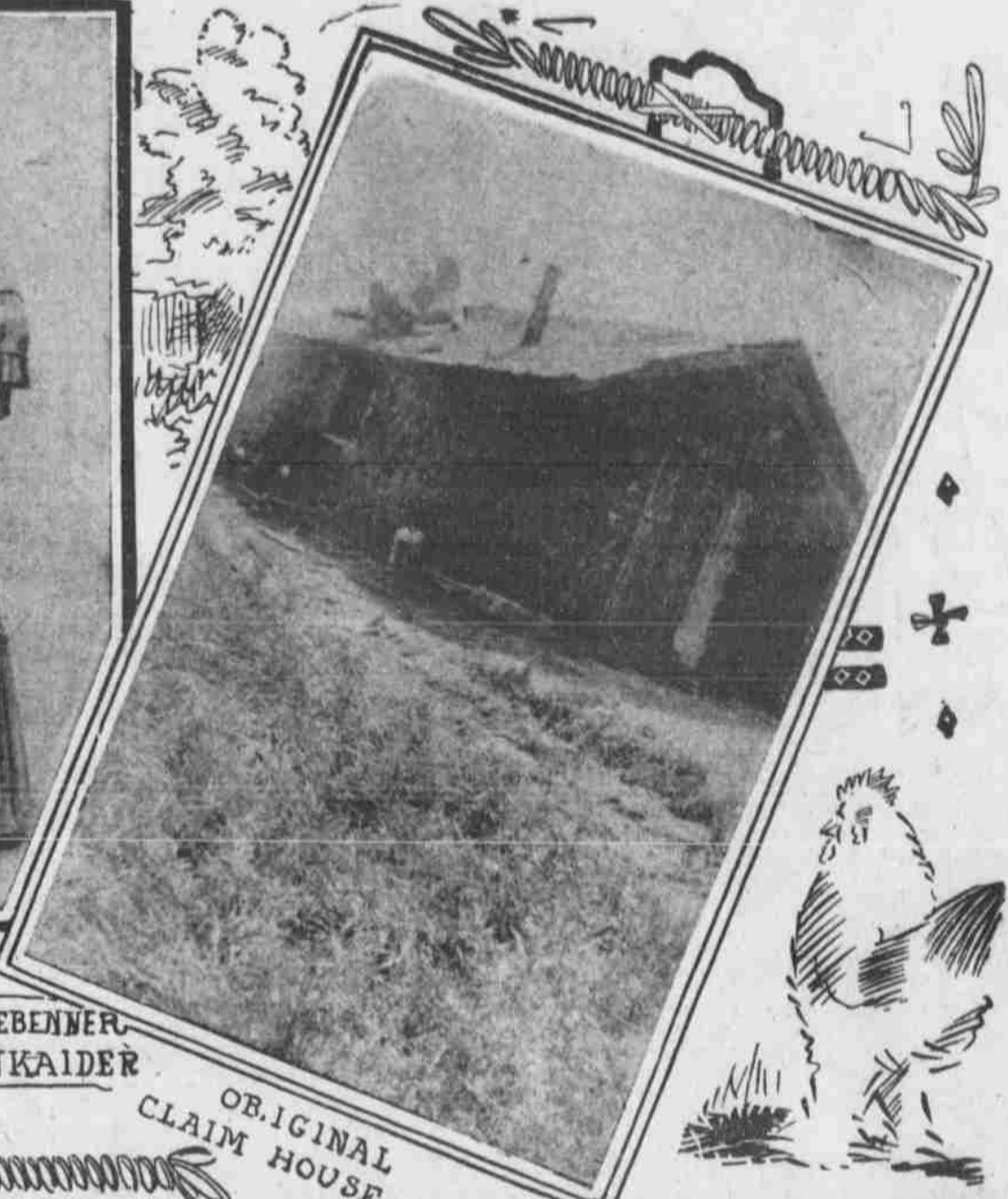


OMAHA WOMEN FIND INDEPENDENCE ON WILD RANCHES

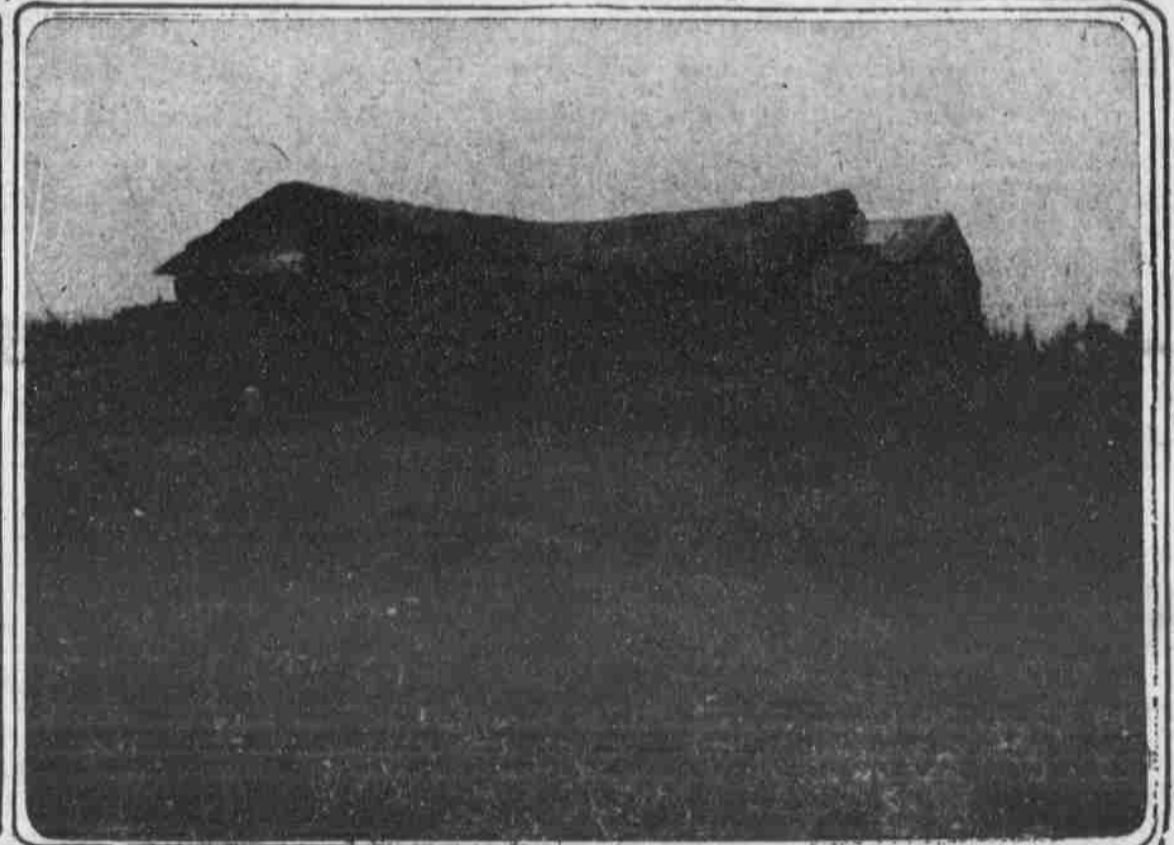
School Teachers and Others Who Have Taken Claims for the Purpose of Escaping the Thralldom of Working for a Living or Depending on Husband or Father to Provide for Them



FIRST HOME AND SCHOOL HOUSE IN HERRICK, S. DAK.

MISS MABEL BETEBNER, A NEBRASKA KINKAIDER

ORIGINAL CLAIM HOUSE



THE TEAM THAT "WORKED" THE FARM.

CLAIM HOUSE AS IT IS TODAY

CONSIDERABLY less than a century ago a daughter of a certain substantial New England family raised her voice in public and proclaimed a doctrine of independence for women, and she was socially ostracized. When she died a few years ago her biographers and the press of the world named her one of the greatest women of the century and an international educational institution was founded to perpetuate her teachings as a memorial to her life and work. "We are not the superiors of men, but their equals," was the doctrine she taught, but society did not take kindly to her teachings, and for many years after its first proclamation "old maids" went out eating the bread of dependence and young maids and wives did likewise, while bearing their share of the family responsibility and work.

Since there have been farms the wives and daughters have borne their part of even the most laborious of the farm work, and it has been taken as a matter of course. When war has been upon the land the women have tilled the soil, cared for the stock and kept things going, and today it is no uncommon sight to see women working in the fields, carrying water, milking from ten to a score of cows, and even breaking their own horses and "riding herd," while woman's ability for carpentering is proverbial, and there is no more popular poem in the language than that of "Maude Muller." But when one fine day a lone woman was discovered farming on her own hook—who had deliberately and quite independent of father, brother or husband taken up some land and was proceeding to improve it, the immediate neighbors looked askance, and far and wide her enterprise was heralded as something quite remarkable and a new tangent for women.

However, there is nothing that succeeds like success, and before long the woman homesteader was no longer a novelty. Quick to recognize their opportunity, scores of women have taken up land under the several plans afforded by the government, and within the last five years hundreds of women have acquired independence on farms or ranches secured under the homesteading laws. And they have made the best kind of settlers, demonstrating that a woman can make a home, and an inviting home at that, even under the most adverse circumstances and encouraging others to establish permanent residence in the new country. Not less than a score of Omaha women are today living on such farms or reaping the benefit of farms so acquired.

From the sheltered life of the wife of a New York attorney to "sooner" in a town on the prairies of South Dakota, and then proving up by residence on a claim, is a far cry, but that was the experience of Mrs. Emma B. Haviland, who is now owner of one of the many choice farms of the Rosebud reservation. Mrs. Haviland is a teacher at Windsor school, and expects eventually to farm her land; that is, when her son has finished college, and if she does not sell out, which at present she has no idea of doing. After the death of her husband Mrs. Haviland and her young son came west, and

when the Rosebud country was opened she accompanied a cousin and his family to the proposed site of the town of Herrick, S. D. They drove across country with the rush and were among the "sooners" of the new town. At the suggestion of her cousin Mrs. Haviland had gone provided with stakes for staking off a share of the town property, but when the wagon finally came to a stop and the rush began she found it more attractive viewing the rush from her security on the top of the load. When reminded that her chances were flying she climbed down and staked off her patch of ground upon which she established a residence, and when the rush was over and the town finally blocked out her choice proved one of the most fortunate. It was in the business section and among the most valuable in the settlement. On one lot she had her home built, a single room "soddy," with frame upper and roof, and here she lived with her son.

After the excitement of the first few days, during which many disputes were settled by shooting, a meeting of the settlers was called. There were forty children in the new community, and Mrs. Haviland was promptly elected teacher of the school, which was established without delay. Of course there was no school house, but the new school mistress was equal to the demand and tendered the use of her own little house. This was readily accepted and the townspeople set about improvising school furniture. A few planks and saw-horses served as benches and desks, and a most creditable blackboard was devised by some ingenious one, although the source from which the chalk was obtained is still a mystery to the school-mistress. The little house had been crowded to accommodate the scant equipment for housekeeping, and the addition of school furniture, not to speak of the students, would have appalled a less resourceful woman. But Mrs. Haviland was equal to this, too, and fronting her many inconveniences. In the morning a committee of citizens came and moved her furniture outside and installed the school furniture, returning at the close of the session to move it out again and replace the housekeeping effects. Of course it was rather crowded when it rained, but this, too, was all incidental to starting a town, and the children as well as the grownups cheerfully made the best of it. But a term of teaching under these conditions was enough for the schoolmistress, and having gotten title to her property she came to Omaha, where she entered the teaching force.

This was only the beginning of Mrs. Haviland's homesteading experience. The land about Herrick, now a thriving, prosperous town, looked better than anything she had seen in New York and she resolved to have a claim. Accordingly, when the Rosebud lands were opened for settlement she registered, but when the drawing came off her prize was well up in the thirty-seven hundreds. Even this did not discourage her, and looking about she decided to put a straight fling over one of the many soldiers' declaratories, that, in the language of the neighborhood, "did not look good." Her choice proved fortunate, for the soldier did not materialize within the stipulated time and she began "proving up." Her claim of 150 acres is about four miles from Herrick, and she has had her title to it for nearly two years. At present 140 acres are under cultivation, a renter working the farm. There are eighty acres of winter wheat and next summer Mrs. Haviland proposes to put in twenty acres of alfalfa and an equal acreage of potatoes. Living springs afford abundant water supply. When it came to the improvement of the

claim the Herrick lots proved well worth all they had cost in effort and inconvenience. They more than paid all the expense of improving and proving up, being among the most desirable business property of the town.

But there were some things that money could not provide. Mrs. Haviland had arranged for the building of a one-room sod house, but when she arrived to begin her residence she was appalled to find the sod walls, covered with a canvas roof, through which the rain had been falling for a week or more, dripped in streams, making deep puddles over the dirt floor. But the former school mistress was equal to this, too. Making two solid piles of sod, she took the door from its hinges and formed a little perch up off the wet floor. A little shifting of the roof canvas shed the water, insuring a dry place, and here she made a bed at night and did her cooking for several days, until better accommodations could be improvised. Fourteen months of broken and seventeen months of continuous residence gave her final title to her farm, for which she has already refused \$50 an acre.

Miss Mary Beecher of Loavenworth school has a 320-acre farm in eastern Colorado, about seven miles from Flagler. The original 160 acres she took up under the old law, in June, 1897, and last September she was granted an additional 160 acres. As yet only twenty acres are under cultivation, but breaking is being done and the ground prepared for alfalfa, which Miss Beecher expects to make her permanent crop. In other respects the claim is better improved than the average. The house is a substantial, attractive little bungalow, 16x26 feet, and includes two rooms. It is Miss Beecher's proud boast that the house is painted and has a chimney, qualities worthy of mention, as the "soddy," with a stovepipe through the roof or protruding from one end, is by far the most numerous variety of frontier residence. And Miss Beecher's progressiveness has already manifested itself in other ways than the substantial improvement of her own property. Although the residents of the community are above the average and a good grade school is in successful operation, there was no high school, and to provide this necessity also, that the young people might have every possible advantage within access of their homes, Miss Beecher set herself about the task of providing for the instruction of the higher branches. It was evident that if a union high school could be secured much better opportunities might be offered at less expense to all, and upon a union school she set her heart. Fifty signatures were required in the petition to the county and state superintendents, but when her petition was turned in it bore seventy-five names, and this year four districts have united in the union high school, which becomes a permanent institution. All such improvements have reacted to increase the value of the land in the neighborhood and that about Miss Beecher's claim has risen from \$2.50 and \$4 to \$17.50 an acre, and is still going up.

About four miles from Andrews, Neb., in Sioux county, is a little settlement of four houses, the homes of a colony of former Omahans. "Galloway" it is called by the neighbors, but the name is of the family, not the community. The family consists of two



brothers, Emmett Galloway and C. W. Galloway, and family, and Misses Gussie and Lulu Galloway, their sisters. Mrs. Galloway was Miss Beard of Omaha. They are homesteaders, having taken their land under the Kinkaid act, and each has 640 acres. It has been four years since Miss Gussie took up her claim adjoining those of her brothers, and a year ago Miss Lulu joined the colony. The houses, all warm, cozy little homes, are about ten feet apart, built where the claims corner, and making possible practically one household while complying fully with the requirements of the law. Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Galloway have recently completed a more pretentious home, where Mrs. Galloway with her small son lives, and superintend their farm while her husband holds a position as traveling salesman, returning at required intervals and as often as business will permit. Mrs. Galloway and the Misses Galloway have proven most successful farmers, so successful in fact that they expect to remain on their land permanently. The claims are in the semi-arid region and best suited for grazing purposes. For this reason only enough has been put under cultivation to comply with the requirements of the law. Other extensive improvements have been made, however, to facilitate the business of stock raising, which is their real industry. Among these improvements is a lake of several acres which was made by a system of dams, conserving the water to afford an abundant supply for the cattle and enough for irrigating purposes. The women have also done a profitable business in milk and

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