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## Commencement Exercises of Class '09

Commencement exercises in our city are always the center of attraction at this time of the year. This year more than usual interest has been manifested in the program owing to the fact that former students were to again appear before the audience in place of an imported lecture.

The exercises began with the Baccalaureate address Sunday evening at the M. E. church delivered by Rev. M. T. Stiffler.

The speaker chose for his text "Keep thyself Pure."

This was a masterly address and was delivered in Mr. Stiffler's happy manner.

The audience room was filled to its full capacity yet not one showed any signs of restlessness or fatigue thru out the entire discourse. The speaker's principal theme was that greatness was to be sought for but we could not all be great, we could all do better however, than that. It is possible for us all to be good and that is better than greatness.

On Wednesday night the graduating class presented the play dramatized from Ouida's novel "Under Two Flags."

Every member of the class did exceptionally well in this play and the acting was strong in all its parts.

The presentation showed hours of drill and preparation and the class of '09 covered themselves with glory.

Margaret Miner greatly pleased the audience with her perfectly natural manner of expression and her winsome manner. The play was real to her and she handled her part like an experienced actress.

To Rev. Cressman belongs no little credit for his painstaking training. We might have selected a different drama for a public school to play but their acting was all any one could ask for.

The special features of the evening were the piano solos by Gertrude Blackledge and Marie Burke, the vocal solo by Greta Turanue and the duet by Mrs. Albright and Edna Holmes.

Commencement night proper found the opera house again crowded to its full capacity. The class, dressed in their caps and gowns, marched upon the stage promptly at 8:15 and a little time was given the audience to feast their eyes upon the graduates who were about to step upon the threshold of life's active duties.

In the introduction it was explained that the Alumni took charge of the exercises of the evening in response to popular demand. We were much pleased to see the old timers again before a Red Cloud audience and hope that this will be a regular feature of our commencements.

Miss Bernice Potter began the program with a piano solo which was much appreciated by all music lovers present. Miss Bernice has been pursuing a musical course in Chicago and showed by her playing that she had well improved the time spent during the past year.

The invocation was then offered by Rev. Cressman who is always the right man in the right place. The next was a solo by Mrs. Beatrix Florence entitled "Nymphs and Fauns.... Bemberg." She has often charmed the people of this city with her singing but she did exceptionally well last night. Her voice appears more mature and full than it did the last time she sang here.

Fred Maurer was then called upon for a History of the Red Cloud School. We believe that every one will be interested in this history by Mr. Maurer and hence give his address in full here.

Nebraska for a number of years enjoyed the reputation of having a lower per cent of illiteracy among her citizens than any other state in the Union. This came about because her pioneer settlers understood the value of and the necessity for education and educational institutions. We find that the early settlers of Red Cloud were no

laggards in this matter of education. As early as the spring of 1871 we find a school being taught here by Miss Fannie Barber, now Mrs. Fannie McCune, we discover many unique and interesting circumstances clustering about this, the first term of school which was taught in Webster county. The school was taught during the months of June, July and August and Miss Barber, the pretty school ma'am received for her services the magnificent sum of \$15 per month out of which she boarded herself, lived in high style at the Red Cloud stockade and accumulated a nice sum of money during the three months' term. The money which defrayed the expense of this term of school was raised by subscription as no tax for school purposes had yet been levied in Webster county.

The term of school was taught in a sod dug-out located in the bank slightly south east of the residence now occupied by Wade Koontz. There were no windows or door except in the east end of the building, there was a dirt floor, which was kept sprinkled with water during the hot summer days, by the sixteen year old school ma'am, to lower the temperature and settle the dust, and the desks, or rather we should say benches occupied by the pupils were made from cottonwood slabs.

Thus in this humble edifice surrounded by all the hardships and difficulties incident to frontier life was begun the school work, which has gradually grown and expanded until today we find our present splendid school system. Let us pause a moment and wonder what the oppressed and down trodden school ma'am of today, drawing her \$40 or \$50 per month would think were she suddenly placed in a position similar to that occupied by Miss Barber in 1871. We heard a world of complaint about the badly lighted and unsanitary condition of our High school in the Damerell building during the year 1907 let us wonder how they would have relished the idea of attending school in the building over which Miss Barber presided in 1871, lighted and ventilated only from the east end of the structure. During the summer of 1871 a more pretentious sod school house was erected near the present residence of Henry Diedrich and in this building school was taught for several terms. The first official record we find of a school meeting in Red Cloud School District was held April 6th, 1874, the following is the record of the meeting.

The Annual meeting of School District No. 2, County of Webster and State of Nebraska was held at the school house in said district on Monday the 6th day of April 1874 at 7 o'clock P. M. Moderator in the chair. Meeting called to order, David Lutz was elected Moderator for the ensuing three years. On motion it was voted that a school be taught in this district nine months during the coming year, a summer term commencing the 3rd day of May 1874, a fall term commencing the 23rd day of August 1874, and a winter term commencing the 15th day of December 1874. On motion it was ordered that the amount of tax levied on the taxable property of the owners for school purposes for the ensuing year be as follows, for building fund 6 mills on the Dollar, for pay of teachers wages 2 mills on the Dollar, for incidental 2 mills on the Dollar. The following miscellaneous business was transacted. On motion it was decided to place the bell on the top of the school house. On motion it was decided that if it became necessary on account of the increase of the number of pupils the school board may divide the school and employ an assistant teacher. On motion it was voted to purchase twelve cords of wood for the use of the school house, the wood to be delivered by the first day of June 1874. On motion it was decided that the board have two rows of trees planted on the border of the school house block, the trees to be ten feet apart in the row and the rows ten feet apart. On motion it was decided to

have the yard in front of the school house graded up so as to cause the water to run from the house. On motion the meeting adjourned. - I. W. Tulleys, Director.

As early as 1875 we find some of the members of the school district interesting themselves in musical matters enough so that a special meeting of the voters of the school district was called on the petition of five voters of the district October 30th, 1875 for the purpose of determining whether or not the district should purchase a musical instrument. The result of this meeting was discouraging to the music lovers of the district as the voters present at the special meeting decided by a majority of 11 against purchasing a musical instrument.

We find among the early teachers who took part in moulding the destinies of the Red Cloud schools, John R. Wilcox, concerning whom it is said that some of the scholars always had to stop at his house on their way to school to rouse him out of his morning slumbers, Prof. Tulleys, Prof. Springer until in 1875 we find James Gilham in charge of the schools. This was the first year that two teachers were regularly employed and the school divided into two separate buildings. The primary school was taught in a stone structure afterwards known as the Becker property and the building over which Prof. Gilham presided was a frame structure situated on the south side of the present school house grounds. This building was used as a school house, church, court house, opera house and all other public gatherings. Whenever court convened school had to be dismissed until court was adjourned. During the years which followed two other frame buildings were erected and used for school purposes, all located in a row along the south side of the present high school grounds, until at last the present high school building was erected and the old frame buildings were removed from the school grounds and no longer used for school purposes.

We find in 1888 the first official record of a graduating class, in this year there were four graduates, Estella Ducker, Kate Spanogle, Will Ducker and Randolph McNitt.

An investigation outside the records brings to light the fact that at the close of the school year of 1886 Ella Rensburg and Bell Spanogle completed the school course and were entitled to diplomas and credit rating at the State University. At this time the course of study taught at the High School ended with the branches necessary for obtaining a first grade teachers certificate.

It might be interesting at this juncture to read a list of the graduates of the Red Cloud High School as shown by the Alumni record book, the following is the list and the year in which each class graduated. As before stated in the year 1888 there were four graduates Estella Ducker, Kate Spanogle, Will Ducker and Randolph McNitt.

In 1889 Will Letson was the only member in the graduating class.

In 1890 there were three graduates Alex Bentley, John Tulleys and Willa Cather.

In 1891 there was no graduating class but Mary Miner and George Morhart completed the course and were entitled to diplomas, which were given them by order of the school board the year 1908.

In 1892 there were three graduates Harry Holenbeck, Donald Pope and Nellie West.

In 1893 there were ten graduates, Mabel Day, Maude Greenlee, Dora Henderson, Nellie Kaley, Rachael Letson, Trix Mizer, Lulu Potter, Daniel Garber, Bruce Payne and Fred Maurer.

In 1894 there were nine graduates, Retta Able, Bertha Brown, Edgar Cotting, Cora Garber, Caroline Johnson, Susie Kenady, Edwin Overing, Ralph Pope and Alice Rensburg.

In 1895 there were 11 graduates, Roscoe Cather, Emma Cook, Grace Garber, Will Heffelbower, Margaret Miner, Henry Newhouse, George Overing, Daisy Plumb, Mayo Pope, Lois Pope and John Potter.

In 1896 there were 7 graduates, Jennie Bell, Jennette Dilley, Lucy Eames, Mary Eames, Pearl Ludlow, Helen Roby and Mamie Wideman.

In 1897 there were 12 graduates, Vattie Able, Lucy Garber, Mabel Howard, Jessie Kellogg, Susie Rife, Lillian Smith, Ada Skjelver, May Sanborn, Beacie Carpenter, Dennis Schaffolt, James Yelzer and Robert Mitchell.

In 1898 there were 13 graduates, Daisy Frisby, Jessie Ducker, Vance Foe, Dora Grant, Maude Miller, Irene Miner, Sadie Overing, May Trunkey, Viola Ward, Edward Cook, Herbert Cook, Paul Dickson and Paul Perry.

In 1899 there were 12 graduates, Clara Abel, Jessie Cather, Ella Cook, Gertrude Coon, Florence Cotting, Jennie Earkee, Sophie Latham, Grace McClellan, Lucille McCord, Gulebna Reed, Stacey Morhart and Paul Pope.

In 1900 there were 13 graduates, Sherwood Albright, Roy Phelps, Lawrence Pierce, Ed Platt, Agnes Brown, Nellie Fort, Jessie Henderson, Myra Griffith, Ida Kinsel, Grace Skjelver, Ethel Hosmer, Lorena Nustein and Mabel Wells.

In 1901 there were 10 graduates, Mabel Berkwith, Susan Engles, Anna Hallock, Alice Pope, Winnie Sherman, Samuel Foster, Joseph Garber, Hugh Reed, Clarence Gross and Leigh Pope.

In 1902 there were 9 graduates, Aniel Crabbill, Geo. Heffelbower, Darley Plumb, Dean Smith, Bonnie Emigh, Grace Kellogg, Clara Martindale, Mary Peterson, Bertha Potter.

In 1903 there were 10 graduates, Omar Butler, Earl Crabbill, Will Edson, Will Overman, Nettie Fort, Vina Hutchinson, Blanch McCartney, Pearl Pope, Mary Sheldon and Nellie Warren.

In 1904 there were 13 graduates, Grant Bailey, Will Bailey, Lucius Frisbie, Adair Galusha, Holton Letson, Chas. Phares, Dwight Wilson, Mira Cook, Jennie Cotting, Margaret Evans, Blanch Foster, Helen Overman and Mary Temple.

In 1905 there were 10 graduates, Will Brooks, Lloyd Bradbrook, Harry Cramer, Eric Peterson, Vera Crabbill, Mary Damerell, Hazel Lippencott, Blanche Pope, Etta Reiber and Edna Williams.

In 1906 there were 13 graduates, James Cather, Sheridan Phares, Edna Austin, Cora Clauson, Ethel Garber, Annie Gilham, Carrie Goble, Ethel Kenady, Josephine Mizer, Frances Nesbet, Frances Ward, Cora Weesner, Lora Weesner.

In 1907 there were 14 graduates breaking all former records, Stickney Coombs, Frank Dickerson, James Ferguson, Lloyd Hall, Paul Johnson, Julia Engles, Grace Frisbie, Cora Lockhart, Edith Mohler, Mabel Pope, Florence Potter, Zella Taylor, Grace Shute and Macy Spracher.

In 1908 there were 12 graduates, Miner Sherwood, Bruce Robinson, Bruce Beckwith, Esty Smelser, J. H. Kellogg, Chas. Kellogg, Ruth Johnston, Della Lambrecht, Elsie Cather, Margurite Richardson, Marie Shute and Dessie Taylor.

There are 14 in the graduating class this evening making a total of 205 students who have finished our High School course, of this number not including this year's class there have been 66 boys and 135 girls. Up until the year 1893 there had been 14 graduates, 9 boys and 5 girls but in the year's which have followed the percentage of girls has increased until now the girls outnumber the boys nearly two to one. In 1890 there were 7 graduates all of whom were girls. There have been 10 Popses who have graduated, out of this number 7 have been of the family of George Pope, certainly a record of which any family might well be proud. There have been two colored graduates, Sam and Blanch Foster.

We take particular pleasure in calling attention to those Alumni who have gone out into the world, and on their merit won for themselves national reputations, Mrs. Beatrix Florence and Miss Helen Overman in the musical world, Miss Willa Cather in the literary world and Ralph Pope in the military world. It is also a source of

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(Continued on fourth page)