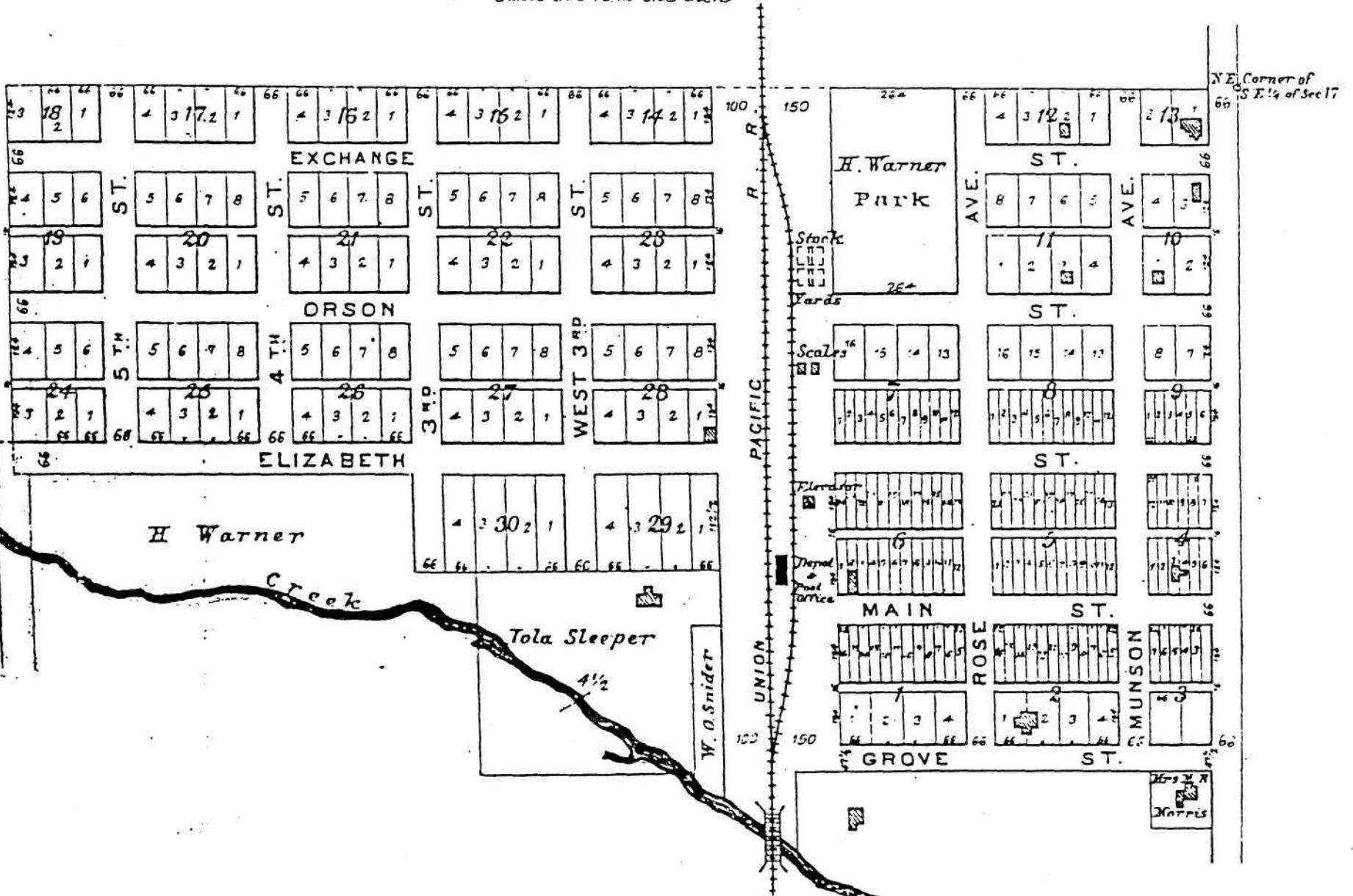
of the 6th Principal Meridian.



WARNER

LOCATED IN WARNERVILLE PRCT.

Scale 300 ft. to one inch



WARNERVILLE'S BACKGROUND

May 14, 1876 - Orson Munson purchased 160A through Homestead Act of 1862- Sec 17 which includes Warnerville.

Sep 12, 1877 - Henry A. Munson purchased 80A - Sec 21 (south of Warnerville School) and Sec 20 (west of Warnerville School).

1879 - Union Pacific RR branch line was built through the area.

Feb 28, 1884 Atlas shows Dist. 25 School house at present location near Munson.

June 11, 1887 - Hiram H. Warner bought elevator and creamery from Munsons and changed name of Munson to Warnerville.

1887 - H. H. Warners moved to Warnerville in the spring and into their home that fall in September.

March 16, 1888 - W. K. Pettitts moved by train from Axtell, Kans. to the Warnerville area.

1888-89 - Pettitts probably did not have barn ready to board Clara Cropper, first teacher of Warnerville school.

1889-90 - Clara Cropper did board with Pettitts

1892 - Pettitts house built

x x x x x

WARNERVILLE once a flourishing village was established by Hiram Warner, who came here from New York in 1867. In the early 1890's Warnerville went through the boom period and had about 50 buildings. It sought to attract industries and had hopes of growing into a city. After the collapse of the boom most of the buildings were moved away.
--From Nebraska State Names

x x x x

Munson Post office established January 12, 1880; name changed to Hiram June 2, 1887. Origin of name not known.

HIRAM Post office name changed from Munson June 2, 1887; name changed to Warnerville June 11, 1887. Origin of name not known.

WARNERVILLE Peak population (1910) 67; Post office changed from Hiram June 11, 1887; discontinued Nov 30, 1917. Former town named in honor of H. Warner settler who operated a store and elevator for many years.--From Perkey's Nebraska Place Names.

x x x x

The following information was gathered by a Committee of School mothers and local residents doing the History of Warnerville School Dist 25 in May 1990. This celebrated the 117th anniversary of the school. Mr. and Mrs. Warner Dale have a large scrap book and donated much information. Mabel Pettitt Huggens donated a copy of her scrapbook.

WARNERVILLE

The district known as Warnerville was organized in 1873, the precinct being: Sec 17, Township 23 North, Range 1 West, Madison County, NE. The town rose up from the prairie in the late 1800's, prospered for a time, and returned to its rural status. The life of this small village was short, but the memories remain still. Warnerville grew despite the nearness of Norfolk for a time. "Others began to settle nearby and it (Warnerville) soon grew into a prosperous village. Warnerville in the early nineties boasted of the Good Samaritan Hotel, a canning factory, several general stores, a large church, drug store, land office, railway station, lumber and coal yards and a hardware store."

For many years Warnerville wasn't much more than a wide spot in the road. When Hiram Warner and his family arrived here, the town itself, then called Munson, was unpopulated. The area so intrigued Mr. Warner, that he began establishing himself and his knowledge of business in the small town. By 1896, Hiram had platted the town into 30 city blocks and a provision was made in each bill of sale that if any liquor was sold on the land, the title would revert back to the founder.

Farmers in the community had already adapted to the toughness of prairie life. "Antelope Run, the creek that runs through Warnerville, was in early days a swail which was heavily sodded but was not boggy, although water was always in evidence. A man was hired to open up the swail and with a dredging machine to which ten yoke (20 Oxen) were hitched, he began at the south end of the Munson place and made a ditch four feet wide and three deep."

Several alumni of District 25 recall the varied uses of Antelope Run. In the winter, students were dismissed for recess and were allowed to cross the road, slip under the fence, and continue down to the creek where they would slide on the ice until their teacher would summon them back to the classroom by ringing the school bell. In the summer, several of the local boys would dam the creek and allow it to flood a small pond where they would swim. This worked for a while until someone farther downstream began running short of water for their cattle.

Warnerville was a close-knit family community. The school and church were important parts of rural life, and never more so than in this small town. During even the busiest summer months, boys would congregate in Terry's pasture southwest of the school to play baseball on Sunday afternoons. I heard they were fairly good, partially because they often times played for five gallons of ice cream.

"On September 12, 1894, a frost came and destroyed several hundred acres of ripe tomatoes that were ready to be used in the canning factory. This was the start of the trend backward." Hiram Warner, seeing the trend of affairs bought much of the land and converted it into a large farm. Some say there were many reasons Warnerville could not remain. "Man with his means of improvement sought to make a thriving metropolis of Warnerville, but due to it's nearness to Norfolk, the introduction of the automobile, and modern means of transportation, the embryo city went back to a rural community."

In a 1972 article from the Norfolk Daily News (page 11) remembering Warnerville, the author states that Warnerville is one of over 900 extinct towns in Nebraska, along with such as Emerick, Kalamazoo, Peck, South Norfolk, Haymow, Copenhagen, Vim, Weber, and Mars. "To them, it is not a name of an old map, but a people and a way of life. It is a pleasant memory nourished by such things as a 100-year old label, carefully preserved, reading "Warnerville Tomatoes."

Warnerville was not an all-business farm community. There were pranks played, especially at Halloween one year when a group of boys who will remain nameless for now (but we know who they were) lifted a cow into a hayloft by means of a pulley and a length of rope. Imagine the farmer's surprise to awaken to the sound of a cow's mooing coming from the highest part of his barn. There was also a time in 1914 when the newspaper carried this local note: "R. M. Terry's buggy was taken from his premises Halloween and drawn to a hill near his house. A robe was in some manner lost from the vehicle, and the owner would be glad of its return. He has no feeling against the boys who carried away the buggy, but naturally would like to recover the lost property."

As in any lifetime, there are trials and tribulations, but the people of Warnerville held fast to one another and helped each other to weather the storm. The friendships were lasting and strong, and although the town itself no longer stands, the fierce protection of it's memory will endure for centuries.

"Farmers in the vicinity of Warnerville have finished threshing for the season and, according to one, have stored the tinker toy until next season." --Warnerville Waves.

POST OFFICE

In 1880, before Munson had been renamed Warnerville, the town was recognized by the postal service. The post office originally was part of the Munson's home then moved to the depot, and finally to Sleeper's General Store.

After 37 years of serving the community, the post office was closed on November 30, 1917. After that date, mail was processed through Norfolk. The following information was obtained from the United States Postal Service in Norfolk:

"In 1880 the name of the town was Munson, NE, and the first postmaster was Joseph W. Strich. He was appointed Nov. 12, 1880. Andrew McGinnis was the second postmaster and appointed May 24, 1883. Mitch R. Morris was the third postmaster, appointed Dec. 27, 1886. On June 2, 1887, Munson, NE, was renamed Hiram. Nine days later, on June 11, the town was renamed Warnerville. Mr. Morris retained the postmaster position. The fourth postmaster was Augustas M. Geyer. The fifth postmaster was June Powell. she being appointed Dec 17, 1893. The last postmaster was Orin A. Sleeper, appointed Oct 7, 1895. He remained until the post office closed on Nov. 30, 1917."

DISTRICT 25 SCHOOL

"When Warners arrived, only the school land was fenced, other land being grazed by milk cattle which were in some cases herded by children and at other times allowed to roam until someone in the family went for them in the evening." Today, District 25 schoolhouse is the only remaining landmark of Warnerville. This building, to the best of our knowledge, is the fourth since 1873 to serve as school to this community. The Warnerville school has taken many shapes and locations over the years since it was first established. From the earliest information, the school was first built 1 3/4 miles south and a mile west of its present location. As E. C. Warner recalled: "It (the school) formerly stood on the northwest corner a mile further south. Amidst rather heated feelings, a vote was taken to move the building to the present site, but before it could be moved, someone touched a match to it and so a new two-room structure was built."

The two-room school was set on to a basement foundation in its present location in 1890. The basement of the school served the community as an auditorium, the north end being the bleachers and the stage at the south end. There was also a cook stove in the basement later on to aid in the preparation of hot meals.

The decision to move the school at one time was not an easily reached decision. One story was that two opposing facets of the school board had reached a stalemate as to where the new building would be located. One evening a team of horses was used to move the building, thus settling the argument.

Another story involving the school took place one Halloween night. Upon returning to school on Nov. 1, the students and teacher were surprised to find a buggy atop the schoolhouse. The boys were instructed by the teacher to go up to the roof, dismantle the buggy, and return it to the ground piece by piece. The boys, laughing, agreed this would be much more fun than attending class, so they went to work. After they had completed reassembling the buggy, they were informed that the day had been spent in good fun, but all school work missed that day would be made up on the following Saturday.

The school was the center of entertainment for Warnerville. Mr. Paul Terry tells us that during the long winter months, there were plays or other social functions at the school twice a month. This helped to break up the monotony of long, cold winter nights before television. Families would often take turns preparing the next evening of entertainment after seeing a neighbor's production. Some of the plays performed at the high school were "Everybody Calls me Jean" and Uncle George Pops In." The Warnerville Community Club met on Friday evening in 1946 to conduct a "Battle of the Sexes." E. C. Warner acted as mediator while several of the community men argued points against several of the ladies. The results reported were that the men won "by a large margin."

Warnerville was one of the first rural districts to have two years of high school, and for a long time, the only one. The first high school graduating class was in 1916, with seven students. Students often attended school beginning in December and ending in March in order that farmers would have enough farm hands to plant and harvest.

Gertrude Neilsen (teacher from 1904-1905) wrote to the following year's teacher: "I cannot say enough in praise of this school. As a whole it is quiet and orderly. Nearly every child is anxious to learn, so be kind to my little friends and your work will be a pleasure as mine has been." E. C. Warner himself taught school at District 25 during the year 1893-94.

Until 1923, the school had eleven grades. Students wishing to enter high school often times enrolled at Dist 25 because it was one of the few rural schools offering high school. From 1923 to 1942 there were only ten grades. During the school year 1946-47, there were only four students in the entire school, all of which were girls.

There were many humorous anecdotes about Dist 25, as all youngsters will recall about school days gone past. Mr. Warner Dale, Great-grandson of Hiram Warner, recalls the small knothole in the backside of the girl's privy where a stick was poked in to discourage the young ladies from spending too much time away from their studies.

Through the years the school has held fast to old customs and has moved ahead to new additions, such as the second building constructed in 1978 to house grades

kindergarten through fifth grade. The indoor plumbing and electricity are a long way from the slate blackboards and the horsehair insulation. The belfry was removed in the 1950's due to rotting timbers. The bell was hauled away, but has now been found and is in the process of being returned to the school. Note: Mabel Pettitt-Huggins reports that the Bell went to the Reuben Anderson farm on the "old Shaw Place" on mile south of the school.

At the end of each school year, a picnic was held. As one newspaper article reported, the event was worthy of special mention. Nearly 150 people gathered at the Warnerville Park. "The grass served as tables, and yards of tablecloth was spread on the ground. A bountiful repast of the good things common to every farm home was enjoyed and the good fellowship was worth all the work of preparation." Usually a community ball game would follow in the afternoon. Many of these old traditions still hold fast today at Dist 25.

District 25
Warnerville
High School

May 13, 1932



May Day Activities

May 1926



The following information was obtained in the scrap books of Arthur (b Dec 4, 1881, d May 25, 1976) & Earl (b Feb 14, 1885 d Apr 1, 1977) Pettitt:

School term ran Dec 1, 1889 to Mar 29, 1890. Teacher - W. R. Lehman

Bert McGinnis	Laura Pettitt	Bert Munson	Pat Conley
Frank Glenn	Kate McNicol	Frank Ransdad	Tommy O'Reilly
Maggie Morris	Flo McNicol	Anna Glenn	Harley McGinnis
John O'Reilly	Arthur Pettitt	Sarah McNicol	Frank Pettitt
Ed Rowlett	Ira Mead	George Schields	Eva Munson
Mattie Rowlett	Julia McNicol	Lottie Pettitt	Alice Conley
Loretta Rogers	Tommi Schields	Benne Munson	James McNicol
Ida Rowlett	Ollie Munson	Mary Rowlett	Alex McNicol
Ettie Schields	Andrew O'Reilly	Zell McGinnis	Florence Hill
Mary Rice	Josie Conley	Dalton Gillian	Curtis Gillian
Merle Rice	Everett Pettitt	Pearl Rogers	Marshall Pettitt
Loren Loomis			

1913-14 First (3 yr) High School year in Madison Co - attended by Mabel Pettitt

1939-40 Last (2 yr) High School year in Madison Co - attended by Ione Pettitt

TEACHERS

1889-90 W. R. Lehman	1906-08 - Matilda Fox	1919-20 - Edna Terry
1890-91 - Fannie Gibbs	1908-12 - Mrs. C. H. Brake	Genevieve Turner
1891-92 - W H. Baker	1912-13 - Joy Morgan	and Pearl Sherlock
1892-93 - C. D. Boyer	1913-14 - Rebecca Moore	1920-21 - Mary Rice
1893-94 - E. C. Warner	and Martha Winter	and Robert Rice
1894-95 - Jos. M. White	1915-16 - Rebecca Moore	1921-22 - Ambyr Duel
1895-96 - Mary Pratt	and Eugene Madsen	and Ella May Elliott
1896-98 - Etta Shields	1916-17 - Rebecca Moore	1922-23 - Della Finn
1898-1900 - Oriole Adams	and Alvine Meyer	and Edith Chilquist
1900-01 - H .E. Austin	1917-18 - Gertrude Wright	1923-24 - Della Finn
1901-02 - Edna Staffort	and Miss Sherlock	Clara Terry
1902-04 - Maude Tannehill	1918-19 - Edna Terry	and Lucille Harris
1904-05 - Gertrude Neilsen	Blanche Barnhard	1924-25 - Amanda Diedrickson
1905-06 - Carrie Castle	and Gertrude Wright	and Edith Chilquist

FIRST HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATING CLASS AT WARNERVILLE - 1916

Helen Sleeper	Ethel Terry	Clara Terry	Blanch Heath
Robert Rice	Lyle McGinnis	Mable Pettitt	

End of information from Pettitt School book

THE WARNERVILLE METHODIST CHURCH

On July 1, 1906, the Warnerville First Methodist Church was dedicated by Rev. W. R. Peters, pastor of the Norfolk circuit. Prior to that time, services were held in the room over the H. H. Warner & Sons General Store. With 75 members in the congregation and 50 members actively attending church services on any Sunday, a larger facility was needed.

The ladies of the village of Warnerville were credited with obtaining the funds to erect the First Methodist Church, sometimes which required trips by horse and buggy to the more distant farmsteads. Community workmen donated their labor to construct the church. Because of the high cost, the ladies Aid covered the windows of the church with adhesive paper to resemble a stained glass effect. The Ladies Aid, later known as the Women's Society of Christian Service, was formed on June 1, 1891, by Mrs.

David Darlington and Mrs. Edwin Rowlett. The Ladies Aid played a big role in the life of the Warnerville Methodist Church, always working to raise money for the organization. Quilts were often made to sell, such as the one made in 1913 by Maude Pettitt. Pieces were cut from dresses worn by the Ladies Aid members of that period.

At one time the Warnerville Methodist Church was known as a circuit congregation. It was served by the Norfolk pastor until his responsibilities in the Norfolk church became too demanding. Then pastors came from Stanton, Pierce, or Wayne to conduct services. Later a layman of the Norfolk church preached at Warnerville for a number of years.

The church bell was hung in the tower by several men with ropes and a team of horses. The bell summoned people to church on Sunday and announced weddings and funerals. The bell is now part of a silent memorial to the early congregations of the Methodist Church and is on display at the First Methodist Church in Norfolk.

The church provided many evenings of entertainment, such as the program performed for a full house one Friday evening entitled "Misery Moon" or the comedy "The Hoodooed Coon." "There were no strangers among us -- everyone knew everyone else and it was one big family. Our joys and troubles were shared and it helped to weather the storm during those terrible depression years. The local school and the church furnished our main social life. It was a sad day when the church became inactive; and when the building was torn down, it left an empty spot in our hearts."

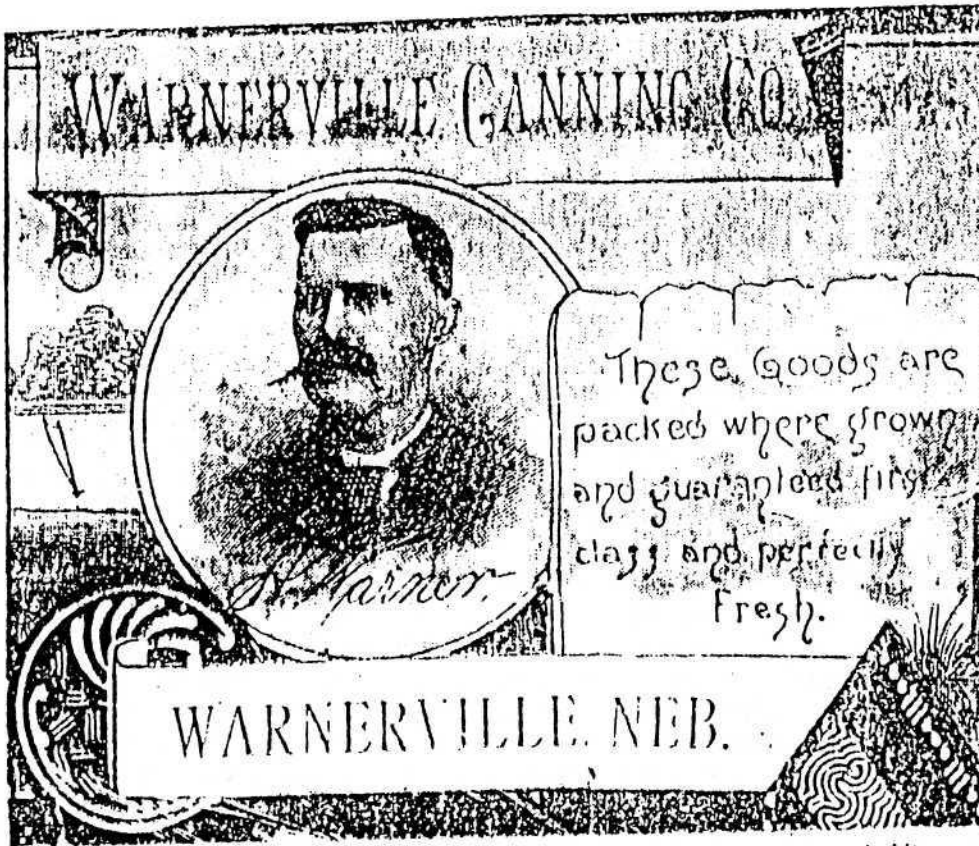
Some of the congregation recalled the cold Sunday mornings at the church where the centrally-located potbelly stove hadn't had time to heat the entire building. Many would rush in and huddle close to the stove before the service to warm themselves. As one member recalls, those who sat near the stove throughout the service suffered from the heat while those seated away from it, froze. We suspect somewhere there was a happy medium.

The closing service of the Warnerville Methodist Church was held on July 14, 1957. From there, we understand that the building was moved, remodeled, and now stands at 106 South 13th Street, Norfolk.

The Methodist Aid Society organized June 1, 1896. The following by-laws and resolutions were adopted: The Society was organized for the purpose of mutual aid and the aid of any in our midst who might be in need. Also for the support of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Warnerville. We agree to work together in harmony and union. All matters of business to be brought before the Society and left to the vote of the same. The majority ruling. Resolve that we refrain from all gossip that had a degrading influence. Resolve that we work for the building up of the Aid Society and the peaceful relation of our Society with all other Societies of like nature. We hereby sign our names:

D. W. Darlington	E. H. Hill	Ed Rowlett	M. Stites
Simpson	H. Warner	E. C. Warner	Ella Pettitt
Ida Murphy	Eaton	Morgan	Brown
McBeath	Evan	Mary Pettitt	Sweet
Horner	Maude Pettitt	Eberly	Gibbs
Mrs Jasnston	Good	Cropper	Yound
Caseman	Squicell		

there were more names but Committee could not make them out



POPULAR IN 1890s — Warnerville Sugarcorn label with likeness of Hiram Warner. It is one of the few artifacts remaining of Warnerville. No pictures of the town could be found.

Warnerville Living Today in Only Few Paper Mementoes

By GLEN BOWKER

Whatever became of Emerick, Kalamazoo, Peck, South Norfolk or Warnerville? These former Madison County communities are part of a list of nearly 900 extinct towns in Nebraska, according to Donald Searcy, former chairman of the geography department at Kearney State College.

They are now a memory: a cracked and faded photograph, a weathered railway sign, or an abandoned cemetery. They are significant in that they outnumber Nebraska's "living" towns by nearly two to one and their number is growing steadily.

COUNTRY LANE

Warnerville, for example, is now a quiet, shaded country lane leading to the Union Pacific railroad tracks three miles south, one mile west and 1/4 miles south of Norfolk.

Two newspaper clippings, a church bulletin and a label from the old Warnerville Canning Co. furnished by Paul Terry and Mrs. Maggie Reed, and the Morris family — residents of the area — attest to the former industry of the town.

The sketchy history available indicates Warnerville began as Munson Post Office in 1882 on the newly built railway line close by Antelope Run Creek.

Hiram Warner and his sons Ed and Guy settled there in 1887 and began building. The name was changed to Warnerville and there emerged a general store, lumber yard, coal shed, elevator, and later a canning factory.

CANNING FACTORY

The factory canned pumpkins, peas, beans, corn and tomatoes. The surviving label, brightly colored and attractive, even by today's standards, is for Warnerville "Sugarcorn" and bears a signed likeness of Hiram Warner and the assurance that "These goods are packed where grown and guaranteed first class and perfectly fresh."

In 1899 Warner installed a creamery which operated by steam power and had a churn capacity of 320 lbs. It is claimed the creamery predates any in Norfolk and that in one day it turned out 1,200 lbs of butter.

A blacksmith shop and meat market were built and in 1888 Charles Dawson erected the Good Samaritan Hotel. A depot was built and the Post Office moved into it as the population of the village grew to 100 or more.

A man was hired to open up the swale on Antelope Run and did the job with a dredging machine pulled by 20 head of oxen, making a ditch four feet wide and three feet deep (which is still in evidence today).

The First Methodist Episcopal Church was built in 1906 with the Rev. Peters in charge. The Methodist Aid Society had been formed in 1896, listing among its by-laws the uplifting rule that "we refrain from all gossip that has a degrading influence."

Warnerville by then was platted for 30 city blocks and boasted an 11-grade schoolhouse and a Town Hall. It was at its peak, however, and in the early 1900's it began to decline.

As an early day historian put it, "Hard times brought on the townfall."

DECLINE

People moved away, stores closed, the cannery closed and

the depot was moved to Enola via Hatcar. The T. B. Hord Grain Co. elevator burned down in 1926 or '27, and the church, traditionally the last institution to expire in a dying town, held its last service in 1952. Only its foundation remains.

Thus Warnerville limped into history to join such Nebraska towns as Haymow, Copenhagen, Vim, Weber and Mars, unmarked but not unmarked by those who lived there.

To them it is not a name on an old map but a people and a way of life that started with the pioneer builders and perhaps began to wane, like Warnerville, in the early years of the twentieth century.

It is a pleasant memory nourished by such things as an 80 year-old label, carefully preserved and wrapped in clear plastic, reading "Warnerville Sugarcorn."

SOCIAL SECURITY DEATH INDEX - THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY recently acquired the Social Security Death Index, and it is available to users of the main library or any Family History Center that offers a compact disc program.

The Social Security Death Index lists 39.5 million deceased people who had social security numbers and whose deaths occurred between 1962 and the end of 1988. By typing a person's name and an approximate date, if known, into the computer, the following information will be displayed: name of person, arranged alphabetically by surname and then by given name; the year of birth as reported to social security; the state that issued the social security number, the year of death, and the state in which the person resided at the time of death.

An optional selection feature permits you to obtain more information on a specific person. The additional information will be the full date of birth; the month and year of death; the social security number, and the state where the death benefit was sent to a living relative. Zip codes can be obtained for place of death and places where death benefits were sent. A zip code directory, built into this database, will list the names of the communities served by the zip code.

Knowing the date and place of death enables you to obtain a death certificate. By sending a copy of this death certificate, the social security number, and form SSA 1-977, Social Security Number Record, Third Party Request for Extract or Photocopy" (available through any social security office), you may secure a photocopy of the person's original social security application. The application will show the address of the applicant, date and place of birth, father's name, and mother's maiden name. Address your inquiry to Social Security Administration, 4H8 Annex, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore Maryland 21235. The cost is \$7.00. - From LLCGS Newsletter August 1991.

I spent a day at our local LDS library in Norfolk using this index. It is a gold mine. You can print out your information for 5 cents a page. Printing saves time and eliminates copying errors. Jeanne Allison

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