

THE VILLAGE OF AVOCA

A Brief Historical Sketch of One of Cass County's Thriving Little Towns---Brief Biographical Sketches

Avoca, one of the most prosperous little towns in Cass or Otoe counties, is located near the southern line of the county and fifteen miles west of the Missouri river, and two miles from the Otoe county line. In the location of Avoca, or about the time the Missouri Pacific railroad was completed through the town, great hopes of securing a line of the Wabash Railroad were entertained. The route had been surveyed and had been much talked of for several years. It was destined to cross the Missouri Pacific at this point and a big town was expected. The town was platted for Amos Tefft, the first settler and owner of the land. The town promised great things, and in a very few months eight store rooms were erected. The postoffice was established in 1857, with S. J. Carr, postmaster, the office being at that time located about two miles east of the present town. Amos Tefft was appointed postmaster after the office was removed to the village. At the time the town was laid out the best land could be bought for \$15 and \$20 per acre. That same soil cannot be bought now for less than \$90 and \$125 per acre. From the date of its incipience Avoca has always been a good business point, and today is one of the best stock and grain markets in the county. All lines of trade are represented here and the merchants are all prosperous and happy, seemingly contented with their lot. Avoca has charms peculiar to itself. Nature has done much to make this so, and no one can long remain here and not be impressed with a feeling of reverence and relief for the great artist of the beautiful. The location and general surroundings are simply grand, so much so, that one is impressed with the many elegant homes, shady streets and well kept lawns. All modern and up-to-date homes, with a sublime appearance. The citizens of Avoca are of that friendly, kind and courteous class that one likes to meet and mingle with. The little town does not greet you upon entrance with vain, unsightly, pretentious blocks of business houses such as one sees in the cities, where men slave their lives away, seeking the dollar—the god of day—unmindful of the fact that they owe something to their families and the world, but her business houses will compare favorably with those of any towns of its size in Nebraska and the stores are up-to-date in every respect. Avoca is right in the midst of the finest agricultural and stock raising country in the west, and those who have tilled the soil for the past twenty-five years, and came here poor men can now count their wealth by the thousands of dollars, and are indifferent to the outside world.

Avoca boasts of a good graded school, one of the most substantial banks in the county, two large grain elevators, municipal acetylene gas plant, a commercial club of which J. C. Zimmerer is president, and H. G. Wellensiek is secretary. Two large and well equipped general stores supply the demands of the territory tributary to the town in that line. One of the largest hardware and furniture stores in western Cass is located here, where the housekeeper is supplied with everything from a baby carriage to the finest bed room suits and ranges, rugs, etc. Also here can be found one good lumber yard, that supplies the demand of the people, flour and feed store, one excellent hotel, one doctor, one lawyer, confectionery, two implement houses, one of the neatest drug stores in the county, one jeweler, two barber shops, one meat market, one livery barn, one blacksmith shop, two contractors, one well regulated saloon, one paint shop, one telephone exchange and about 350 well contented and happy citizens. Ministerially speaking, the community is guided as to their spiritual welfare by two pastors—Congregational and Christian churches—who have very fair edifices here, with a respectable membership of each. The Odd Fellows and Modern Woodmen have each a large membership, and are prospering nicely. The citizens of Avoca are very social, as the number of social societies in vogue here will bear evidence. Take it all in all, this village is a pleasant place in which to reside and no one need look for a more pleasant class of citizens among whom to reside, because they will make a dismal failure in an effort to do so. Following will be found a few of the prominent, energetic and enterprising firms of this little town, who have contributed their mite in assisting the Journal in the publication of this anniversary edition:

Dunkak & Maseman.

Louis F. Dunkak, senior member of the firm of Dunkak & Maseman, who have the only hardware and furniture store in Avoca, was born in Hanover, Germany, 39 years ago. He came to America when only 14 years old, landing in New York City, where he remained one year. From which city he came

direct to Avoca, where for several years he worked on a farm in the summer and clerked in a store in winter, until 1895, when he was married, and then made farming his permanent business, until he moved to town to assume his duties as a member of the above firm. Mr. Dunkak has an excellent family and owns a new and up-to-date home in this village. Mr. Dunkak is a member of the I. O. O. F. in which order he takes a great interest.

George D. Maseman, the junior member of the firm, was born in Mason county, Illinois on the 15th day of September, 1885. He came here with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Maseman, when only eight years of age and you might say was reared upon his father's farm, adjoining Avoca. He received a common school education and attended the Lincoln Business College for several months.

He clerked for one year for J. H. Arends & Sons at the village of Elmwood. He was united in marriage with Miss Minnie Mohr, of Syracuse, on the 11th day of January, 1909, and started in life under the most favorable prospects for a long, happy and useful career.

A very essential branch of business in the up-building of a town or city, and for public and private convenience is a well stocked up-to-date hardware and furniture house and it can be said to the credit of Messrs Dunkak & Maseman that Avoca is fully equipped in this respect. This firm carries a larger stock of hardware, stoves, and furniture than any firm of any town double the size of Avoca in the state of Nebraska. The second floor of their building is filled with a new line of furniture. In this department they carry a full and complete line of plain and fancy furniture, undertaking, wood goods, cloth and burial robes. They take charge of funerals, from crepe to flowers and assist in the last sad rites in laying away the departed ones from earth.

In connection with their other departments, they have a harness and saddlery department, where can be bought all such supplies as cheap as at any place on earth. The beauty of it is, they have in their employ, Mr. W. H. Hill, of Seward, Neb., who is a splendid workman and makes all the harness by hand which insures every piece to be just as represented.

On the 5th day of November, 1907, Messrs Dunkak & Maseman purchased their present business from the heirs of the late Joseph Graham, deceased, and by being affable with everybody, and being first-class business men, they have built up a trade they should be proud of, and no doubt are. Their store is a model of neatness in every particular, having "a place for everything and everything in its place," and the people can see nearly on first sight, what they want without asking. Avoca people and the surrounding country should feel a pride in supporting this firm, for they are enterprising in their efforts to please.

J. M. McFarland, Contractor.

The subject of this sketch came to Avoca in its infancy days, and has resided here ever since, his avocation being that of carpenter and contractor. Many of the residences of this vicinity stand as fair specimens of his splendid workmanship. That is the reason Mr. McFarland is busy the year round. The people know that he is a man whose mechanism as well as his record can be depended upon in the construction and planning of new buildings, and is sought by those who contemplate the erection of a new store house or new residence or barn. Mr. McFarland is married and owns a comfortable home.

Some time since Mr. McFarland saw that there was one branch of trade not represented in Avoca that was very much needed—a flour and feed store—and opened up an establishment of this character. The people appreciate his enterprise in this direction from which can be obtained any and everything kept in stock by such an establishment—flour, bran, corn meal, chops, etc. Mrs. McFarland superintends this branch of the business while her husband is occupied with his carpenter work. So far the business has proved very good, and in the future he expects to branch out on a larger scale. Mr. and Mrs. McFarland are excellent people and have the respect and confidence of the people of Avoca and surrounding country.

Gus F. Mohr, Saloon.

Mr. Mohr was born in Otoe county on May 3, 1878, where he was born and reared on a farm and where he remained until 1905, when he went to Berlin and began tending bar for Louis Wulf. He was in the employ of Mr. Wulf for one year, and then went back to the farm, where he remained until the following July. In 1906, he was united in marriage with Miss Agnes Swartzman, making their home with Mr. Mohr's parents, until 1908, when he came to Avoca, and in connection with Amel Amande, of Syracuse, opened a saloon. This partnership continued until the first of May of this year, when Mr. Mohr purchased Mr. Amande's interest and continues the business at the old stand, carrying in stock the very finest brands of liquors, cigars and the finest beer on draught and bottled, on the market. Mr. Mohr is a very quiet and unassuming young man, and it can be said, to his credit, that he keeps an up-to-date saloon in every respect in neatness and order. Gus Mohr is one of those genial fellows you don't meet every day, and by his gentlemanly qualities has won the confidence and respect of all who have the pleasure of his acquaintance, and the people are happy in knowing that they can boast of having such a gentleman to run their saloon.

Ora E. Copes, Druggist.

The above named gentleman was born near Atlanta, Illinois, November 15, 1876, and came to Nebraska City with his parents in 1877, where they resided for twelve years. From there they moved to a farm near Dunbar, thence to Cook, Neb., where his parents still live. The subject of this sketch graduated from the Cook High school in 1896, then entered the drug store of O. F. Harlan at that place, and remained until 1901, when he purchased the drug stock of Mr. George H. Betz, at Avoca, and where he has enjoyed a successful business ever since.

Mr. Copes was united in marriage with Miss D. Cecil Young, of Cook, and while no children are living to bless this union, they are happy and contented in the possession of each other's love.

Mr. Copes' old store room becoming inadequate to accommodate his growing trade and increasing stock, a new building was erected especially for his business. The same is 22 by 60 with all modern improvements, with new furniture, etc. Here his stock shows to a good advantage, and in the arrangement of his goods, we can say Mr. Copes can boast of having one of the prettiest establishments of its character in the state. Here can be found everything usually found in a drug store, including books, stationary, notions, toilet

Gillin is active and quick to grasp the business situation.

The two gentlemen are very popular with all classes.

The store comprises all sorts of merchandise usually kept in a general merchandise store. The stock is carefully selected to meet the requirements of the people of Avoca and the surrounding country and is kept at its best at all times. Modern goods and close prices being kept always in mind.

John Busch, Lumber Dealer.

Avoca can boast of one of the most complete and up-to-date lumber yards in Cass or Otoe counties. John Busch, the present proprietor, was reared in North Branch precinct, Otoe county, and came to Avoca nearly two years ago, and in connection with Mr. Sam. Johnson, bought the lumber yard.

About seven months since, Mr. Busch bought Mr. Johnson's interests and is now "going it alone."

The stocks carried by Mr. Busch consists of the very best qualities of hard and soft pine lumber, doors, lime, cement and in fact all kinds of building material. Mr. Busch is a splendid business man, and being well acquainted with the people and territory tributary to Avoca, does a big business. His prices are as low as those of his competitors of the nearby towns, and withal a clever gentleman to deal with. The farmers, as a general rule prefer to come to Avoca to that of going to other towns to get their building supplies. Mr. Busch's motto is "to sell the best at a fair profit and please the patrons," and it is unnecessary to remark that he is holding good to this proposition.

B. C. Marquardt & Co.

This is the oldest mercantile establishment in Avoca, and the best known in the section of country surrounding the town. Mr. B. C. Marquardt, the senior member of the firm, was born in Germany and came to the United States 40 years ago. He lived in Freeport, Illinois, for six years and moved from that town to Fremont, Nebraska, where he resided until 1882. In that year he went to Avoca and in connection with a brother opened the store which has ever since been continued under the name of Marquardt.

The store is known as a place where every thing sold is exactly represented to be what it is and no one connected with the establishment is allowed to tell anything but the straight fact concerning all merchandise. The stock includes dry goods, groceries, clothing, boots, shoes, etc., and every thing is of the best quality in every department.

Mr. L. J. Marquardt, a nephew is associated with the elder Marquardt in the management of the store and this gentleman also enjoys the esteem of all in the community.

No town in the county is better provided with reputable tradesmen than Avoca and it is a growing little place.

Straub Bros.

Situated near Avoca, Neb., is the fine stock farm of Straub Bros., who for years have made a specialty of breeding fine cattle, paying direct attention to the celebrated Galloways, a herd of which they established over twenty years ago, the foundation of their herd being imported direct from Scotland, arriving at their farm in April, 1887. From the very beginning the purchased cattle have demonstrated plenty of scale and quality, as the showing in late years has proven. This herd had for its foundation sire Dalkieth, 9634, (3828) by Scotland Booster, (669), one of the greatest sires of the breed. They have continued adding to their herd from time to time by purchasing top-notchers in various sales of importance. In Chicago in 1902, they bought the top of all offerings, when they purchased the great show and breeding bull, Grand Scatter. This animal was a success as a sire in the herd of Thomas Biggs, of Scotland, who was the foreign judge at the International that year. At this sale they also purchased a two-year-old International prize winning bull and four choice heifers, all bred by the best breeders in Scotland.

In 1904 they bought Scottish Standard of Durhambill, whose sire was champion of both continents. His dam, the gold medal cow, Louise 2nd of Durhambill. He himself won Sweepstakes at the Nebraska State Fair. Also sire of Junior Sweepstakes, female, at the same place in 1907. They have used Morio of Castlemilk, who was so successfully

shown at Castle Douglas, Scotland. He was also first prize winner at the International, Chicago, as a two-year-old. Today Straub Bros. have at the head of their herd Captain Tarbroech, who stood at the top of the yearling class where there were over one hundred entered at the Castle Douglas bull show in Scotland, in 1907, won first and Junior Champion at the International, Chicago, same year. He is the undefeated two-year-old of the 1908 show circuit.

Recognizing the show ring as one of the best possible means of bringing a good herd before the general public, Straub Bros. exhibited a full show herd at some of the biggest stock shows and stock fairs on the circuit in 1908, exhibiting at the Iowa State Fair, Des Moines; Nebraska State Fair, Lincoln; Interstate Fair and Exposition at Denver; Colorado State Fair at Pueblo; Interstate Fair, St. Joseph, Mo.; Illinois State Fair, Springfield; Mis-



HON. V. W. STRAUB

souri State Fair, Sedalia; American Royal, Kansas City, Mo.; Otoe Breeders' Association, Nebraska City, and the International Exposition, Chicago.

Messrs. Straub Bros. have the honor and credit of winning a prize every time one of their animals was led into the show ring at the above named places, and a large per cent being first and champions. They won first on exhibition herd at such stock shows as St. Joseph, Kansas City and Chicago. Also own and exhibit the grand champion female at Lincoln, Denver, Pueblo, Sedalia, Kansas City and Chicago. They also bred, owned and exhibited the undefeated heifer calf. They bred the three pure bred steers shown by the University of Nebraska at the last International in Chicago; winning first on calf, second on yearling, and first prize in carcass contest, all breeds competing. At the American Royal, Kansas City, a souvenir cup was won on best fitted herd. At Nebraska City a cup was awarded them on the best female of any age. At Denver a bronze medal was voted to Straub Bros. by the board of directors for having a meritorious exhibit of cattle. Buyers will always find good cattle for sale at reasonable prices, and can select from twenty different families, including the best to be found in America, Canada and Scotland.

Mr. V. W. Straub of the above firm is president of the American Galloway Breeders Association and president of the Bank of Avoca. Avoca is located on the M. P. railroad, about forty miles south of Omaha. It will pay all fine cattle breeders to visit the Straub Bros. at their stock farm, near Avoca, if they want the best cattle in the land, and inspect this herd. If it is impossible to make them a personal visit, write them for further particulars.

Dr. J. W. Brendel.

Dr. Brendel was born at Big Springs, Boone County, Indiana, in the year of 1880, and came to Nebraska with his parents, Dr. and Mrs. B. F. Brendel, in 1883, locating at Murray, where his father has since practiced medicine. The subject of this sketch commenced the study of his chosen profession in 1897 at the Lincoln Medical College, finishing the course in 1901, staying with his father during his vacations. Dr. Brendel took Post Graduate course in the Chicago Chemical College in the year of 1904. He was one of the youngest practitioners in the state, starting at Avoca at the age of 21, in the year 1901, and has been there ever since, meeting with phenomenal success from the very start. In 1907, he was united in marriage with Miss Minnie Marquardt, a young lady who was reared in the vicinity, and is known for her most charming manners and excellent qualities. Dr. Brendel is very attentive to his patients, and being a young man of sterling qualities has won for himself an enviable reputation, both as a citizen and a physician.

There are no better men anywhere than Dr. J. W. Brendel, and the people of Avoca are proud that he is one among them.

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RESIDENCE OF FRED RUHGE

The Bank of Avoca.

This institution is a state bank and a very prosperous one. Either as officers or stock-holders some of the leading men of Avoca are identified with it.

With a capital and surplus aggregating \$15,000 the bank is fully capable of handling all legitimate business which may come its way. In as small a place as Avoca one would hardly expect to find very large personal deposits, yet the Bank of Avoca has over \$115,000 on deposit as an average.

The officers are V. W. Straub, president; Henry Wohlers, vice president and H. G. Wellensiek, cashier.

The last named gentleman has been with the bank for the past two years and has the active management of it.

Mr. Wellensiek was born in Otoe County 24 years ago, his former home being Syracuse. Mr. Wellensiek is a well trained business man fully able to meet any exigency which may arise at any time. He is well liked in the community and takes a prominent part in the affairs of the town. The bank's business extends over the territory tributary to Avoca and is constantly growing. The picture below shows the banking office.



BANK OF AVOCA'S BUILDING