

# THE VILLAGE OF UNION

Located at the Junction of the Omaha and Lincoln Branches of the Missouri Pacific Railway

## PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY

Brief Biographical Pen Sketches of the Leading Business and Professional Men of This Lively Village

The village of Union, with 400 population, is situated 15 miles south of Plattsmouth at the junction of the main line and the Lincoln branch of the Missouri Pacific railroad. The town was platted in the spring of 1887 when the Missouri Pacific railroad began the construction of its line from Nebraska City to Omaha via Weeping Water. The first building erected was a store building by G. A. Ruse, and later a number of business houses and residences were added to the new town. A postoffice was established here in January, 1888 with Robert H. Frans as postmaster, he having moved his large store from the little town of Factoryville, two miles southeast of here. In the spring of 1890 the Missouri Pacific began the construction of the "Union cut-off," a line directly north from here to Omaha, thus giving the town splendid railroad facilities in all directions. The village of Union is surrounded by splendid farms owned by intelligent and progressive men, many of whom came here in the early days and figured prominently in the development of the eastern part of the state. The village was incorporated and assumed self-government in Janu-

ary, 1892, when the county commissioners appointed as the first village trustees G. A. Rose, John Kennedy, R. A. Flemming, Hiram DuBois and F. P. Tenney, and at their first meeting, January 8, 1892, G. A. Rose was elected chairman, C. L. Graves clerk, and Jake Elkenbary, treasurer. Of these first officers the clerk is the only one now residing in the village. James Baker, now of Decatur, Neb., was the first village marshal. The religious and educational interests are well cared for, there being at present three church edifices, the Methodist with Dr. D. B. Lake as pastor, the Baptist with Rev. John Richards as pastor, and the Presbyterian with Rev. Byron Beall of Lincoln as pastor. The school building is one of which the citizens are proud, and the board of education consists of L. R. Upton, W. B. Banning and C. L. Graves. The



STREET SCENE—UNION

three general stores, drug store, hardware and undertaking, millinery, bank, 3 restaurants, hotel, lumber and coal yards, blacksmith shop, newspaper, two physicians, meat market, cement block factory, livery barn, harness shop, two elevators, wagon shop, implements, furniture, three barber shops, several carpenters and masons. The Union Ledger is the means by which the people at home and abroad are able to keep posted as to the happenings in and around the village. The paper was established soon after the birth of the town by W. O. Todd, who in November, 1888, issued the first paper, a small 5 column sheet. After five months L.

satisfied with "single blessedness." His deputy is Dan Lynn, who is an efficient official. At the Missouri Pacific depot the welfare of the traveling public as well as the company's business is looked after by three jovial gentlemen, Geo. F. Whitlow, Louis Reynolds and T. C. Laws, who are kept busy handling the large amount of business the company has at this point. The company has a water and coal station here. Union is well supplied with telephone facilities, central stations being maintained by the Union Mutual, the Plattsmouth and the Bell. The Union Mutual is a home company owned and controlled by citizens of the town and vicinity. It was incorporated April 3, 1905, and has been in a flourishing condition from



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

three general stores, drug store, hardware and undertaking, millinery, bank, 3 restaurants, hotel, lumber and coal yards, blacksmith shop, newspaper, two physicians, meat market, cement block factory, livery barn, harness shop, two elevators, wagon shop, implements, furniture, three barber shops, several carpenters and masons. The Union Ledger is the means by which the people at home and abroad are able to keep posted as to the happenings in and around the village. The paper was established soon after the birth of the town by W. O. Todd, who in November, 1888, issued the first paper, a small 5 column sheet. After five months L.



PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING

J. Mayfield became its owner, being succeeded five months later by Chas. L. Graves, under whose management the paper has kept pace with the progress of the town and is loyally supported by the business men and other people. The office is equipped with a "Monona" news press and all other facilities for conducting the business. The paper is now in its 21st year, and during that time (with exception of a short interval) it has been owned and operated by Editor C. L. Graves.

Last February two conflagrations wiped out three large buildings on Main street, the hotel, the Woodman two-story hall building and Gruber's two story pool hall, but in due time there will be brick buildings to replace them, a part of the work now being in progress. There are also some nice residences to be erected this year, some already in progress. The town has no debt, is inhabited by an excellent class of citizens, and altogether it is one of the bright spots on the map of Cass county. Here is where the old settlers of all parts of the state meet annually for a grand re-union of two days, a celebration that has been held here each year for the past twenty years under management of Union citizens and is acknowledged to be the most popular and well attended celebration held in the state.

### Hon. William B. Banning.

Senator Banning was born in Wyoming, Otoe county, on the 18th day of September, 1869. After receiving a common school education, he taught for three terms. After which he attended the Lincoln Business College, from which he received a diploma. Removing to Union in 1896 he entered the grain and implement business, and disposed of the implement business in 1902. In 1903 Mr. Banning purchased the lumber yard of Edwards & Bradford, since which time he has carried on a very successful business, both in lumber and grain. In 1902 he was elected county commissioner, and served for three years. So well did he perform the duties of that position, that the people all over Cass County clamored for his re-election for another term, but Mr. Banning's private business interests would not permit him to accept a re-nomination. So well and faithfully did Mr. Banning look after the interests of the taxpayers of Cass county while a member of the county board, that the people of the county came to the conclusion last fall that he was just the man to represent them in the upper house of the Nebraska Legislature. The democrats nominated him unanimously, and his well known record for business carried the flag under which he sailed on to victory. His record in the State Senate was like that as county commissioner, way above par, and he acquitted himself with honor to his constituency as well as himself.

He was among the leaders of the Senate and was wide-awake, always to that which was to the best interests of Nebraska, and especially the county he represented. Senator Banning's going to the legislature, was a great detriment to him in his business interests, but he went just the same, and remained at his post of duty steadfastly until "the last armed foe" expired, and to his credit must be said he acquitted himself nobly.

### A. L. Becker.

This gentleman is just getting rounded into definite shape one of the most important industries in Cass County. On his fine 450 acre farm about three and a half miles northeast of Union he is having finished an elevator and other improvements costing something more than \$20,000. The principal structure among these new buildings is a large 25,000 bushel elevator. It is built to stand for years. The heavy timbers are of black walnut and oak which were cut and sawed from the forest on Mr. Becker's own farm. This building is 80x112 feet on the ground and rises to a height of something more than 60 feet at its highest point. There are nine large grain bins which may be filled by the use of a 20 horse power gasoline engine. The cleaning, shelling and elevating of grain is all done by machin-

ery and in no case is it necessary to bring in the aid of human energy to assist in the work.

There is a flour mill adjacent to the elevator in the form of a light running (3) roll Barnard & Lee Mill made in Moline, Illinois. It will grind all kinds of feed, and also a patent process flour. It is Mr. Becker's intention to put in a complete flour mill plant a little later on.

Mr. Becker has just completed the installation of a new Barnard & Lee Corn Meal sifter and grain separator and screener of the very latest patent. Joseph Bauer, of Union, was the head carpenter and contractor of this new addition to Mr. Becker's ideal farm home.

A little north of the elevator is a huge stock barn, new and completely modern in all its accessories.

South of the elevator Mr. Becker has recently built a commodious square brick residence which is complete and home like.

He has also just completed a stone cold storage plant for his apples and other fruits grown on his farm.

A brick ice house built in circular form, on Mr. Becker's own ideas gives cold comfort to the family all the year around.

In all respects the Becker place is one of the finest and most complete in Nebraska.

The land is worth with improvements fully \$200.00 an acre, and would be cheap at that price.

At present there is some fine stock on the Becker place, especially in mules, some of which are highly pedigreed.

It is Mr. Becker's intention, when his improvements are complete to enter the stock feeding business on a large scale.

That it will be well equipped goes without saying. Mr. Becker is a man of 45 years of age, aggressive and intelligent, and it is no more than proper to add, is just on the threshold of a useful career.

The picture here given of Mr. Becker's place will give some idea of the extent of the improvements.

### Dr. N. B. Larsh and Family.

Dr. Larsh, one of the pioneers of Otoe County was personally known during his long and useful life, to nearly every man, woman and child in the county.

As a physician he stood at the head of the profession in Nebraska City, and as a citizen he was prominent both in civic and political circles. The doctor was born in Ohio and moved to Nebraska City in 1859.

Entering at once the practice of medicine, he at once became a leading citizen, being elected a member of the legislature in 1861-62. In 1872 he was elected a senator from Otoe County. He went to the war as an assistant surgeon in the 1st Nebraska regiment and served from 1862 to 1865.

Returning to Nebraska City the doctor practiced his profession until his death, which occurred in December, 1887.

The deceased was sincerely mourned by a large circle of friends and relatives.

Ten years ago Mrs. Larsh, the widow, bought a fine country place east of Union in Cass County. There she has built one of the finest homes in the county, of stone, which was quarried off her own land, the house makes a most beautiful landmark in this vicinity. On the farm many remains of Indians have been found and in the stone mantel built in the living room are embodied a number of stones evidently used at some ancient date by the aborigines.

Mrs. Larsh is the mother of seven children.

John N. Larsh, a son who conducts the farm, was born in Otoe County in 1865. He is a capable and progressive man and fully alive to modern conditions. Mr. Larsh is married and has one child, a boy 11 years old. Mrs. Larsh, Jr., was born in Waupaca County, Wisconsin, and is an estimable woman, greatly admired by all who know her.

The Larsh place is a model home. A fine spring furnishes ample pure water for all purposes, bath room and household, besides supplying two fish ponds amply stocked with bass, perch and crappie. The picture here given gives a view of the house.

### L. R. Upton, Hardware Dealer.

Mr. Upton is a Cass county production, and was born in Liberty precinct, four miles northwest of Union, on the 3rd day of July, 1875. He was a dealer in general merchandise in Union for seven years, previous to entering upon his present occupation. Mr. Upton handles all lines of hardware, cutlery, stoves, farming implements, and everything pertaining to an up-to-date store of this character. On the second floor of his store building will be found a general line of household and kitchen furniture. If you want anything in his line, and Roy has not got just what you want, he will get it with a "come quick order," just as cheap as though he had the same in stock. In connection he is an under-

stock is carefully selected and is fully up in quality with any of similar kind anywhere. Mr. Frans was the first business man when the town started and he has never since ceased to occupy the position of first merchant of Union. Mr. D. W. Frans, the junior member of the firm, is the oldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Frans, and he is an active and energetic business man fully abreast of the times.

### V. T. Arn.

This gentleman was born in Ohio within a hundred and fifty miles from Cincinnati, twenty-five years ago in February. Mr. Arn located in Union August 28th, 1908, and bought into a partnership with Will A. Frans in the Union Meat Market on the 19th of October last. While Mr. Frans has an interest in the market, Mr. Arn manages its affairs and has entire charge of everything connected with it.

Every article of food usually found in a similar place is found in the Union Market in abundance and of the best quality.

The firm maintains its own killing establishment and slaughters all beef and pork used in Union.

Mr. Arn is a young and aggressive



MISSOURI PACIFIC RAILWAY STATION

taker, and does all the work in that line, even to embalming. He also has a hearse, and is prepared to give funerals his direct attention in matters pertaining to first-class undertaking. He was united in marriage to Miss Nina Lynd on the 16th day of March, 1907, and is the happy possessor of a most accomplished wife and a darling baby girl. Mr. Upton is known well in all the territory tributary to Union, and by his genial qualities and splendid business management he has come to the front as one of the leading business men of Cass county, with a trade that is a credit to a merchant much older in the same business in Cass or Otoe counties.

### R. H. Frans & Son.

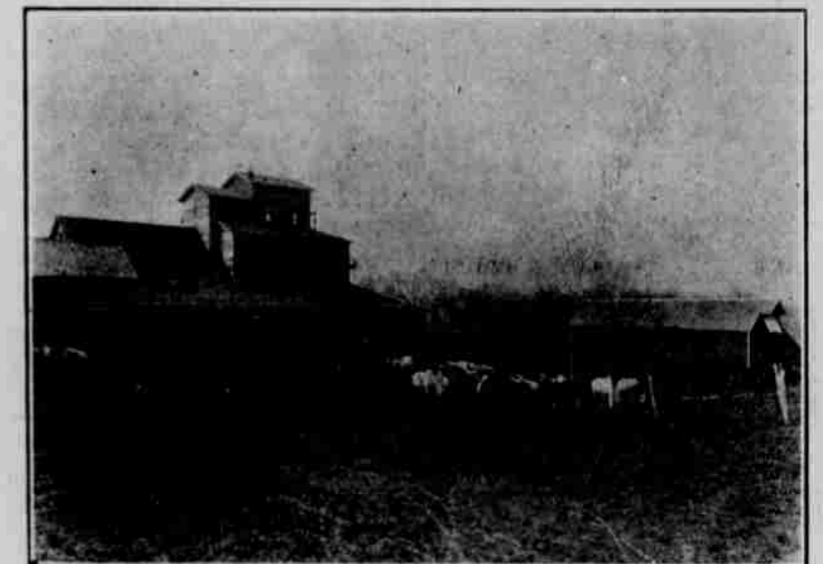
Mr. R. H. Frans of Union is the oldest resident of the town. In 1887 he organized the firm of R. H. Frans & Co., under which name the business

business man who is well thought of in the community in which he cast his lot, and it is only a question of time that he makes a record for himself of an enviable character.

### F. H. McCarthy.

Mr. McCarthy was born and reared in Otoe County and remained at home until eight years ago when he removed to Union and entered the grain business. He has built up a good business in that line and handles all kinds of grain, buying from the farmers in Liberty precinct and shipping mostly to St. Louis, where he finds the market has a more stable character than at other points.

Mr. McCarthy is an active man and outspoken in his opinion. While he holds decided views he never allows himself to interfere with the opinions of others. As a result he is highly esteemed as a man and neighbor. His business is conducted alike



A. L. BECKER'S FEED BARN AND ELEVATOR

was successfully maintained until March 23rd, 1908. At that time Mr. D. W. Frans, a son of R. H. Frans, was admitted into partnership and "the big brick store" is now known to the public as R. H. Frans & Son. The stock carried is a general one and comprises dry goods, groceries, shoes, chinaware, etc.

Mr. R. H. Frans was born in Iowa in 1854 and came to Nebraska in 1883 and located at Factoryville. He moved to Union in 1887 when the place was first organized and has been the leading merchant ever since. The store is a commodious brick, amply sufficient to supply the needs of a larger place than Union. The

along all lines and he has the confidence of farmers with whom he deals.

### Joseph W. Banning.

Born in Otoe County, Nebr., just south of the Cass County line, is the sole dealer in Agricultural Implements, Buggies, Wagons, Gasoline Engines and anything usually kept by an up-to-date implement dealer. He also carries an up-to-date line of Furniture, Pumps, Pipes, Windmills, Tanks and Plumbing goods. Taking the advantage of saving freight he buys mostly in car lots, giving him a chance to figure lower than some of his competitors.



R. H. FRANS & SON'S STORE