

The CHIEF

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THE ONLY DEMOCRATIC PAPER IN
WEBSTER COUNTY

The city fathers are to be commended for their efficient work on the streets and alleys. The roads they are making are really excellent and are a credit to any people. The cement culvert thirty six inches wide which will divert all water which falls in the northwestern part of the city direct to the creek is a good plan and the money is well spent. Let the good work go on.

There seems to be a little undercurrent over the county expressing dissatisfaction at Red Cloud because so many candidates for office filed from this city. The impression seems to prevail that Red Cloud as a city is responsible for this state of affairs, but this is far from true. In the first place, any citizen of the county is free to run for office under the primary law and all he has to do is to pay his filing fee. No one is barred. In the second place, if Red Cloud really wished to capture all the offices she would see to it that only one candidate filed for each office. When two or more from one place file for the same office it gives the fellow in the other part of the county a better show and usually means his nomination. We plead not guilty.

We have received so many assurances that our idea of a county commercial club is a move in the right direction that we feel encouraged to go a little further and see if that organization cannot be established. There are so many things which affect the county as a whole that there ought to be some one who would have the authority to go ahead and attend to the business. We have had our Fourth and our chautauqua and now the county fair will soon be held in Bladen. This fair is a county matter and the entire county should take an interest and make it the best ever given in this part of the state. We know our Bladen brethren well enough to know that they would welcome any assistance from the rest of the county, and so it is with Blue Hill, Cowles and Guide Rock. With an organization of the county anything attempted by any of the towns would be a success and that is what we are all after. In order to set the ball rolling we are going to take the liberty to name the following men to act as a committee to formulate a county commercial club: Fred Good, Cowles; L. Pelsiger, Blue Hill; V. S. Hall, Bladen; H. C. Wright, Rosemont; Wm. Irons, Inavale, and F. W. Cowden, Red Cloud. We trust that these men will serve in this capacity, organize clubs in their localities, then meet and elect permanent officers.

To The Public

RED CLOUD, NEBR., Aug. 12th, 1911.
The board of trustees of the Red Cloud Cemetery Association for several years have been trying to evolve some system that would result in the creation of a cemetery that the citizens of Red Cloud, and especially the lot owners, would be proud of.

The board have generously given their time and efforts gratuitously to promote this and it is no small tax on their time.

The present plan has met the approval and commendation of the progressive and public spirited citizens of the community and was inaugurated solely on the confidence the board entertained in the good will and co-operation of the public.

The transformation from a jungle of old grass and noxious weeds to a nicely kept lawn, as it shows today, is the work of only one year and will continue to improve each succeeding year as the work progresses.

The last rains caused the sinking of thirty-eight graves from one to two feet, leaving ghastly holes exposed to view.

What would have been your verdict if they had been allowed to remain so, or the cemetery been permitted to grow up into an unsightly waste?

Your pride and public spirit would revolt at the idea, and do violence to every sense of Christian civilization.

Some few have been and are caring for their own lots to the satisfaction of the superintendent, which is all right, but the large majority will not and in fact can not do it. It is impracticable and no one can do it as well and cheaply as the association can, and preserve the necessary uniformity of the whole cemetery.

Any neglect or refusal to comply with this humane request must be interpreted as a protest against the improved conditions so apparent in the last year and a discriminating public will place a proper estimate on their actions. Respectfully submitted,
RED CLOUD CEMETERY ASSN.

History of the Earliest Farming in Nebraska

(Adapted from Sheldon in Farm Magazine.)

The first report we have on farming in the Nebraska country is found in the letter of Francisco Vasquez Coronado to the king of Spain, dated October 20, 1541. In July of that year Coronado found the people of the province of Quivera raising corn, beans and melons. How long these crops had been grown in the plains region of Kansas and Nebraska can only be conjectured. From the floors and fireplaces and from the concealed cellars or caches beneath the floors of prehistoric homes in eastern Nebraska, explored by R. E. Gilder and other Nebraska ethnologists, have been taken parched kernels of corn. Five to ten feet of soil blown by the winds or carried upward by earthworms now cover the floors and fireplaces of these earliest Nebraska homes. A thousand years ago is not too distant a date to give to these early corn raisers in the fertile valleys of our state.

There is also little doubt that all the crops cultivated by the Indian inhabitants of Nebraska had been developed from their wild forms in a region far to the south and their seed brought to these plains by migrating bands. The common edible wild vegetables of this region, such as the tippin or sweet wild turnip, the Indian tribes were content to dig from the native soil without attempt at domestication. In fact, of the numerous edible fruits and vegetables of the Nebraska region, including the astragalus or buffalo pea, the wild bean, the buffalo berry, the wild currant, the sand cherry and others, none of them have been developed to any considerable extent by cultivation even at the present time.

From the date of the Coronado expedition in 1541, for the following 150 years there is no further report in historical literature upon farming in the Nebraska region. A dispatch from the French governor at New Orleans to Paris, dated April 11, 1766, states that two Canadians had arrived there who for two years had been going from village to village along the Missouri river and that they said it was the most beautiful country in all the world and that the savages there kept horses. This is the first record we have of horse raising among the western Indians, indicating that in the 150 years which had elapsed since the first Spaniards under Coronado had reached the plains, the descendants of horses brought by the Spaniards from Europe had reached the Missouri river and were bred by the Indian tribes there. The documents of the French colonial office for the next fifty years contain a number of brief references to the Nebraska country, secured from the early adventurous fur traders who penetrated this region and even intermarried with the women of the native tribe, but evidently had little eye for agriculture. The wealth of mines along the Missouri is the burden of the tales of these early travelers.

The first authentic description we have of Nebraska is that made by the Mallet brothers, who wintered with the Pawnees on the Loup or Elkhorn river in 1789, and in the spring of 1790 named the Platte river and followed its valley as far west as the forks, thence crossing southwestwardly to Santa Fe. They accurately described the topography, but say nothing of the primitive agriculture which we know was carried on by the Pawnees in that day.

Lewis and Clark found the cultivated fields of the Otoes and Pawnees along the Platte in the vicinity of Ashland and in Dakota county, in the neighborhood of Homer.

The father of improved agriculture in Nebraska was Manuel Lisa, a Spanish fur trader, who first reached Nebraska from St. Louis in the summer of 1807, and who was for the next thirteen years the leading spirit in Nebraska enterprises and the real ruler of this region. Lisa established a large trading post called Fort Lisa eight miles above Omaha on the Missouri river and numerous other branch trading posts at other places. His passion was to make money in the fur trade, and incident thereto to promote the welfare of the Indian tribes in every possible way in order to secure more furs and more profits. So we find him promoting peace between the tribes, since dead Indians brought no furs to his trading posts. The report of his services in behalf of improved agriculture in Nebraska may best be given in his own words as found in a letter from him to Governor Clark at St. Louis, dated July 1, 1817, from which these extracts are taken:

"Before I ascended the Missouri as sub-agent, your excellency remembers what was accustomed to take place. The Indians of that river killed, robbed and pillaged the traders; these practices are no more. Not to mention the others, my own establishments furnish the example of destruction then, of safety now. I have one at the Mahas, more than 600 miles up the Missouri, another at the Sioux, 600 miles further still. I have from 100 to 200 men in my employment, large quantities of horses and horned

cattle, of hogs, of domestic fowls; not one is touched by an Indian.

"I impose upon myself great privations; ten months in a year I am buried in the forest, at a vast distance from my own house. I appear as the benefactor, and not as the pillager, of the Indians. I carried among them the seed of the pompon (pumpkin,) from which I have seen in their possession the fruit weighing 160 pounds. Also the large bean, the potato, the turnip; and these vegetables now make a comfortable part of their subsistence, and this year I have promised to carry the plough. Besides, my blacksmiths work incessantly for them, charging nothing. I lend them traps, only demanding preference in their trade. My establishments are the refuge of the weak and of the old men no longer able to follow their lodges; and by these means I have acquired the confidence and friendship of these nations, and the consequent choice of their trade."

Agriculture in Nebraska was first carried on by Americans in that beautiful breadth of rich second bottom lying about two miles southeast of the present town of Ft. Calhoun, in Washington county. On the bluff above the river where Lewis and Clark held their first council with Nebraska Indians on August 3, 1804, the United States government established a fort in 1819. For the next eight years this fort was the metropolis of the trans-Missouri region. Its garrison included several hundred men of the Rifles and Sixth infantry regiments. Besides these there were teamsters, fur traders and the other usual hangers-on of a frontier fort. All the plains tribes came here to trade. A Spanish embassy came here from Santa Fe to make a treaty with the Pawnee nation. The population of this first city in Nebraska was from 500 to 1,000 people. Food for this population was produced on the rich flat land adjacent to the fort and lying about a little lake on a bench slightly elevated above the first Missouri bottom. Several hundred acres of land were in cultivation. The official reports and regimental records show that in one year several thousand bushels of corn and wheat were raised, with potatoes and vegetables in abundance to supply the garrison. Several hundred head of beef cattle also were kept.

The reports of the farming operations carried on here uniformly speak in the highest praise of the agricultural possibilities of this region in that distant day nearly one hundred years ago. The first war known in Nebraska annals, the Arikara war of 1823, came on. It was brought on by the Arikara tribe, then living on the Missouri river a little above the present site of Pierre, S. D., attacking a party of fur traders. Large reinforcements of men, horses, cannon, steamboats and keel boats were rushed up the river from St. Louis. Ft. Atkinson, on the old Council bluffs, adjoining the present town of Fort Calhoun, was the rendezvous and base of supplies. The rich black land of Washington county furnished the food. The expedition besieged and cannonaded the Arikara village, killed Gray Eyes, chief of the Arikaras, compelled the tribe to sue for peace, and then returned down the river in the fall.

Four years later, in 1827, Ft. Atkinson was abandoned upon orders from the war department, its garrison transferred to Ft. Leavenworth, its buildings dismantled and the fertile Nebraska fields which had been the granary, vegetable garden and meadow for the first city in our state—the fields which had been the scene of the first agricultural experiment station in the entire Transmissouri region—were abandoned, and so quickly and thoroughly does kindly nature restore primitive conditions, that thirty years later these same fields were taken by the first settlers in Washington county without comment or apparent notice of the fact that they had been farmed a generation before. The reports and records of these first farming operations in Nebraska lay forgotten in the files at Washington, but it must never be forgotten by the agricultural historian that the first successful farming in Nebraska on a large scale was carried on by the military near the old fort on the Council bluffs in Washington county as far back as 1820.

Prince Maximilian von Wied, the great German traveler, came up the Missouri river in the steamer Yellowstone in 1833. From his book, published at Coblenz, Germany, in 1838, I translate the following glimpses of Nebraska dairy farming, hog raising and farming as they existed at Bellevue and Cabanne's post, six miles above Omaha, in that year:

"About 2 o'clock in the afternoon (May 3, 1833) we reached Mr. Louis Fontanelle's residence (at Bellevue), which stood out from a group of buildings, in front of fields of Indian corn, in front of pleasant green wooded hills. The land here is extraordinarily fruitful and a poorly cultivated acre yields 100 bushels of maize. Cattle also succeed here splendidly, give much milk, but require salt from time to time. Mr. Fontanelle thought he would have 5000 head of swine in a few years if the Indians did not steal too many from him.

"On May 4, our ship, like a smoke

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vomiting monster, continued up the river, frightening all living creatures; geese and ducks flew in all directions. At Mr. Cabanne's trading post we saluted with a cannon shot, and at once made landing. A small brook, with steep banks, comes forth from a little side valley in which are located the corn plantations for the support of the inhabitants. Mr. Cabanne had planted here fifteen acres of maize, which produce nearly 2,000 bushels of this grain, for the richness of the soil is very great."

Such is the story of the earliest agriculture and stock raising in Nebraska, forgotten beginnings in the days of prehistoric savages, the early Indians, the Spanish discoverers, the first fur traders and military garrisons. This story relates itself solely to the narrow belt of black valley along the Missouri river. The story of the first farming ventures in the region west-

ward, on the open prairie, in the sandhills and the high plains, is a more recent, but fascinating, chapter in the agricultural history of our fair and fruitful state.

Free Library Books.

The Nebraska Public Library Commission will have an exhibit at the State Fair September 4th to 8th in the educational building, to which the attention of every one interested in books is directed. Books are loaned by the commission to people in the rural districts and small towns of the state free of charge. In this exhibit will be shown a regular traveling library, a library for country schools, and a library for club work or special study of any kind. There will be attendants in charge to explain how these books may be obtained and to answer all questions concerning the work. The Nebraska Library Commission

was established by the state legislature in 1901. In the ten years of its organization, it has sent 70,000 books out over the state and the demand for these books is steadily increasing. This year an additional appropriation was given the commission to supply books to the unfortunate who are confined within the thirteen state institutions. After you have seen the aeroplane flights, heard Liberati's band and grand opera singers, the speed contests, etc., do not forget to look up the method of securing a traveling library for your town or community.

Apples for Sale.

400 bu., of sprayed summer apples. On the D. G. Norris farm 5 miles west and 1 south of Red Cloud.

In considering roads, remember that there are few towns that look so good to a farmer that he will kill a horse to get there.