

# Madison County Remembers...

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A small train ran through Ta-ha-zouka Park for many years. Pehr Wagner started the operation known as the Prairie Central Miniature Railroad which replaced the small zoo that was there for many years. The miniature railroad gave rides for free to children. This is in the early 1950s.

## **Warneke continues with the railroad story:**

The Black Hills gold rush was on and all railroads pushed on west. In 1879 the Sioux City and Pacific Railroad extended its line to Norfolk and Battle Creek. In 1880 Union Pacific brought in the Omaha, Niobrara and Black Hills branch, offering cheap rates to haul anything and everyone and began mail service. The Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha completed its Norfolk line in 1882, connecting with the Black Hills Union Pacific road, crossing the North Fork River south of Elm Avenue. It joined with Union Pacific to build the depot at North Fifth Street and Braasch Avenue which was later shared by Union Pacific, Chicago, North Western and the Greyhound bus company.

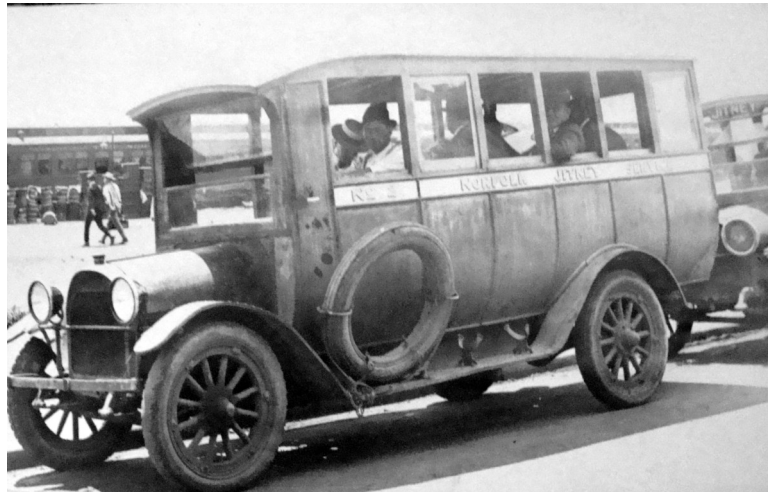


In 1883-84 Blair sold the Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley Railroad to Chicago, North Western which built the Seventh Street depot, consolidated its lines, and continued its service until World War II. Train service in Norfolk by 1885 advertised five incoming and outgoing trains daily. Railroad sections in Norfolk grew so rapidly that with its population barely over 1000, it was declared a second class city in 1885. In 1911 the CNW railroad built the new brick depot on Northwestern Avenue, including a full service restaurant and coffee shop. Passenger service was discontinued in 1958, and freight service on its 320 mile line to Chadron, on December 1, 1992. This was the end of the era of the "Iron Horse" which had laid much of the groundwork for Norfolk's future development as agricultural and retail trade center, which are still the driving force of our economy today.

But the CNW right of way did not lay dormant. In 1994 it became the highly desired Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail which when completed will stretch 321 miles across Nebraska, from Norfolk west through the Elkhorn River Valley, to the O'Neill trailhead, crossing the Sandhills, the bridge over the Niobrara River at Valentine, and on to the Pine Ridge country near Chadron.

A note on train service at Norfolk Junction: In the 1950s and 1960s it was possible to take mail to the Depot in South Norfolk by 10 o'clock P.M., for overnight delivery, as the mail was processed on the train enroute to Omaha. Norfolkans knew their letters deposited by 10 o'clock P.M. at the Norfolk Junction depot would be delivered next day! Great customer service without today's technology.

In 1888 a trolley car pulled by two mules, or horses, carried passengers from downtown Norfolk to the Norfolk Junction terminal and return. Later in early 1900s Uncle John's Norfolk Jitney service was available from downtown to the Junction. John Crook's wife, Emma, wrote on a postcard that she also drove the jitney.



The depot was sold in 1965 and became a warehouse. In 1978 it was sold and renovated into a first class historic restaurant and lounge. Following a destructive fire in 1985, it was again refurbished and reopened as a bar and grille, with evening entertainment, known locally as the Depot.

**Norfolk Junction** flourished during those booming railroad years and among the beneficiaries were the Perry family. Following are excerpts from the interesting memoirs of Frank D. Perry of the life and times of the Perrys in the early years of the Norfolk Junction:

Ed and Rebecca Perry operated the Clifton Hotel (1418 South 1<sup>st</sup> Street) for about a year, and then moved across the street and opened a small restaurant, until a café on the corner of First Street and Northwestern Avenue quit business. They rented that café for a few months, then bought it and added sleeping rooms above, a new kitchen and living rooms for them (possibly the Omaha House at 1427 South 1<sup>st</sup> Street). By this time they were doing a good business and making some money for the first time in a number of years.

They then bought the old Ferguson property back of the restaurant across the alley, which had 15 sleeping rooms. They rented to the single railroad men for the night. This area also had a barn, corral and chicken yard. When farmers came with wagons of chickens they were sold by the head, chickens of all ages. After Ed would agree on price and put them in the chicken yard, he would feed them garbage from the hotel kitchen. Fried chicken was served at the lunch counter daily, and on Sundays mostly stewed chicken and noodles on biscuits, using the old roosters and hens.

When Ed and Rebecca learned that a new brick depot across from property at Northwestern Avenue and the foot of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street was to replace the old depot that burned down, they had an opportunity, as long time business owners operating at the old Norfolk Junction, to purchase the property (Perry Hotel), with partners Jim Keleher and John Koerber, saloon keeper and barber, who also built units next to the Perry Hotel which opened for business in May, 1912. A little later a brick building was built for a pool hall and next to it a drug store. Later a one-story brick building across the alley was built for a bakery and operated quite a few years by L. A. McPhonpson (?), and then a Coca Cola factory, and behind that the Graham Ice Cream factory.

Two years later in 1914, Ed and Rebecca found that their Perry Hotel, 300 Northwestern Avenue, was one of the best businesses in the county. Most everyone traveled by train and they were just across the street from the passenger depot, the junction of the main line, Winner branch, and the terminal for the train crews that came from Sioux City and tied up at South Norfolk; also making connections for passengers from Sioux City to the Black Hills and points west and east.



Not having enough room for their expanded business, they built a brick addition to the original hotel and doubled their room capacity, giving them 32 sleeping rooms; living quarters for themselves, and quite a large waiting room or lobby besides the lunch counter, dining room and kitchen.

The passenger trains stopped only 20 minutes for lunch and being a division terminal on the C & NW railroad, they changed engines and checked over the train for hot boxes, etc. The passengers had to be back on the train in 20 minutes ! The hotel crew had to be prepared to feed many passengers in a short space of time, mostly lunches. They prepared and set food on the counter first, and also fast service in the dining room for full meals that could be served hurriedly. The passengers could only eat at division points, that is: Long Pine 133 miles to the west,

and Fremont 80 miles to the east.

Just the minute the train would come to a stop the passengers would come on the run. The first ones would grab food that was on the counter that was placed there just minutes before. Fried spring chicken, boiled ham sandwiches, boiled eggs, several kinds of pie, and anything else from the kitchen. What they wanted most was fast service. As the crowd was coming from the train the coffee, milk, ice tea, etc., was set out ready with the rest. It was a mad-house until all were fed and back on the train. The hotel crew had to then clean up and prepare the food for the next train.

Sometimes there would be several trains in at the same time. As the years went by the railroad officials would co-operate with the Perrys and would check by phone to be sure that no one would be left. The Perry crew prided themselves on getting the customers fed and back on the train, and soon the passengers and train crew depended on our word. That was just part of the business.

In stock season from about the middle of July to Thanksgiving, ranchers from as far west as Wyoming and Montana would ship grass cattle to the Midwest markets or to farms, where they were fed corn and alfalfa for several months to fatten them up. Many a time in stock season when the cowhands were going to market with the cattle, the hotel crew was feeding 300 to 500 range hands in the season.

As the new modern brick Perry Hotel became known for its fine food prepared under the direction and with the personal help of Rebecca, its fame grew from one end of the state to the other. Then traveling men started to come by the dozens and began to leave their reservations a week to a month in advance for sleeping rooms. Many of them left a permanent reservation for a certain night, every week or every two weeks as needed. The new addition to the hotel was finished in 1914-15 adding about 35 sleeping rooms. They were always full and at least one-fourth were double rooms with two double beds sleeping two and many times 4 people; just the service for families that were migrating further west on the main line or into the Winner, South Dakota country, which had been opened by the government a few years previously.

Ed and Rebecca were a wonderful team and rendered a great service to the public traveling to settlements in western Nebraska, Wyoming and all the Northwest territory. They worked together in planning and managing the hotel in general, but it was Rebecca who had the more imaginative mind and it was through her leadership that projects and new plans became realization. They employed quite a number of people and operated 24 hours a day, which lasted until Ed passed away in 1922. Sons Frank and Earl managed and operated the hotel until Rebecca passed in 1938. Then the two brothers took over. But with Rebecca gone it was just a matter of time until they had to close. Of course, World War II was really the beginning of the end. The brothers closed the Perry Hotel in October, 1943, when Frank and family moved to California to be near their sons who were then in the Navy.

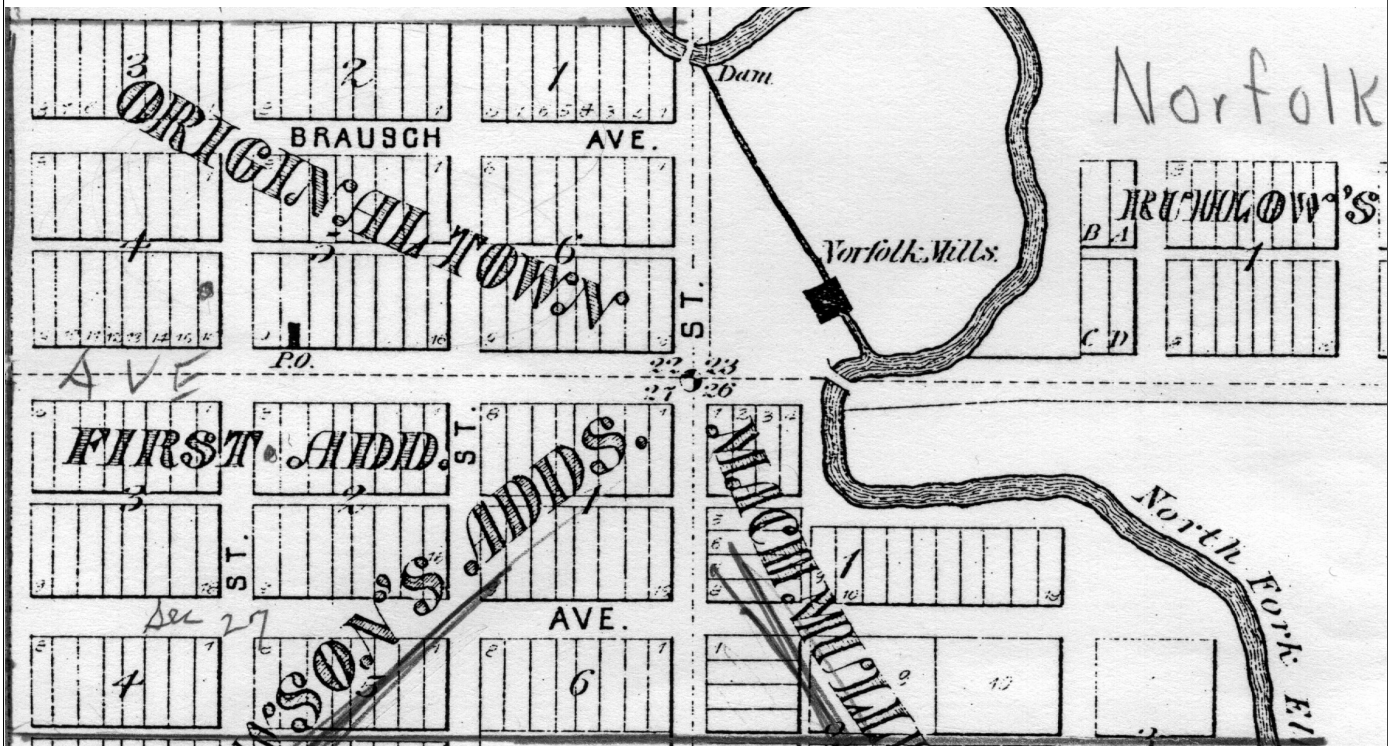
The Perry Hotel closing was mourned and remembered for many years.

A sincere thank you for the Perry Hotel history to: Nancy Perry-Dalton, Great Granddaughter of Rebecca Perry, Granddaughter of Frank D. Perry (his memoir), Daughter of Leland F. Perry

## Original Town of Norfolk

It was time to lay out the town of Norfolk to meet these demands. Herman Braasch marked off six blocks of his land in Section 22, divided into lots from First Street to Fourth Street, north of Norfolk Avenue (then still Main Street), including Braasch Avenue. This was the first official village survey made by Thomas W. Ward, Jr. in December of 1869, recorded as the Original Town of Norfolk.

Col. Charles Mathewson also platted six blocks of his land in Section 27, south of Norfolk Avenue, with lots from First to Fourth Streets, including Madison Avenue, known as Mathewson's First Addition to Norfolk.



Original town is what was marked off by Herman Braasch. Colonel Charles Mathewson did the First Addition (south side of Main Street (now Norfolk Ave.)) Note the river meandered through what is now Johnson Park and the bridge was angled as it crossed the road.

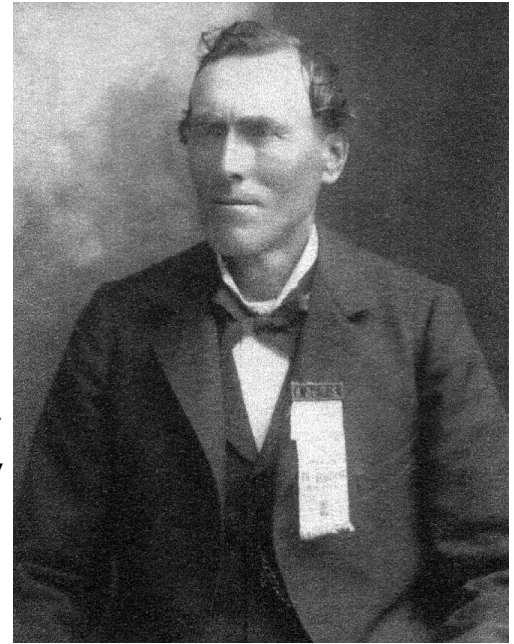
The pioneers wasted no time—as quickly as those lots were utilized, ambitious settlers sensed opportunity and turned their farmland into additional, new real estate developments, many carrying the pioneer name to this day. A brisk real estate market developed as they sold lots to all comers, some merely speculators.

### August Raasch Pioneer Settler and first Postmaster

Earlier the pioneers had selected "North Fork" as the permanent post office address, but postal authorities back east assumed that was a mistake and wrote "Norfolk", and so it was left. One of the first village duties was appointing a postmaster. On June 4, 1868, August Raasch was appointed Norfolk's first postmaster, in consideration of his Civil War service in which he was severely wounded at the Battle of Gettysburg.

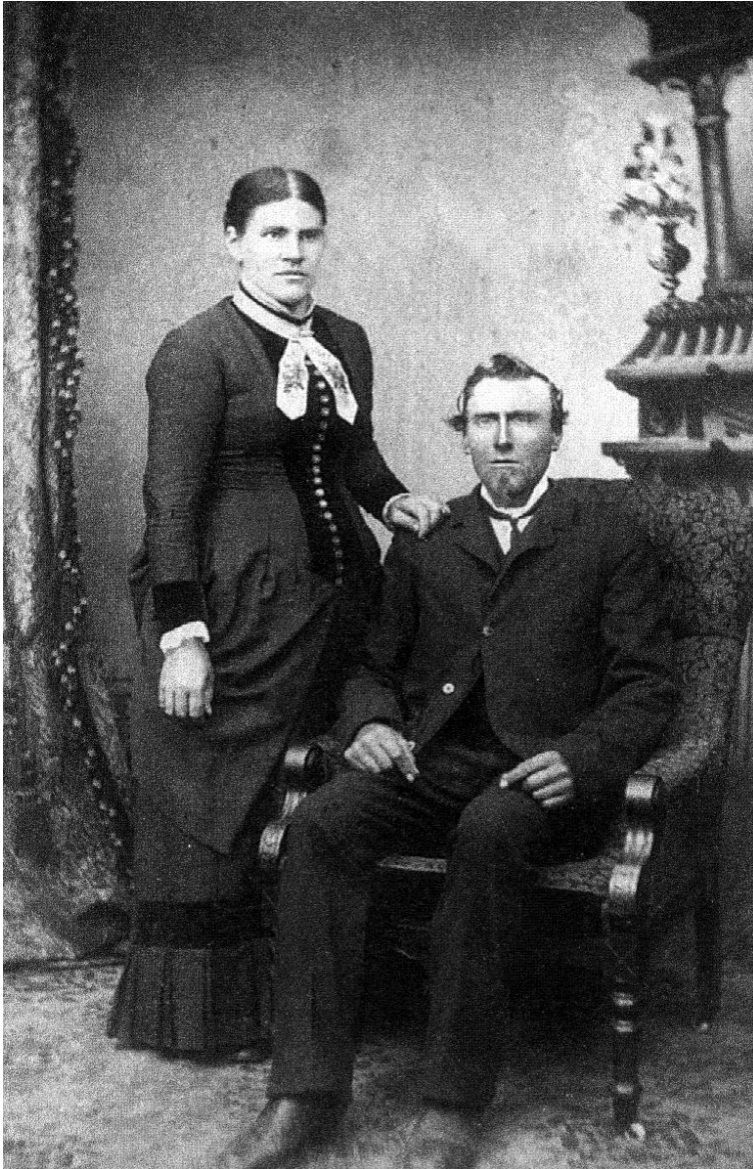
August was the oldest child of Martin and Wilhelmine Raasch, having been born in Koenigsberg, Germany on September 2, 1842. He came to America in 1844 with his parents traveling from New York to their first settlement home at Ixonia, Jefferson County, Wisconsin at the age of 2.

August's Civil War Diary of 1862 gives accounts of the historic battles at Chancellorsville and the Battle of Gettysburg, July 1, 1863, where he was severely wounded. He had enlisted at 17 years of age in Company B, of the 26<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Volunteers. He never forgot Gettysburg and how tenderly two rebels carried him to a hospital, bleeding profusely, thus saving his life. After Lee's surrender he was transferred to different hospitals for 23 months, finally receiving his discharge on March 25, 1865. August returned to his home in Ixonia, Wisconsin, his Civil War survival story retold many times. His mother nursed him back to health, however the war wounds remained a source of great discomfort for some twenty years, requiring frequent dressing as bone splinters worked out of the wound. Nevertheless, in 1866 he drove a team of horses along with his father and his ox team from Wisconsin to Nebraska, as part of the original pioneer colony, to participate in the great historic settlement on the North Fork River to be known as Norfolk.



He homesteaded west of Norfolk (about where Faith Regional Hospital is now) and lived there most of his life. His homestead west of Norfolk was the first post office and on July 4, 1868, he received the first mail of 3 letters via horseback from West Point. The small wooden mailbox sat on his kitchen table, or he carried it around with him. August took seriously his postmaster duties, but quoting from his Diary of 1867-1871: "April 9, 1869, I opened the mail bag for the last time. That meant great relief to me. I am at last free from this burden. I have been long anxiously waiting for this—April 14<sup>th</sup> I delivered to my successor all post office supplies. Masek was my deliverer." The post office was moved to the Mill Store in 1869.

August set up a sorghum press on his farm, which was operated by a horse walking around in circles. This was another neighborly sharing job and many good times were had by all during sorghum cooking days. It was a lot of work getting the sorghum ready for the press, and then the round the clock cooking over a huge fire, but the pioneers loved the syrup on their bread and all pitched in to help. August's Diary tells of the hard times the pioneers endured to survive in this new unsettled land, such as the October, 1868 prairie fire which destroyed the Dederman barns, some hogs and grain, but the house was saved, continuing "March 1, 1869 wood was hauled for the mill that is to be built here at the Fork; the wood had to be brought from Union Creek; April 29<sup>th</sup> my bonus was paid to me. I received \$100 additional. On the same day I lost the money on the streets of Omaha; August 21<sup>st</sup> broke an arm while helping erect a granary at Christian Haase's. On the same day the arm was set (there was no doctor in the settlement; in emergency cases Mrs. Wilhelmine Winter gave advice and assistance). In 1870 he notes "Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> the county owes me still \$10.12 ½ for the year 1869—to Braasch the county owes in back salary as commissioner \$22.550."



His Diary for 1871, Monday, Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>—"I expressed my intention and asked father to propose for me to Maria Rohrke. He at once proceeded to do this." Wednesday Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>, at evening he asked for her hand but has received no answer. Father Rohrke requested eight days time to think it over and submit the proposition to Maria. Thursday Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> through Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup> extremely cold and snow—no getting out. "Sunday (Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>) very cold and no services. But I received word from Father Rohrke that I could have Maria; also that it was her wish and that she had no objections."

On that happy note August Raasch's Diary ends.

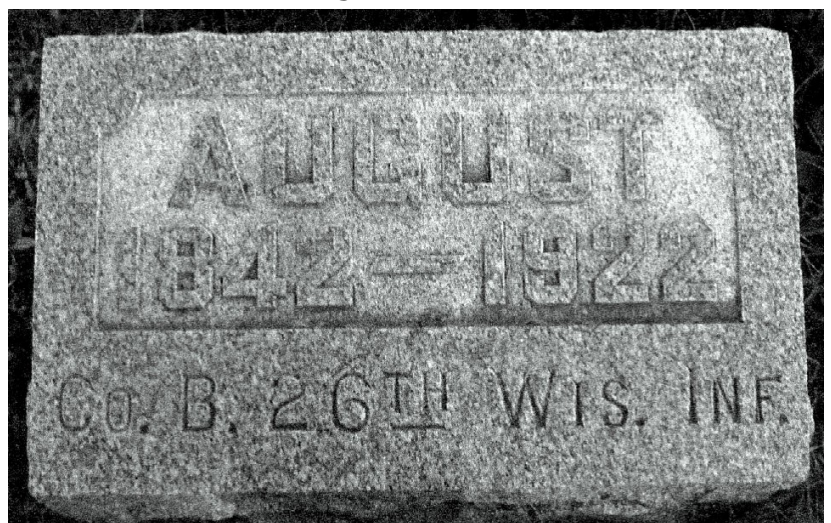
A highlight in the German community calendar was a party celebrating the engagement of August and Maria on January 16, 1872.

Maria Rohrke was born on January 15, 1852 in Wisconsin, the daughter of Gottlieb Rohrke and Henrietta C. Collet (Kollath). August and Maria were married on 6 June 1872 in Norfolk.

August and his wife, Maria, raised a family of 11 children by heritage of honest work and Christian character. He was a lifelong

member and deacon of the St. Paul's Lutheran Church, and held civic offices. August retired from farming about 1912 after moving in to town, still suffering from his war wounds.

August Raasch passed away on December 8, 1922 at his home at 503 N. 11th St. in Norfolk. His wife Maria H. Rohrke only survived him by less than 3 years passing on April 27, 1925. August and Maria were laid to rest in St. Paul's Lutheran Cemetery. Farming the fertile soil of this valley was his life blood, but his diary recounts his willing spirit of helping neighbors and newcomers build the community.



**MADISON COUNTY, NEBRASKA MARRIAGE RECORDS Book One #1 - 1868 to 1888**

Page (Note: spellings are as in the original records not as we know and use them today)

28. Henry Hilgen of Battle Creek; age 34; born Germany; son of Heinrich Hilgen and Anna Heit Jensen. Albertine Manske of Pierce County; age 21; born Germany; dau. of John Manske and Wilhelmine Lemke. Lisc. issued: 13 March 1871 Married: 13 March 1871 at Norfolk A.W. Frese, Minister Witnesses: Henry Wuster, Battle Creek; Emilie Otto, Madison County
29. Ernest Swertferger of Norfolk; age 28; born Prussia; son of John Swertferger and Katrina Milken. Amelia Griebenow of Norfolk; age 21; born Wisconsin; dau. of William Griebenow and Wilhelmine Felkenhauer. Lisc. issued: 18 May 1871 Married: 2 June 1871 Witnesses: Carl Griebenow of Pierce County and William Zutz of Madison County.
30. J. M. G. Rohrke of Madison; age 23; born Wisconsin; son of Gottlieb Rohrke and Henrietta Kollat. Mary A. Huebner of Pierce; age 21; born Wisconsin; dau. of Christian Huebner and Louisa Lehman. Lisc. Issued: 24 May 1871 Married: 15 June 1871 Witnesses: William Huebner and Herman Rohrke of Pierce County.
31. Herman F. Barney of Madison County; age 25; born Pennsylvania; son of Horace Barney and Sallie Lawson. Rebecca Stark; Madison County; age 19 born in England; dau. of Stephen Stark and Anna England. Lisc. issued: 27 June 1871 Married: 28 June 1871 at Stephen Stark house by J.W.Kidder Witnesses: Stephen Stark and Ann Stark.
32. Henry Malchert of Stanton; age 26; born Germany; son of Martin Malchert and Anna Alka. Mrs. William (Merna) Fisher of Madison; age 24; born Germany; dau. of Carl Wickman. Lisc. issued: 17 June 1871 Married : 26 June 1871 Witnesses: August Melcher of Stanton and Julius Wichert of Madison County,
33. Robert Lew of Pierce County; age 26; born Prussia; son of William Lew and Wilhelmina Krennk. Mary A. Haase of Madison County; age 25; born Prussia; dau. of Christian Haase and Mary Schmidt. Lisc. issued: 21 June 1871 Married: 13 July 1871 Witnesses: Fred. Haase of Madison County and Fred. Braasch.
34. John L. Goodman of Madison County; age 23; born Indiana; son of William Goodman and Nancy Williams. Emma A. Fletcher of Antelope County; age 19; born Maine; dau. of Joseph P. Fletcher and Prudence Harding. Lisc. issued: 29 July 1871 Married: 3 August 1871 Witnesses: Samuel Goodman and Jacob Sheets both of Battle Creek.
35. Heinrich Piller of Madison County; age 40; born Germany; son of Johann H. Piller and Mary D. Bergman. F. Louisa Boche of Madison County; age 19; born Germany dau. of Frederic Boche and A. Louisa Luka. Lisc. issued: 7 Aug. 1871 Married: 3 Sept. 1871 Witnesses: Carl Wickman and August Raasch.
36. Patrick Machen, Madison County; age 52; born Ireland; son of Patrick Machen and Rose Monahan. Elisabeth Sieffert, Madison County; age 22; born Germany; dau. of William Sieffert. Lisc. issued: 3 Oct. 1871 Married: 5 Oct. 1871 at Battle Creek. Witnesses: Geo. Carrel and J.W. Risk.
37. August Melcher, Madison County; age 27; born Germany; son of August Melcher. Augusta Wichman, Madison County; age 19; born Germany; dau. of Carl Wichman. Lisc. issued: 3 Oct, 1871 Married: 29 Oct. 1871 Witnesses: Julius Wichert and Carl Wichman.
38. Frank Wichman, Madison County; age 25; born Germany; son of Carl Wichman.



- Moena Kohler, Pierce County; age 23; born Germany. Lisc. issued: 3 Oct. 1871 Married: 29 Oct. 1871 Witnesses: Frederick W. Wichman, and Julius Wichert.
39. Peter J. Barnes, Madison County; age 32 Monetta J. Wuylar, Madison County; age 18; dau. of Charles Wuylar. Lisc. issued: 11 Nov. 1871 Married: 12 Nov. 1871 Witnesses: Frank W. Barnes and William J. Barnes,
40. Henry Tomhagen, Madison County and Liena Gunkle, Madison County. Lisc. issued: 27 Oct. 1871 Married: 29 Oct. 1871
41. L.A. Gilbert, Madison County; age 23; son of Daniel Gilbert and Harriet Marsh. Susan Muhm, age 18; dau. of F. Muhm. Lisc. issued: 30 Nov. 1871 Married: 30 Nov. 1871 Witnesses: William and Emma Hopkins,
42. William Donner, age 25; born Germany; son of Fred Donner and Reka Bars. Reka Dedeloff, age 25; born Germany; dau. of Fred Dedeloff and Reka Green. Lisc. issued: 16 Dec. 1871 Married: 16 Dec. 1871 Witnesses: Joseph Mathewson and Mrs. Catharine Hurford.
43. Owen Carrabine, age 26; born Canada; son of Timothy Carrabine and Hannah Carry. Serilda Best, age 20; born Iowa; dau. of John Best and Mary A. Ricker. Lisc. issued: 8 Jan. 1872 Married: 9 Jan. 1872 Witnesses: John O'Banion and Douglas Preece.
44. J. S. McElhose, age 30; born Pennsylvania; son of William McElhose and Ann B. Fair, Elmira L. Switzer, age 28; born Pennsylvania; dau of Peter L. Switzer. Lisc. issued: 17 Jan. 1872 Married: 23 Jan. 1872 Witnesses: John Riggle, James R. Fowles and James Delinger.
45. Levi A. Bartlett, age 31; born Vermont; residence Stanton County; son of Avery Bartlett and Abian Lyman. Elizabeth J. Kyner, age 18; born Ohio; residence Madison County; dau. of John Kyner and Nancy Gunder. Lisc. issued: 8 Jan. 1872 Married: 17 Jan. 1872 by J. W. Kidder, Minister. Witnesses: Mary Stork and James H. Kyner,
46. L.M. Rickard, age 24; born Iowa; son of Solomon Rickard and Mary Ann Mortindale. Sarah A. Ives, age 24; born New York; residence Antelope County; dau. of Alec Ives and Margaret E. Ives. Lisc. issued: 19 March 1872 Married: 27 March 1872 Witnesses: Nicholas Ives and Annie L. Giles.
47. August Raasch, age 29; born Germany; residence Madison County; son of Martin Raasch and Minnie Mescke. Maria Rohrke, age 20; born Wisconsin, residence Madison County; dau. of Gottlieb Rohrke and Henrietta C. Collet. Lisc. Issued: 10 May 1872 Married: 6 June 1872 Witnesses: Fredrick Braasch and Herman Rohrke.
48. August C. Dehring, age 27; born Germany; residence Madison County; son of Martin Dehring and Annie Persicke. Wilhelmine Court, age 22; born Germany; residence Madison County, dau. of August Court and Fredricke Ekers. Lisc. issued: 3 June 1872 Married: 23 June 1872 Witnesses: L. Hartman and Fredrick Lehman.
49. Charles Schwitzenberg, age 27; born Germany; residence Pierce County; son of John Schwitzenburg and Wilhelmine Wooldorf. Augusta Hille, age 22; born Germany; residence Madison County; dau of Charles Hille and Wilhelmine Klutt. Lisc. issued: 7 June 1872 Married: 27 June 1872 Witnesses: Julius Lehman and Benjamin Heckendorf.

(To be continued in the next issue)

**GREETINGS from our MADISON COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**

What a typical Nebraska summer in July !! HOT-- but it's still a good summer hereabouts as we have not suffered the storms other parts of our country have endured. May was the usual month-- busy with graduations and weddings, and many of our members had commitments, so the May meeting was cancelled. Memorial weekend was observed with our U.S. flags in cemeteries, and honor guards at Central Park and Jr. High School grounds, and an early morning ceremony at the Norfolk Veterans Home. The cemeteries were beautifully decorated.

The June 20th program was on "grave witching" presented by Judy Carlson. This was a very interesting demonstration. See the story following this article.

Our July 16<sup>th</sup> meeting found us touring the Clarkson Historical Society Museum in Clarkson, NE. The Museum is artfully arranged for every facet of everyday living, throughout several buildings, and were continually amazed at the size and variety of the collections. This is partly explained by quoting from their Society brochure "Distant past, in our case, doesn't mean only the 1800's or 1900's. We believe that any era of interest should be included in this museum." The permanent military collection was especially outstanding with photos of those being honored along with their uniforms, medals and history. The innovation and ingenuity of the all volunteer museum staff led by Ruth D. Waters, speaks volumes about the respect and dedication to history of the Clarkson area, as well as the determination of its citizenry to preserve their past.

Admission to the museum is free, (donations accepted) and it is handicapped accessible—its elevator an interesting feature itself as a holdover from earlier days in another life. Our time there was certainly well spent, we enjoyed it immensely and extend our 'thanks' to Ruth Waters and her staff. We recommend it heartily as a lesson in what and how to preserve our past in a manner that is easily seen and understood.

**Research Query Received** My name is **Terry O'Gorman** and I am the 4th child of 7 of the **Patrick and Mary Ellen McGuire O'Gorman** family that lived on the farm 5 miles west and 2 miles north (referred to as the Dederman farm). I have two cousins (children of two of my Dad's sisters) that are filling in some O'Gorman family stories and pictures. Some of your members will remember my Aunts Maye, (Fair Store), Lenore (Railroad), and Anne (schoolteacher at rural schools). My one cousin is Ed Kirby who was raised by the O'Gorman girls when his mother died. Ed went to Norfolk Sacred Heart and Norfolk Junior College. He has lived in Omaha most of his life but still has a few friends in Norfolk. Ed is 92 years old. If anyone in the group knows the name of someone in Norfolk that they think I should/could visit with to tell me O'Gorman information I would appreciate knowing.

The following is taken from notes I made from a visit with my Dad – Patrick J. O'Gorman on March 4, 1990 - Dad went to Dederman schoolhouse #24 in the Valley township of Madison County, Nebraska. - Ellen O'Gorman taught at schoolhouse #20 for seven years. - Lenore O'Gorman taught at schoolhouse #20 for 2 years and then also taught at Sacred Heart Catholic school in Norfolk- Anne O'Gorman taught at Born #8 schoolhouse - Anne taught at Sullivan #21 schoolhouse for 2 terms. She stayed with Patrick Dennis Sullivan. (the older Sullivan boy is still alive and could tell about)

- Anne taught at the Salacek school in Pierce County. It was by the lake

Terry O'Gorman, 234 Levee Trail, Dakota Dunes, SD 57049, 605-232-6160  
Email: togger@longlines.com

**2014—2015 Officers**

Phyllis McCain, Bobette Ferguson, Bernice Walters

**Madison County Genealogical Society**  
**P. O. Box 1031, Norfolk, NE 68702—1031**

**Our Society Website** is at  
[www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nemcgs/](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nemcgs/)

**Our future meetings**

June 20 at Old Regional Center Cemetery (see story on page 50)

July 18

August 15

September 19

**Join us and bring a friend**

**Memberships** are \$15 per year. Our membership year runs from September 1st through August 31st annually and includes our newsletter. Joining anytime is welcome and your first year membership will be pro-rated to expire on August 31st. If you would like to join our society please send your payment to our mailing address, Please include your email address. Let us know if you prefer an email newsletter or a paper printed copy.

**Meetings** on 3rd Saturday of each month except December and January, at 10 a.m. at 515 Queen City Blvd., Norfolk, NE., in the Elkhorn Valley Museum and Research Center.

**Queries, Society contact, Change of address, or Newsletter submissions** can reach us by mail at our mailing address P. O. Box 1031, Norfolk, NE 68702-1031, or by email at [mcgs@telebeep.com](mailto:mcgs@telebeep.com). We are here to help you in your research for your ancestors in Madison county.

### **Grave Witching the Old State Hospital Cemetery**

On Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, the Madison County Genealogical Society met at the Old Regional Center cemetery located northwest of the Ag Complex building on East Benjamin Avenue. The Old Regional Center cemetery was the original cemetery used for the Norfolk Hospital for the Insane and was in use from 1889 to September 1916. Judy Carlson demonstrated grave witching.

She uses copper rods with a loose fitting sheath over the handles so that the rods can move freely. Judy is able to determine where a grave starts, where it ends, and whether it is male, female, adult or child. She can also identify water with the same process as she says the rods feel and act differently when over water.

The Old Regional Center cemetery was a challenge because there are no existing records that list who or how many graves are actually there, or even where they are located in the cemetery. There are three gravestones, two of Civil War veterans, and another of granite with one name on it. According to Judy's skill we located 30 adult graves, one baby grave, and she identified one of the adult graves as a pregnant woman. She also identified a natural spring under part of the cemetery which may explain why the cemetery was closed and a new one started on Benjamin Avenue as it frequently is wet and soggy and nearly inaccessible, but no water source was known.

We are now attempting to identify a list of persons who should be buried there, using the records from the funeral home that handled the burials and removals from the State Hospital for the Insane. Many patients died there but most were sent home for burial or to some other location with or for their family. More information on this cemetery and its burials will be published in a future issue when this research is complete.

Madison County Genealogical Society  
P. O. Box 1031, Norfolk, NE. 68702—1031



**TEMP RETURN SERVICE    FIRST CLASS**

Your membership renewal date is on the address label.

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### Upcoming Events:

The Swedish Genealogical Society of Colorado will be hosting an all day **Swedish Genealogy Research Fair** on 3 October at Aurora Community College in Aurora, Colorado. The fair will feature four genealogy researchers from Sweden and Kathy Meade, the North American representative for Arkiv Digital, a company that has digitally scanned the Swedish church records and other Swedish documents including soldier musters. We hope that you will help us publicize this event for people in your community who might have Swedish roots. Thank you in advance. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Our website is at <http://swedgensoc.org>.

Respectfully,  
Beverly Harbourt  
President,  
Swedish Genealogical Society of Colorado

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