

Reminiscences of a Wayfarer

Some of the important events of the Pioneer Days of Richardson County and Southeast Nebraska, as remembered by the writer, who has spent fifty-one years here.

RULO AS I SAW IT FIFTY YEARS AGO.

Having concluded to stop over and see the town, we went out on the street to begin the rounds. I think this statement needs some explanation, for if stepping into the immensity of all out doors, means going out on the street, we certainly did that. There was nothing in sight to indicate the existence of a street or alley or other municipal thoroughfare, in the whole village, unless the spaces between the houses were such, in which case, as the houses seemed to have fallen out among themselves, and to have set up in separate territory of their own, the town must have consisted of nearly all streets, which of course, could not be. Grass grew everywhere, except in the traveled paths made here and there, by foot passengers, among the dwellings and places of business. There was certainly enough of such highways, and as no two of the houses were built within fifty feet of each other, the foot paths branched off in all directions, and in all shapes from a straight line in places to windings in and out like the trail of a snake in a dusty road. We first visited a store kept by Martin & Goldsbery. The senior member of the firm was a Canadian-Frenchman, while his partner was the same Frank Goldsbery, who not long ago resided in Falls City and is remembered by most of its present residents. Several years ago he removed to Los Angeles, Cal., and has since deceased. I knew him intimately and well every year from that time till he left Nebraska for the Pacific coast. The next person I remember to have seen that day was Mr. A. D. Kirk, a lawyer by profession and one of the early settlers of Richardson County. He was one of its representatives in the first territorial legislature, held at Omaha in the winter of 1855. Mr. Kirk had his office in the store of his brother-in-law, Goldsbery, though from the surroundings I was not impressed with the notion that his law business was very extensive. At the same place I also met another man of the law named Woodfin. He had been in Kansas during the early troubles down there, and I was not slow to perceive that his sympathies were not with the seceding state. In fact he was extremely bitter in his reflections on that class of men, calling them Danites and other names of reproach, equally uncomplimentary. As I was not interested in his political grievances, I took care to let him have the field to himself, a concession I had reason to believe, he construed as an indorsement of what he was saying. Later on Mr. Woodfin came up to Falls City, and though I never was able to find out how good a lawyer he was, I did find that he was a first class chess player. It was about the time that Paul Morphy went over to old Europe and proved himself the greatest chess player in the world; and Mr. Woodfin, having the records of some of the master games that Morphy played over there, went over them with me, with as much enthusiasm and gusto as though he had done the playing himself. On several occasions Morphy had played against ten men at the same time without seeing the boards and had defeated all of them in some instances, and in others had beaten all but one or two and with those had made draws.

Nothing so wonderful had ever been done before, and the whole world was astounded at the almost incredible feat. There were several chess players in town besides myself, and Woodfin, being easily the best, proposed to play all of us in the Morphy style. It turned out that he could play any one of us successfully in that way, but failed when he undertook a greater number. He possessed some very distinctive characteristics and might have made his mark in the world if he had been less anxious to exterminate his old enemies, the Danites. He was a southerner by birth, and believed in the South, its traditions and its institutions, as religiously as did those homeless Israelites by the rivers of Babylon, in the Jerusalem of their younger days. Later on in that same year, and while the great debate between Lincoln and Douglas was in progress, I saw him several times. Of course, the subject of that celebrated contest was frequently discussed. He had some remarkably clear ideas about it, made more clear in the light of subsequent history. He said "Douglas ought not to have accepted Lincoln's challenge for a joint debate. It was bringing the sensitive question before the people in a way never before attempted. Lincoln was forcing Douglas to defend slavery as being morally as well as legally right, and in the present state of public sentiment up north, Douglas would certainly be worsted. He might win his seat in the Senate, but the Democratic party two years hence, would be in the same situation Douglas is now; and no matter what the result of the next presidential election may be, the South will be the loser." That Douglas had already done the South an immeasurable injury with his squatter sovereignty doctrine in the Kansas-Nebraska Bill;—he should have allowed the Supreme Court to settle the question as it had in fact done, in the Dred Scott case. "It is too late now," he said "as Douglas has up-set everything by this last blunder he has made."

Two years afterwards these same detested Danites elected Abraham Lincoln president, and the trouble commenced. I never saw Woodfin but once after that, and then he told me he was going back to his southern home, as he would soon be needed there. That the old union was already destroyed, and that war was as certain to come as daylight in the morning. And so he went, and no doubt was swallowed up in that maelstrom of death and destruction that followed and has been matter of history these forty years, and I heard of him no more.

But goodness, gracious me, while I have been recalling a personal incident of interest to nobody but myself, I have kept my worthy friends idling away their valuable time in Mr. Kirk's office. However, to resume the narrative, I remark, that I have enjoyed the personal and friendly acquaintance of Mr. Kirk from then till now, though he removed from Nebraska several years ago, and now lives at or near Los Angeles, Cal., in the enjoyment of good health, and a hale old age. The next prominent citizen I met that day was Mr. Eli Bedard, one of the proprietors of the town whom I found to be a very genial and pleasant gentleman. I knew him for many years afterwards, and until he ceased from among the living. I met many others that afternoon, whose names

cannot now be given for the want of space.

Mr. Charles Rouleau, another of the town proprietors, and for whom it was named, was absent in the east, I think at Washington, D. C., looking after the interest of the town, and the people, who owned the land on which it stood. It was part of an Indian Reservation called the Half Breed Tract—a strip of country lying between the Great and Little Nemahas, and extending ten miles west from the mouth of each. I made the acquaintance of Rouleau later on, which continued without interruption, till he passed away several years ago. The town as laid out and platted, covered land enough to accommodate a city of the size of Omaha, with several additions in prospect. From the highest point west from the river, my friends showed me the town of Falls City, a few straggling houses, mere specks against the western horizon, and that was my first sight of the town in which fate had decreed I was to make my home for half a century, and how much longer, the One above only knows.

I passed the night at the house of Mr. James Miller, and there met Tom Sare, well known to Falls City people and now residing over the Missouri in or near Mound City. When the war came three years afterwards, Mr. Miller went off to the red fields of the south, and like many others who went on a like errand, never came back. He has many relatives still living in this city. At his house there were quite a number of boarders and I was treated to a lot of first class vanity lying by a rather clumsy set of performers, who were doing the stunt for my special behoof, whom, they no doubt took for a galleable tenderfoot from the "states". The words "the states" were in frequent use by the people west, and always as indicating a section of country a long way off; and I have heard them used in California long after it had become a state, and in precisely the same way, as though there was some difference between the Pacific Coast states and those east of the great ranges. In this case we only had to go about half a mile across the Missouri River to get into one of "the states," yet, they talked that night as though "the states" were thousands of miles away. I heard scores of tales of Indian fights, Buffalo hunts, contests with Grizzly Bears and Mountain Lions; of hair-breadth escapes from death of the most wonderful descriptions—many of which were physically impossible to be true—and all told with a serenity of countenance that was almost laughable. I rather thought at the time that most of them were of opinion that I believed their preposterous lies to be true. As it made no difference to me whether they were so or not, I allowed the show to go on and proved myself a first rate listener. I shall have some thing more to record of Rulo and its citizenship in a future paper and I will only say, in passing, that when I saw both for the first time, the town possessed the most mixed population I have ever seen in a place of its size. There were a great number of idle people about the streets, who were neither French, Indian or American, but were in fact a mongrel race compounded of the blood of all three, whom the general government had designated Half-Breeds, and for whose benefit the reservation between the Nemahas had been set apart by treaty. They were a new and strange people to me, differing in every physical characteristic from all anthropological classifications I had ever seen. In their relations with the government their status was that of Indians, and yet, the effect of the treaty as-

signing them lands in severalty, would be to make them citizens. Regarding them as such, it occurred to me that to build a state out of such material in the middle of the nineteenth century, to rank with the other states of the federal union would be to awake the age of miracle and the marvelous. During the day they were orderly enough and tolerably sober, but after nightfall the din and uproar they made, was terrific. The town was full of them, and they were as full as the town, and all pandemonium seemed to have broken loose. My introduction to the society of Nebraska was thus somewhat noisy; but my faith in its business men I had that day met, and the hoped for brilliant future of the town, happily presaged by their push and energy, was almost as great as their own. I tried to see nothing but good in everything pertaining to Nebraska and its people, for I had come all the way from the eastern banks of the Mississippi, to be one of them.

Notice to Contractors

Sealed proposals shall be received at the office of the City Clerk of the city of Falls City, Nebraska, until 12 o'clock, noon, standard time, January 22nd, 1909, and opened at 7:30 p. m., at the City Hall, for the furnishing of all labor, material and equipment necessary to install complete and put in successful operation in the City's water and light plant in Falls City, Nebraska, all in accordance with the general specifications and instructions to bidders on file at the office of the City Engineer and City Clerk, Falls City, Nebraska. Bidders to furnish their own plans and specifications conforming to the general specifications on file. The proposals are to be made on bidding form attached to specification on file to cover the following items:

- One new 200 to 210 horse power water tube or internally fired double-drum boiler.
- One new 300 horse power open feed water heater equal to Cochrane make.
- All steam piping and other piping necessary to install this pump and boiler complete and connect it with the present system.

Prospective bidders are requested to confer with the Engineer, visit the present plant and make themselves familiar with the requirements of the work. Time is the essence of this contract, and the shortest time possible in which the contractor can install this machinery complete will be given due consideration by the council. A certified check of 5 per cent of amount of each bid, payable to the City Clerk, must accompany each proposal. Successful bidder must give bond in the amount of 50 per cent of the contract price. The City reserves the right to reject any or all bids, or to accept any bid without explanation.

WM. SCHMELZEL, City Clerk,
W. W. ABBEY, Mayor,
J. A. CROOK, City Engineer.

Public Sale

Michael Lichty will sell at his farm, 2 miles west of this city Friday, Jan. 22, at 10 o'clock a. m., his entire personal effects, consisting of horses, cows, hogs, implements and household goods. A credit of ten months without interest will be given. The liberal discount of 4 per cent will be given for cash. Everything offered at this sale is first class. It

Notice of Probate of Will

IN THE COUNTY COURT OF RICHARDSON COUNTY, NEBRASKA:—
In the Matter of Probating the Last Will and Testament of William Cade, Deceased, Notice is hereby given to all persons interested that Ethel Cade has deposited in said court an instrument purporting to be the last will and testament of said William Cade, deceased, and filed a petition praying that said instrument be allowed and probated as the last will and testament of said deceased. It is ordered that the same be heard by the court on Saturday, the 30th day of January, 1909, at 9 o'clock, a. m., in the county court room in Falls City, in said county, when and where all persons interested may appear and contest the probate thereof.

By order of the court, dated January 9th, 1909.
JOHN GAGNON, County Judge.
First publication Jan. 15, 1909.

IN THE DISTRICT COURT FOR RICHARDSON COUNTY, NEBRASKA.

J. H. Brinegar, real name John H. Brinegar, Plaintiff.
vs.
Pora Hoerner, Amelia Rouleau, Emmanuel Bedard, Defendants.

The above named defendants non-residents will take notice that on December 22, 1908, plaintiff filed his petition against said defendants in the district court of Richardson County, Nebraska, the object of which is to quiet the title to lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, in block 53, in Rouleau's and Bedard's addition to the city of Rulo, and to exclude each of you from any interest therein. You must plead to said petition on or before February 22, 1909, or the allegations of the petition be taken as true and decree rendered accordingly.

JOHN H. BRINEGAR, Plaintiff.
REAVIS & REAVIS, attorneys for plaintiff. 49-4



A GREEN OLD AGE

never need be a toothless one. By means of gold crowns, bridge work or entirely new teeth, improved and conveniently arranged "toothless gums," have and are a thing of the past. Dr. Yutzy is thoroughly alive to every new detail that adds pleasure and profit to life.

DR. YUTZY
BERT WINDLE, D. D. S., Assistant
Falls City, Nebraska

PANHANDLE EXCURSION

Tuesday Morning, Jan. 19th

Via Missouri Pacific Train No. 106 Due at Falls City, Nebraska at 3:40 A. M.

For this trip we are offering for sale at bargain prices a number of the choicest farms of the very best portion of the Panhandle, selected after 18 years of successful experience in farming and the cattle business. No company now selling land in this district can make the prices or sell the quality of land that we are offering. Why not buy the best and be a winner? We can say with positive truth that every person who has been our customer has and is making more profit than was expected and is more than satisfied. We make no promises that we can not fulfill. Ask our home banks about our business and responsibility.

Special arrangements and inducements are made for the benefit of genuine homeseekers. Come and see us and get a description of the best and safest investment of the time. Go with us next Tuesday morning. Berths and Sleeping Car Service Free.

Yours Respectfully,

THE RIFE LAND CO.

Canyon City, Texas

WHITTAKER BROS.

Falls City, Nebraska

We sell land on a crop payment plan—ask about it. We would as soon have a portion of your next few years' crops as to have the money.