

Polk County's Fertile Fields Are Inexhaustible Producers of Wealth



FEED YARD ON KENT & BURKE'S RANCH, POLK COUNTY.



FARM RESIDENCE OF T. D. RICHARDS NEAR OSCEOLA.

POLK COUNTY, in the Platte valley, is one of Nebraska's most fertile spots. Nestling in one of the richest valleys of the west, it holds promise and opportunity for many. And the prosperous farms, orchards and dairies now found here are only forerunners of many more which will come into existence under the guiding hand of the home-maker.

Down the length and breadth of Polk county, no matter what crop may be planted, it is the same story—fruit, corn, wheat, oats, alfalfa and clover grow with profit to the farmer and pride to the whole county. Though much of the county is under cultivation, many acres have not yet been touched by the plow. What the freight and passenger business will be in this county when there is a family on every eighty acres of land and the dairy interest shall have become one of the leading industries of the county, it is, of course, difficult to tell.

Polk county is a plain sloping gently to the southeast, in harmony with the greater portion of the state. The Platte forms the west and north boundary. A valley stretches back from the river a distance ranging between ten and fifteen miles in width to where a low line of hills separates the valley from the upland. A branch of the North fork of the Blue river passes through the county, making it one of the well watered counties of the state. Native forest trees, embracing walnut, ash, box elder, soft maple and cottonwood, fringe this stream, and are also found along the Platte.

With the exception of those portions broken by the streams, the general surface of the county is a gentle rolling prairie. The principal development of the county has been in agricultural wealth. In 1871 there were but 700 acres under cultivation, and in 1878 there were 33,000 acres under cultivation. In 1879, when the Omaha & Republican Valley branch of the Union Pacific railroad penetrated the interior of the county, giving direct communication with the outside world and transportation to the



GROUP OF POLK COUNTY OFFICIALS.

The city has electric light and water works and a good start with cement sidewalks. The flouring mill is one of the chief manufacturing plants of the city.

Stromsburg was located and surveyed in June, 1872. The Stromsburg Town company was the original owner of the site, which was selected by Lewis Headstrom. The first building was erected in the fall of 1872, in which Messrs. Headstrom & Buckley opened the first stock of general merchandise in the winter of 1873-1874. Nearly all lines of business are well represented here today. It is the largest town in the county and surrounded by an excellent farming country.

Upon the advent of the Union Pacific the town of Shelby was located. In August, 1873, J. P. Dunning erected a grain elevator. In April, 1880, John T. Dunning built the first drug store and John Stalmecker the first hotel. It is a thriving business center with an up-to-date class of business men.

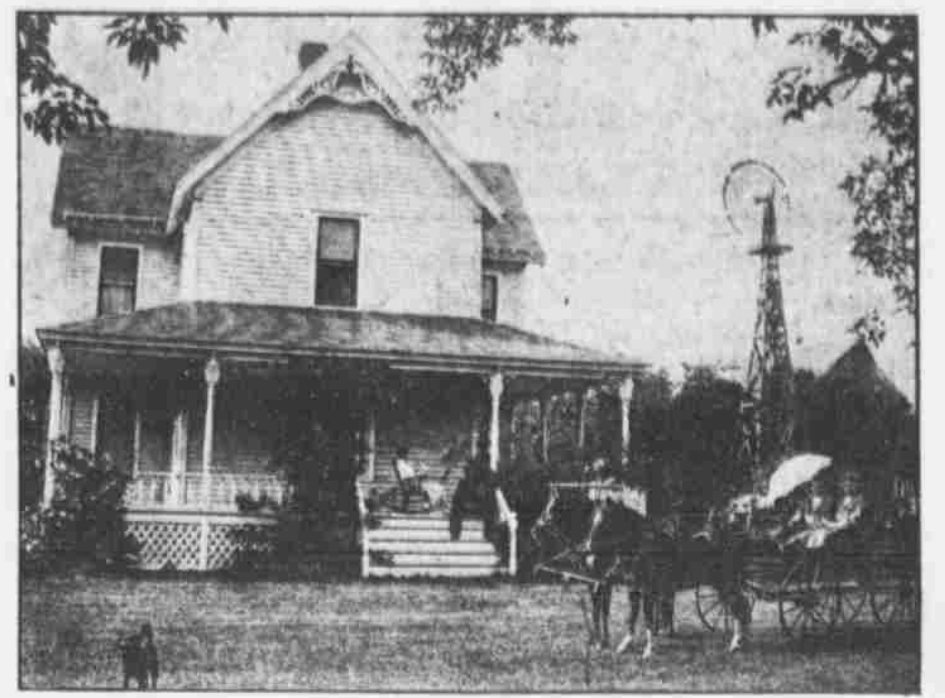
Polk, a thrifty village located in the western part of the county, is fast coming to the front as a trading point for a large circle of an excellent farming section, and it

bids fair to be one of the leading towns of the county in the near future.

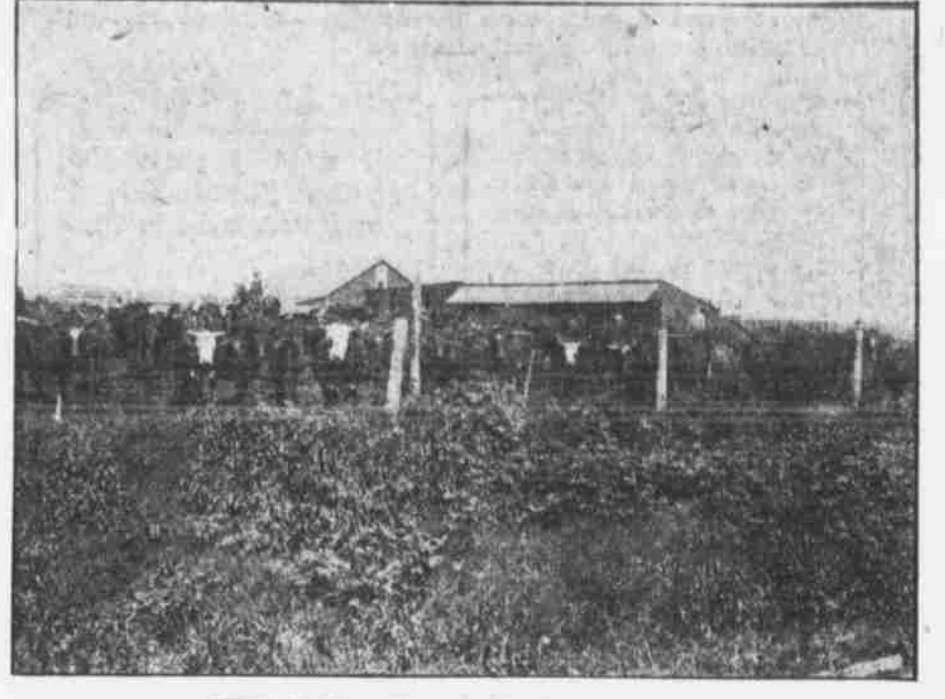
Polk county, taken from every standpoint, will compare favorably with any and all the counties in the Platte valley. It has a valuation of \$35,000,000, a population of 12,000 people, with thirty-five miles of railroad, together with twenty rural routes, covering over 600 miles. Its public highways exceed over 900 miles, and it is in every respect an up-to-date county of the state. It has 154,000 acres under excellent cultivation, from which the farmers last year grew 77,000 acres of corn, 52,000 acres of wheat and 29,000 acres of oats. These farmers sold and shipped out last year over 1,700,000 bushels of corn, 220,000 bushels of wheat and 1,000,000 bushels of oats. Besides this, they sold and shipped out of the county 3,500 head of beef cattle, 24,000 head of fat hogs and 3,700 head of sheep. It is one of the strong counties of the state in the production of poultry, but the dairy industry has not received the attention it merits. The farmers of this county are keeping 5,500 cows on their farms and using 173 hand separators.

Last year they shipped out about 8,000 pounds of butter and 65,000 gallons of cream. They also marketed over 5,000 dozen of eggs and 612,000 pounds of dressed poultry. This county is fast gaining ground in the production of alfalfa and tame grasses, as the farmers have at the present time about 4,000 acres seeded to alfalfa alone. It is plain and self-evident that the future greatness of this county as a county will come largely from the dairy and alfalfa industry, the two belonging together and in Nebraska especially are almost inseparable. They are twin brothers to plenty and prosperity.

It is doubtful if the younger generation living in Polk county today thoroughly realizes and appreciates the blessings and advantages that the modern conveniences of this county furnish and supply. The older generation, who knew much of the ox team and prairie schooner, are much more likely to appreciate some of these modern conveniences. Recently a young traveling man stepped up to the ticket window in the depot at Osceola and registered a vigorous kick as to the train serv-



FARM RESIDENCE OF JAMES HOTCHKISS, POLK COUNTY.



FEED YARD OF A. A. YOUNG, OSCEOLA.

ice at this point. Just then an old gentleman with a gray beard, slouch hat and a look of prosperity stepped up and unfolded an old handbill yellow with age. It was an advertisement of a line of stage coaches that ran from Atchinson, Kan., to San Francisco during the excitement in the early mining days. The circular announced that the trip was made from Atchinson to California in thirty-five days and the fare only \$300 in gold. The old gentleman compared the ancient handbill to a modern timetable and the great change that had come over the country since he located on the Nebraska prairie. This old handbill was issued by the Atchinson & California stage line in 1857. The inducements held forth were in strange contrast with those of modern railroad advertisement. The stage coach line advertised that it had recently refurbished the entire road with absolutely new wagonettes and it told what kind of coaches they were, how the spruce were made and of what strength they were. It even stated that the coaches were painted in the best manner possible. The horses that drew the coaches were described, too, as the best.

An inducement held out by the timetable to prospective passengers was the stop-over privilege—a passenger might resume his journey whenever there was an empty seat in the stage coach. "We make quicker time to California than any other stage coach line and at a cheaper rate," the pamphlet stated. It went on to say that for \$50 a person could ride all the way from Atchinson, Kan., to the gold-fields of California. The distance is 1,823 miles, as stated on the timetable, the longest distance ever attempted by a stage coach line, and the entire trip made in thirty-five days. A boast was made that there were twelve telegraph stations on the road to California, and that eating places had been established at regular intervals where good meals could be had at the nominal price of \$3 each. Every passenger was allowed twenty-five pounds of baggage; all over that must be paid for at 50 cents a pound.

The faded pamphlet also advertised a fast freight line between Atchinson and

Denver, Colo. The round trip was made in the short space of twenty days. To ship by this method all merchandise had to be wrapped in waterproof packages. A package weighing ten pounds could be sent by that route for 50. The old man's eyes sparkled as he said, "Just think of it, we can get on the train tonight and be in Denver tomorrow. Yes, this is a wonderful age."

In no one feature of Polk county do its citizens take more interest and feel a deeper pride than in its public schools. This has been brought about by an appreciative people, who thoroughly realized what the public schools meant to a young and growing county. The Nebraska Wesleyan university was established at Osceola on May 21, 1879, with C. W. Kyle as president and H. C. Bittenbender as vice president. The county has seventy-one country districts with ninety-four schools and 103 teachers were employed during the last year. The county has 354 children of school age, with an enrollment of 2,311. The total value of the district property is \$6,500. The total salary paid the teachers is \$25,300, the average salary of the male teachers is \$62.11 per month and the average monthly salary of female teachers is \$41.12. The county has four graded schools, with twenty-seven teachers. Miss Lillie M. Cole is superintendent of the schools of the county, she is giving entire satisfaction and the schools of the county are in a most flourishing condition.

Polk county has prospered by virtue of its great resources, exploited and developed by the energy of an enthusiastic people. It can remain prosperous and attain the maximum of industrial development only by the conservative use of its resources. Nature has been prodigal of good things in this big free country of splendid opportunities still referred to reverently in the east as "out west." Much of the wealth of this county is yet to be developed, what it has done in the past is only a small part of the glorious future that awaits it.



HIGH SCHOOL AND PUPILS, OSCEOLA.

Great War Game to Be Played Around Cape Cod and Boston Bay

NEW YORK, July 24.—The war game that is to be played next month along the Massachusetts coast and inland is regarded by regular army officers as the most important work of the kind ever attempted in this country or elsewhere. It is to be more like real war than anything this country has ever seen in time of peace. There have been war games in this country, both on a large and a comparatively small scale, but nothing like that which will be played this year has been attempted before. Moreover, this one this year, it is declared by the military experts, is the only one of value that should be played consistently.

The game for 1909 is that of a real invasion by a supposed foreign enemy. The forts defending the city of Boston will be attacked. A real attempt will be made to capture them by a real force. In our former games two armies have been pitted against each other on land and have gone through various strategical performances, chiefly forced marches and deploying, with a rattle of skirmish drill and some artillery firing to give it spice.

This kind of a game has been played regularly by the regular army out near Fort Riley in Kansas, and it has developed much that is useful in the way of field maintenance, field signaling work and in rapid movement under constantly changing conditions. There was once a large game of this kind played in Chautauque's national park. Later in Virginia a set of field maneuvers was worked out, in which state militia and regulars played equal parts. Last year, up near the Canadian line, at Pine Camp, regulars and militia united in quite a large game in various battle exercises and field movements.

Variations on the Coast.

For the last three years there has also been played along the Atlantic coast an artillery war game. Small rigs supposed to represent battleships, cruisers and torpedo boats have steamed up the harbor of New York and other places, and when they have come within a certain range by day or have been picked up by searchlights at night the forts have blazed away at them with big and little guns. Invariably the attacking boats have been de-

molished in theory, under the idea that any ship which could remain such and such a time under the fire of the forts would be sunk.

In the game at New York three years ago there was a diversion. One man of the attacking party slipped by the forts at the Narrows in a small craft while the guns were being fired at the vessels, landed on the shore of Staten Island above and then made his way by the back door, so to speak, right into Fort Wadsworth, where he actually shot off the power plant and rendered the fort useless. Similar games to that in New York harbor were played at Portland, Me., and Boston. The attackers were always beaten off.

The practice was very good for the men in the forts. They stood at the guns by the hour. The alarms were responded to with great activity and during the time that the shooting was going on excellent practice in loading, sighting and firing the pieces was obtained. There was also good work done in range finding. The local militia regiments were in the game, some of them working at the guns and the others defending the forts from theoretical attack in the rear.

Theory Good, Practice Poor.

The great trouble with those theoretical attacks in the rear was that they were only theoretical and not real. No body of soldiers ever appeared for an extended plan of attack. Once a force did march overland to try to get at Fort Hamilton, but it was not an extended movement. What the importance of such an attack may amount to can be judged from a statement which Brigadier General Funston of the regular army made at a dinner given to Admiral Evans and his officers in San Francisco a year ago last May, when Evans' fleet sailed into San Francisco bay. Funston declared in a public speech:

"That fleet of yours when it came in here the other day made a magnificent spectacle. But let us get down to facts. I want to say to you that if it had been a hostile fleet you could never have got in this port. We could have kept it or any other fleet out. No fleet in the world could get into this harbor if we wanted to keep it out."

"But let me also say with equal frankness that if that fleet made a landing down the coast eight or ten miles and sent its

large force against us from the rear, all these splendid fortifications for this harbor could have been captured easily. In that case we could not have kept you out and it is a startling situation to which this government should be alive."

Trouble with the Forts.

That is the point. All the forts in the world, placed at a harbor's mouth, are useless unless defended from the rear. In the war games that have been played there has been no demonstration thus far of what could be done in the way of effective attack or defense from the rear. It is a fact, based upon the authority of a military man of national reputation in the United States army, that there are not enough regulars in the entire army

of the country even to man effectively all the fortifications of New York harbor, the men standing at their guns in three watches. This authority says that he includes in this statement every branch of the army, cavalry and all. The same authority also declares that there are not enough men in the entire National Guard of all the states of the country successfully to protect the New York forts—and these include those at the eastern end of Long Island Sound—from attack by an invading army of one of the great powers.

Nevertheless it is recognized that provision must be made in these times of peace for some sort of practice in repelling a real invading army trying to capture the forts of one of our harbors. For that reason the attack this year will not be by little torpedo boats, supposed to represent battleships, or the navy, but by an armed force of real soldiers. The force will consist of militia from Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and the District of Columbia. The defense will probably be made entirely by the Massachusetts National Guard. It may be that some of the Connecticut troops will help the Massachusetts men out. The details have not been worked out at this writing, and probably will not be given out fully before the invasion of the eastern shore of Massachusetts below Boston takes place.

Plan of the Boston Invasion.

So real is the invasion of Boston and the attempt to capture its forts to be that about 10,000 men will be embarked on four

of the regular army's transports and probably one other vessel to be hired in this harbor on August 12. It will represent a strictly foreign force. It will take with it every means of maintaining itself in a foreign country, food and ammunition. The only thing for which it will depend upon the country invaded is the water. Otherwise it will take along all its food, all its other supplies, all its transportation and equipment and it will not try to live on the country in any way.

It will be fought campaigning in a hostile country in every sense. It will destroy telegraph and telephone wires, tear down railroads and it will burn the landing places to Boston harbor. Its landing will be secret, but that, it is expected, will be discovered promptly. After that it will be a case of fighting or outmaneuvering the defenders. Umpires will decide these combats. There will be all sorts of military work, scouting, skirmishing, flanking work, one or more downright engagements, and the result will be that one side or the other will win, and as that decision goes Boston's forts will be taken from the rear or will be defended successfully.

There will be all kinds of flank movements, false messages, ruses of one sort or another, and the war will be as real like that which is fought by real soldiers, fairly evenly matched as to numbers and equipment, as can be. Of course, the invaders will have to take their horses and wagons and medical supplies with them. The troops will probably have to swim ashore with their mounts. There will be hurry work in making a landing and there will be a test of modern methods in loading and unloading transports.

Packing of Transports.

The attacking force doesn't expect to find its shovels down in the bottom of the last transport unloaded, as was the case in one of the landings our troops made in the Spanish war. Nor does anyone expect to find 100 lawn mowers among the supplies, as was the case on one of the transports sent on our very first expedition to the Philippines. The Japanese are conceded to have had the best system of transport packing in actual war and those maneuvers of next month will go to show whether our army has made any improvement.

The landing and many of the important movements may be made at night. An important feature of the work will be that of the signal corps in setting up telephone and telegraph wires and in securing information as to the whereabouts of the defenders. Likewise the public prints or get busy. All they will know is that a hostile force is to descend upon the Massachusetts coast on or about a certain date. Where it will land they will not know. The defenders are forbidden to take information from the public prints or other messages. They must secure their information from their own scouts and must act on that alone. The newspapers may say that the invaders have landed at New Bedford, but the defenders must not act on such information until they get it from their own representatives and in a military way.

As soon as it is settled that the attackers are on shore in a given territory and it is certain that practically the entire force is there a movement will probably be begun on both sides which ultimately will bring them together not far from Boston, where the final and decisive engagement will be fought out. It will probably be on Cape Cod.

What It All Means.

This invasion of a real force is declared to be the only sensible kind of a war game for United States troops to practice. It is asserted that our fortifications are now practically complete. In case of war we must meet invasions. They will be in the rear of forts and by training not only regulars but national guardsmen in the methods of meeting such invasions, it is asserted, real practice of value will be obtained in the military art. The practice also of landing real men and of real invasion will be equally valuable.

It is known that the War department regards the coming war game as the most useful and the most important war practice ever held in this country, and for that reason it is giving the closest attention to the details. Secrecy is being maintained about a lot of these details. It is difficult in these days to keep information of value in military channels from other countries and it is altogether likely that foreign governments will know almost as much about the coming game when it is all over as our own.

Cleveland's Joyous Battle for Principle

IN NEVER saw Mr. Cleveland more elated than after he had thrown the presidency out of the window by his anti-free silver letter, in February, 1893," writes Mr. Richard Watson Gilder in the August Century. "The situation was typical of his career. The question had arisen as to what reply he should make to the invitation of the Reform club to attend a banquet at which free coinage of silver was to be attacked. Some of his advisers thought he should keep silent on this subject, so that the chances of his renomination might not be injured. But he characteristically used the occasion to reaffirm his opposition to what he regarded as a financial heresy, and in unmistakable terms he denounced the dangerous and reckless experiment of free, unlimited and independent silver coinage."

"At once the cry went up from the machine men of the party all over the country that this was the end of Cleveland. Mr. Wilson (afterward postmaster general) told me that when he and a friend sauntered out of the house of representatives together they soon found that they were the only members of that body who did not believe that Mr. Cleveland was a

Cleveland's Joyous Battle for Principle

'back number.' In fact, among those regarded as democratic leaders the opinion seemed to be well-nigh unanimous that he would never again be the standard bearer of his party.

"As for Mr. Cleveland himself, he was not only undismayed, but joyful. His intense delight in the incident seemed to spring from two sources. First, his pleasure in having availed himself of the opportunity of telling the truth and circulating the right doctrine, and second, his satisfaction at having been able to show that he was not 'waiting around' for a third nomination. In other words, he felt that he had demonstrated that he cared more for principle than for the presidency. Every once in a while Cleveland 'threw away the presidency,' and I never saw him so happy as when he had done it; as for instance, after the tariff message and again after the silver letter."

"But back of his action in thus alarming some of his anxious political advisers was evidently a prophetic sense of the ultimate fortunate effect of a brave word of conviction on a burning question. He cared nothing for the conventional opinions of professional politicians; he was looking for the decisions of a wider audi-

ence, and he was not disappointed. "One afternoon, very soon after the letter, we were driving uptown together, when he expressed himself with frank enthusiasm: 'I don't believe any man in the country,' he said, 'can have having such an experience as I am having; letters are coming to me from all parts of the country telling me that they are glad that the people always come out right when they have a chance to look into a thing! In this same conversation he said that so far as he was concerned he would be willing to enter upon a presidential campaign without the support of Tammany Hall. I find among my notes concerning the incident of the silver letter this reflection: 'Cleveland always is more cheerful, always at his best when he is making a fight for principle.'"

Johnny's Excuse.

"Mother—'Johnny, Johnny, why are you slapping little sister?'"

Johnny (guilefully)—"Auntie made me."

Auntie—"Why, Johnny, how can you tell such a falsehood?"

Johnny—"Well, you did. You said you'd never kiss me again if I hurted my little sister."

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