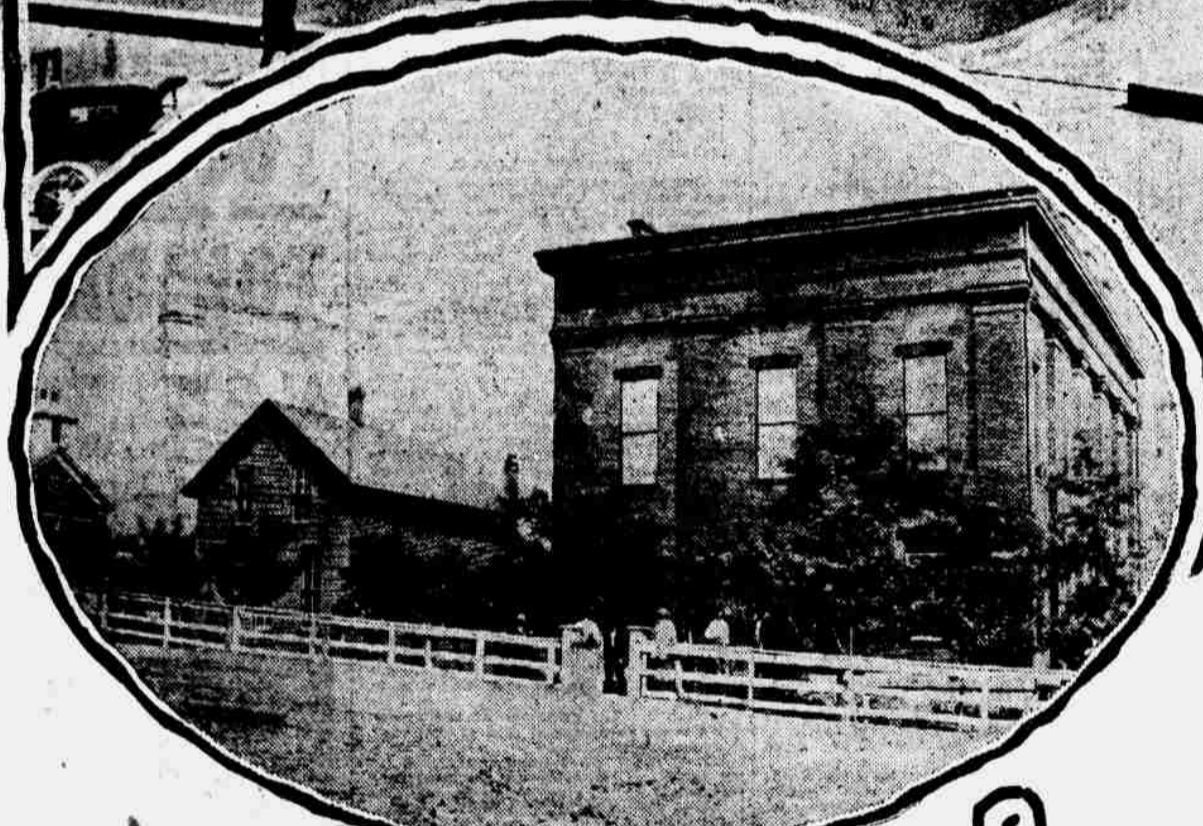




Omaha—the Wonder City



Douglas County business forty years ago was transacted in the modest brick building located at 16th and Farnam, a picture of which is shown. Next to it one sees the frame building that housed the sheriff and his men. Douglas County court house today is a building of which all Nebraska may well be proud. It stands as a beautiful monument to the development of Omaha as a business community.

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



As a result of the Kansas-Nebraska bill President Pierce in 1854 appointed Francis Burt to be governor of the new territory called Nebraska. He journeyed up the Missouri with his official family, intent on establishing the capitol at Florence. Landing at Bellevue, he and his staff were hospitably entertained, and the ambitious residents of the little town sought to persuade him to make theirs the new capitol city. He persisted, however, in his first intention, and continued the voyage. By the time the governor reached Omaha, however, he was too ill to continue, and stopped here. His illness was fatal, and the duties of governor fell on Thomas B. Cuming, secretary of state, who established the first capitol of Nebraska at Omaha.

While the political capitol of the state did not remain in Omaha, our city has become firmly established as the commercial capitol of the great territory of which it is the Gate City.

From 1854 the commercial growth of Omaha was very rapid. The civil war did much for Omaha. It brought governmental recognition of the desirability of closer communication between the east and west coast. Congress encouraged the building of the Atlantic and Pacific Telegraph, the development of which brought to Omaha the Creightons, W. A. Paxton, Edward Rosewater and others who were interested in pioneer telegraphy. These men were later to become the industrial leaders of the city.

The stream of commerce continued to deepen and widen, notably in the field of retail selling,

wherein were men of vast foresight and unlimited faith in Omaha. Enterprising were the merchants of Omaha in the early days, and their names are still remembered. When the first stores were opened, the red men as well as the white were drawn to the Gate City to have their wants supplied. Red Cloud, Red Dog, Spotted Tail, American Horse, Young-Man-Afraid and many others were known to pioneer merchants of Omaha.

But now! Omaha's first crude commercial structures have given way to mammoth temples of trade, where the finest of the world's goods are on sale. The stores and stocks have kept closely in touch with the demands of a growing community and rare indeed would be the product not to be obtained in Omaha today.

The Omaha Bee feels that the merchants who have placed this city in the van of middle western commercial communities will in the future as in the past bend every effort to the continued growth of Omaha, not only commercially, but as a city in which we may all be proud to make our homes and raise our children.

The Omaha Bee, established in 1871 by Edward Rosewater, has always been a widely used medium by which the merchants of Omaha have informed Omaha's Great Shopping District of their wares. The news of merchandise, scanty in those days when only bare necessities were to be had, has grown day by day and month by month until today the discriminating shopper finds in The Bee the news of goods brought to Omaha from all over the world and at prices that encourage economy.

This is the fourth 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