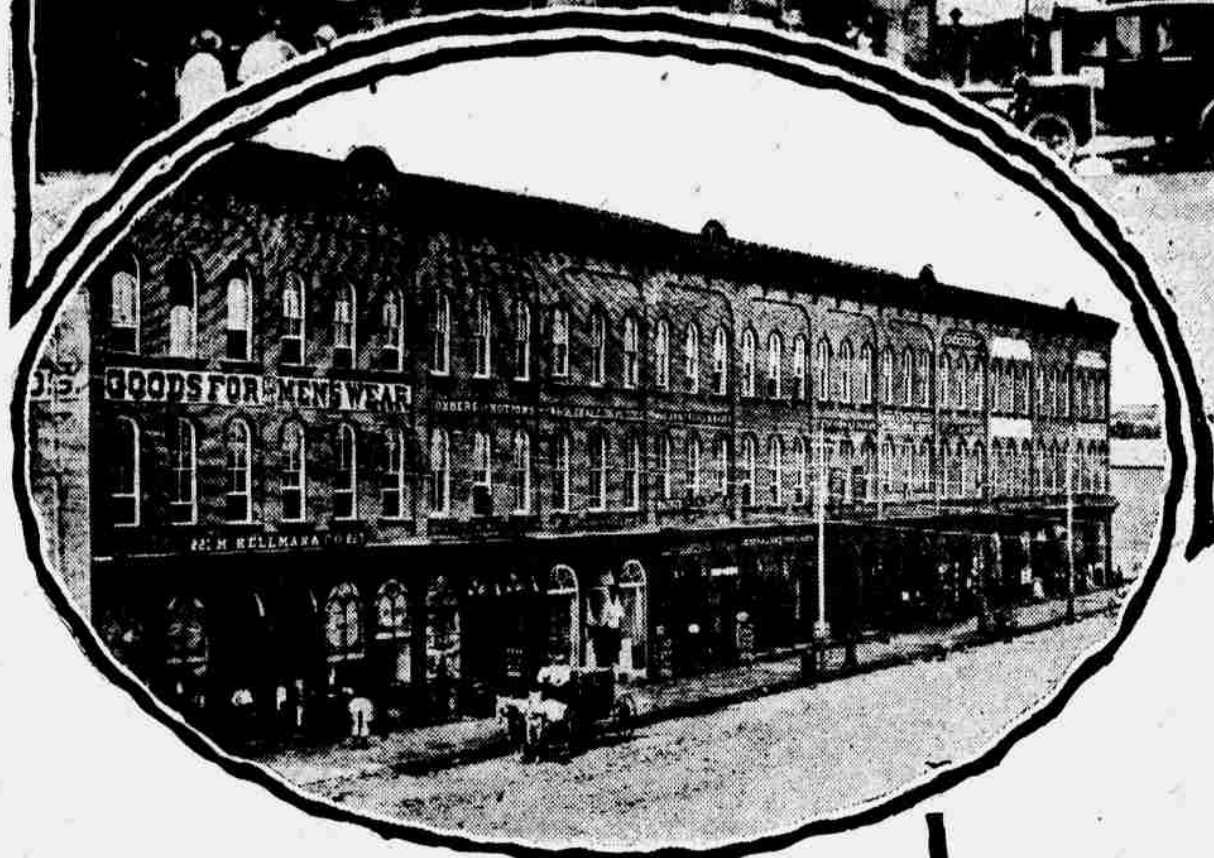


# Dynamic Omaha

When the farmers drove in to do their "trading" in the old days, most of their business was transacted on Farnam street, east of Fourteenth street. Today the shopper finds at her service a retail shopping district extending for blocks. Her patronage is solicited in great stores, where she will find displayed a choice of goods from the markets of the world. An increasingly high standard of merchandise is evident to one who will but watch the great plate glass windows, housing for Madame Omaha's easy inspection wares of all kinds.



All photographs in this series donated to the merchants of Omaha by Louis R. Bostwick, commercial photographer.



1922

When Lewis and Clarke came to the site of the present Omaha in 1804 they found a village of Otoe Indians. Six years later the American Fur Company opened a trading post at Bellevue, where a number of traders exchanged calico and whisky brought up-river from St. Louis, to the Indians for furs and pelts. Among these early fur traders was Peter A. Sarpy, after whom Sarpy county is named.

Council Bluffs was so named by Lewis and Clarke, who held a great pow-wow near there with the Indians in 1804. The great chieftain, Black Bird, who is buried, seated upright on his favorite horse, somewhere on the bluffs overlooking the river, was present, as also were Logan Fontenelle's father and grandfather. The name Council Bluffs was later selected for the frontier settlement that grew up as Kanesville.

The settlement of Omaha was started when the gold seekers, to shorten and straighten the Overland trail en route to California, began to cross the Missouri at Kanesville, abandoning the old trail, which crossed at Westport.

So the landing on the west bank of the river was named Omaha ("up stream") for the Indians who held the nearby land, and who later were to treat with the government for its cession to the white man. Omaha thus became then the Gate City of the straightened Overland trail.

Not all the westward bound throng were gold seekers. Among them were wise and far-seeing men who recognized in Nebraska's fertile prairies potential wealth and plenty to be had for tilling the soil. So settlement was begun.

Roving fur traders, dealing in cloth, whisky and firearms, were the first retail merchants of Omaha. Later, the flatboat and prairie schooner brought supplies and foodstuffs for the first tiny stores.

Far different from the early frontier settlement called Omaha is the Gate City Metropolis of Today, with its miles of pavement, schools, churches, colleges and spiderweb of railroads centering here. The vast mercantile establishments of Omaha in 1922 are no more to be compared with the humble trading posts of yesteryear than are the speeding railroad trains of today to be compared with the lumbering, groaning ox-carts and prairie schooners of the '50s.

Only the ambitious, pulsing spirit that led to the founding of Omaha remains of the pioneer settlement. Its trading posts have given away to great stores which buy in the markets of the world, its little red school house has been replaced by many splendid schools and colleges, its frontier missions are gone and in their places stand a score or more of monumental buildings, cared for by men of broad education and refinement who minister to the spiritual wants of our city. The coming of commerce brought with it first a village, then a town, a small city, and finally Omaha, the Metropolis.

The Omaha Bee, founded in the early 70's, while Omaha was still a village, has grown step by step with the city, and today serves its people by the hundred thousand, in keeping with the growth of population. The pioneer editor who dared to predict 50,000 people for Omaha finds a prototype in The Bee of today, expressing confidence in as great a future growth as ever the past has witnessed.

This is the first of a series of advertisements on Omaha, "The Retail Market," dedicated to the merchants of Omaha by The Omaha Morning Bee, THE EVENING BEE

## Omaha the Great Shopping District of Nebraska