

Franklin Township

Franklin township, in the far southeastern corner of Fillmore County, is bounded on the north by Glengary and on the west by Belle Prairie townships, on the east by Saline County, and on the south by Thayer County. It is crossed from north to south, near its middle line, by Little Sandy Creek, and most of its eastern sections are traversed in the same general direction, just inside its Saline County boundary, by Walnut Creek. State Highway 74 runs across it along the first section line south of Glengary township. It is also crossed from east to west by the Beatrice-Hildreth line of the Burlington, which serves the thriving little town of Ohioa. By 1966, the township had some 14 irrigation wells.

The finishing of the Burlington's main line in the autumn of 1871 brought the first large influx of settlers into the "South Platte" area. Many of the first settlers of Fillmore County homesteaded in the northern part of the county because the West Blue River gave them a supply of fuel and water. However, Franklin township in the southeast also had a large number of early homesteaders.

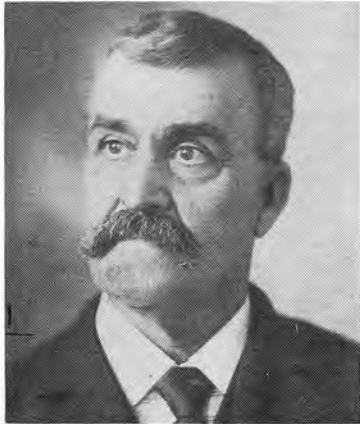


Photo from Dorothy Runge
Austin Adams in 1900.

One of the first was **Austin Adams**. Mrs. Josie Adams Stowell, who now lives in Hebron, tells the following about her family and the early days:

Austin Adams homesteaded just south of Ohioa on the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 17 in 1867. Austin Adams, A. F. Clemons, and Ed Stone came from Ohio. Their women and children came later, after plans had been made for them. Mrs. Stowell was born on this homestead in 1879. The older children in the family were Bertha, Vesta, and E. C. Adams. Mrs. Stowell remembers that when she was seven or eight years old, a young man who came from Chicago brought a revolver and shells because he thought that when he got off the train he would have to protect himself against cowboys and Indians. He felt very foolish; and when he returned to Chicago, he gave the revolver to her brother E. C., or Erk, as he was called.

Mrs. Stowell's father was the second postmaster and held that post for several years when the mail came by horseback from Fairmont. The Adamses also handled medicines; something called the "Golden Medical Discovery" was a kind of ointment and pain reliever. This family moved to Geneva when Mrs. Stowell was four years old. Her father was county treasurer.

The Adams family were active workers in the Baptist church, where they didn't always have a preacher but did have an active Sunday School and Christian Endeavor. The young people loved music and would prepare fine Christmas programs, which they practiced upon for weeks. They had a fine quartet, composed of Bertha and Josie Adams, E. C. Adams, and either Professor Huntington, Will Fulton, or Dr. J. D. Patterson.

Tempa Enslow Adams came from Alexandria to Ohioa soon after the town was started. Mr. Enslow had a grocery store between the Hasterlick saloon and O'Boyle's Hotel. Mrs. Adams recalls that the young people had picnics and parties. They loved roller skating, and the ice skating in the winter on Hopken's pond.

In the Gay Nineties they wore the lovely, picturesque dresses of the period, made of pretty prints, with leg-o'-mutton sleeves, very long, sweeping skirts over many petticoats, and lovely hats. Mrs. Adams's graduation dress was sent to her from Kansas City for the event in 1893.

Graduation exercises, held in the Opera House, were as big events then as they are now. But the Fourth of July celebrations were really the events looked forward to: booths in the streets, barrels of lemonade, speeches, and fireworks. Farm families came from miles around in wagons for these events. The young people had many good times, but would have been shocked at the behavior of young people today, especially at the girls' wearing of slacks and shorts.

The pioneer farmer tilled his farm with walking plows, planters, and cultivators. He threshed his grain with the help of his neighbors. He milked his cows, shelled his corn, and scooped his grain without the help of gasoline or electric motors. Until the railroad came through, he hauled his grain a long distance to sell it. He bought necessities he couldn't produce himself at Crete, Nebraska City, or Beatrice.

The grasshoppers came in clouds so thick and heavy in 1874 as to blot out the sun. They ate the turnips, potatoes, and onions—leaves, stem, and root—leaving only holes in the ground. Hailstorms and drouths brought want, hunger, and depression. The years 1893 and 1894 were hard for everyone. There were drouth, general scarcity, and bank failures.

But these rural people had stamina; they stuck it out, started again, and made progress. They built homes, better churches, better schools, better business places. They didn't always agree, and they argued over politics. They planted trees—many trees—built better roads, and put in telephones and electric lights.

What would grandfather or great-grandfather say today if they could see thousands of bushels of corn stored, feed lots full of fat cattle, big, powerful tractors, and cornpicker-shellers? They would probably ask, "Why don't you sell that corn? What are you going to do with it?" No doubt he would stew and talk about the weather, as farmers from Austin Adams's day have done. He would argue politics and maybe denounce the farm plan, with the rest of the farmers. But I am sure that he would be shrewd enough to realize that we haven't found all the answers yet.

Grandmother would appreciate the hot-water heaters and automatic furnaces, washers, and dryers; but maybe she would smile to herself and think, "You can't bake better pumpkin pie or ginger cookies than I did 60 years ago."

SCHOOLS

Before Ohioa was incorporated as a village, schools were organized in Franklin township. Today we see many abandoned one-room schools, some idle, some converted to other uses, that years ago were the pride and joy of their community. Many of these were also used for church and Sunday School meetings, social functions, and voting places. School was free and open to all, but attendance was not then compulsory. On family farms where everything had to be done by human labor and a team of oxen or horses, every child was a "hand." Even without any payment for tuition, it was still something of a family sacrifice to spare a child—but the children flocked in.

The free public school, open to all, was born in America; it was built into the earliest foundation of this nation. Never before in the world had such a notion been entertained. This more than anything else, it seems to me, marked the birth of American democracy.¹



Photo from Emma Renken

District No. 9 in 1902. *Back row, left to right:* Pearle Schafer Cradduck, Lewis Morgan, Ella Cradduck, Oley Baldwin, Nellie Schroll Sigman, Earl Baldwin, Lena Bahe, Carrie Rohler Cummings, Miss Dove Moore (teacher), Lloyd Mumford. *Middle row:* Alta Baldwin Wiswell, Sadie Schroll, Fern Schroll, Rosie Rohler Stribey, Bessie McCurdy, Eva McCurdy Petteys, Elsie Baldwin Schroll. *Front row:* Charley Baker, Ross Schafer, Howard Thomas, Leslie Moore, Roy Baldwin, Freddie Bahe, Willie Bahe, Neil Baker.

District No. 9 was organized under the direction of G. R. Wolfe, superintendent. At a meeting at the home of Louis Smith on September 27, 1871, David Hadley was elected moderator, N. W. Tracy, director, and William Case, treasurer. There were only three districts in the county that sustained 60 days of school by qualified teachers within the year 1871, and so the first term was begun in that year to qualify for a fair-sized share of the state apportionment.

The following letter is from the county superintendent's records:

Sir:

I take great pleasure in submitting to you the following special report of the educational condition of Fillmore County.

The first school was taught in school district No. 9, commencing Dec. 15, 1871, by John A. Williams—the number of pupils enrolled 17, average attendance 9½—length of term 3 months (65 days)—wages paid to teacher \$25 per month—John A. Dempster, County Supt.

The school was taught in a board granary 12' x 14' square, with a dirt floor and the pupils seated on homemade pine benches. There were no other furnishings except a stove. Only about half the scholars had books, the other half borrowing. A frame schoolhouse was put up in May, 1872. It was 16' x 20' and seated with Richmond patent desks. The building and all its furnishings cost about \$500. This was the first frame schoolhouse in the county. Superintendent Dempster reported:

Friday P.M., June 21, 1872

I visited in District No. 9 taught by Samuel B. Heaps—nine pupils present—frame schoolhouse. Scholars doing very well—system good.

School opened in 1873 with 30 pupils, taught by Samuel Heaps and Nute Hansen, each for a three-month term. The largest number of pupils appeared in 1884, when 72 enrolled. From 1873 to 1918, enrollment averaged from 45 to 50 pupils; after 1918, the numbers started to drop. The first continuous full nine-month term came in 1913. The school had 15 pupils in 1955.

Two men served long terms as director in this district: John Hickey, 1876-1892, a total of 17 years, and F. W. Sieckmann, 1925-1945, a total of 21.

The teachers and directors who served District 9 were as follows:

Year	Teacher	Salary and term	No. Pupils	Director
1873	Samuel Heaps	\$20 mo.—3 months	30	G. E. Barnett
	Nute Hanson	\$25 mo.—3 months		
1874	Bella Terry	\$28 mo.—3 months	33	G. E. Barnett
	Luella Hoag	\$25 mo.—5 months		
1875	Ida Barnett	\$20 mo.—3 months	33	William Case
	Etta Dorrance	\$25 mo.—3 months		
1876	J. H. Sager	\$32.50 mo.—5 months	29	John Hickey
	Lennie Elrod	\$25 mo.—2 months		

¹ Dorothy Thompson, "The Ragged Beggar Stands Again," *Ladies' Home Journal*, April 1959.

Year	Teacher	Salary and term	No. Pupils	Director
1877	J. D. McKelvey	\$30 mo.—2½ months	41	John Hickey
	Mary Hammond	\$35 mo.—4 months		
1878	Mary Hammond	\$35 mo.—3 months	43	John Hickey
	Frank Peense	\$30 mo.—3 months		
1879	J. D. McKelvey	\$33.33 mo.—7 months	45	John Hickey
1880	Emma Thomas	\$25 mo.—2 months	49	John Hickey
	Eva Thomas	\$22 mo.—4 months		
1881	Chester Metcalfe	\$30 mo.—4½ months	68	John Hickey
1882	Walter White	\$30 mo.—3 months	51	John Hickey
	Tideman Hale	\$30 mo.—4 months		
1883	Eursa Thomas	\$30 mo.—3 months	57	John Hickey
	C. Barrett	\$30 mo.—4 months		
1884	Flora Angstead	\$30 mo.—7 months	72	John Hickey
1885	Flora Angstead	\$30 mo.—7 months	66	John Hickey
	A. K. Wright	\$30 mo.—3 months		
1886	C. J. Barnett	\$37 mo.—8 months	65	John Hickey
1887	Ida Sharp	\$40 mo.—	49	John Hickey
	Laura Angstead	\$31 mo.—6 months		
	J. W. Fries	\$35 mo.—6 months		
1888	J. W. Fries	\$40 mo.—3 months	45	John Hickey
	Ida Sharp	\$35 mo.—2 months		
	Leona Angstead	\$31 mo.—3 months		
1889	No record	No record	25	John Hickey
1890	No record	No record	45	John Hickey
1891	No record	No record	34	John Hickey
1892	No record	No record	56	John Hickey
1893	No record	No record	51	George Mumford
1894	No record	No record	47	J. W. Mumford
1895	No record	No record	41	Olie Eide
1896	No record	No record	49	Olie Eide
1897	No record	No record	41	Olie Eide
1898	Mrs. Maude Moser	8 months	40	Olie Eide
1899	Ruth Angstead	9 months	42	Olie Eide
1900	Ruth Angstead	9 months	43	Olie Eide
1901	No record	No record	43	Olie Eide
1902	No record	No record	50	John Angstead
1903	No record	No record	46	John Angstead
1904	Bessie Nottingham	\$35 mo.—8 months	48	John Angstead
1905	Ellen Coane	\$34 mo.—8 months	43	John Angstead
1906	Percy Skyrme	\$40 mo.—8 months	44	John Angstead
1907	Eunice Tooker	\$46.87 mo.—8 months	43	John Angstead
1908	Gertrude Pump	\$40 mo.—3¼ months	43	Wm. McCurdy
	Laura Schinzel	\$45 mo.—4 months		
1909	Laura Schinzel	\$45 mo.—4 months	33	L. C. Shafer
	Gertrude Pump	\$40 mo.—3¼ months		
1910	Ameda Lindbloom	\$50 mo.—8 months	38	L. C. Shafer
1911	Bess Mahannah	\$55 mo.—8 months	42	W. L. Baker
	Laura Schinzel	\$55 mo.—8 months		
1912	Edna Brown	\$55 mo.—8 months	49	D. H. Sweeney
	Laura Schinzel	\$55 mo.—8 months		
1913	Thomas Ashton	\$55 mo.—9 months	46	D. H. Sweeney
1914	Adah Ward	\$50 mo.—9 months	45	D. H. Sweeney
1915	Adah Ward	\$55 mo.—9 months	34	D. H. Sweeney
1916	Adah Ward	\$55 mo.—9 months	35	L. C. Shafer
1917	Adah Ward	\$55 mo.—9 months	31	L. C. Shafer
1918	Vera L. Moore	\$65 mo.—9 months	40	Jess J. Cradduck
1919	Vera L. Moore	\$75 mo.—9 months	33	Jess J. Cradduck
1920	Mrs. Ada W. Coane	\$115 mo.—9 months	33	Jess J. Cradduck
1921	Bess Pflug	\$90 mo.—9 months	17	Jess J. Cradduck
1922	Gladys Schaper	\$90 mo.—9 months	31	Jess J. Cradduck
1923	Gladys Schaper	\$90 mo.—9 months	14	Jess J. Cradduck
1924	Grace F. Smith	\$75 mo.—9 months	19	Jess J. Cradduck
1925	Hazel A. Black	\$75 mo.—9 months	14	F. W. Sieckmann
1926	Mildred E. Warnke	\$80 mo.—9 months	11	F. W. Sieckmann
1927	Mildred E. Warnke	\$80 mo.—9 months	8	F. W. Sieckmann
1928	Ethel M. Cook	\$85 mo.—9 months	21	F. W. Sieckmann
1929	Ethel M. Cook	\$85 mo.—9 months	12	F. W. Sieckmann
1930	Ethel M. Cook	\$80 mo.—9 months	7	F. W. Sieckmann
1931	Loretta Cocheran	\$70 mo.—9 months	9	F. W. Sieckmann
1932	Loretta Cocheran	No record	9	F. W. Sieckmann
1933	Ruth Long	No record	13	F. W. Sieckmann
1934	Ruth Long	\$50 mo.—9 months	30	F. W. Sieckmann
1935	Ruth Long	\$42.50 mo.—9 months	28	F. W. Sieckmann
1936	Vivian Hafer	\$45 mo.—9 months	25	F. W. Sieckmann
1937	Vivian Hafer	\$55 mo.—9 months	—	F. W. Sieckmann
1938	Ruth Philippi	\$50 mo.—9 months	—	F. W. Sieckmann
1939	Ruth Philippi	\$50 mo.—9 months	—	F. W. Sieckmann
1940	Ruth Philippi	\$450 per year	13	F. W. Sieckmann
1941	Ruth Philippi	\$637.50 per year	11	F. W. Sieckmann
1942	Charlotte Garrison	\$450 per year	12	F. W. Sieckmann
1943	Adelaide Novak	\$637.50 total	11	F. W. Sieckmann
	Mrs. M. Elward	5½ mo. 3½ mo.		
1944	Dorothy Wood	\$759.60 per year	11	F. W. Sieckmann
1945	Mrs. Dorothy Meyer	\$1,017 per year	11	F. W. Sieckmann
1946	Caroline Hever	\$900 per year	10	Milo Buzek
1947	Caroline Hever	\$1,125 per year	11	Milo Buzek
1948	Ruth Ann Bahe	\$1,035 per year	15	Milo Buzek
1949	Ruth Ann Bahe	\$1,215 per year	15	Milo Buzek
1950	Arlene Nun	\$1,350 per year	12	Milo Buzek
1951	Marjorie Langhorst	\$1,350 per year	10	Milo Buzek

Year	Teacher	Salary and term	No. Pupils	Director
1952	Marjorie Langhorst	\$1,800 per year	12	Milo Buzek
1953	Marjorie Langhorst	\$1,800 per year	10	Milo Buzek
1954	—	\$2,025 per year	11	Milo Buzek
1955	Peggy Schulte	\$2,025 per year	15	Milo Buzek
1956	Lucille Thomas	\$265 per month	—	Leslie Matthies



Photo from A. O. Wood

District No. 10 in 1896. 1-Clara Nedler (teacher), 2-Tidy Goodman, 3-Florence Hines, 4-Gus Goodman, 5-Mary Goodman, 6-Herman Mead, 7-Minnie Waterman, 8-Ben Terry, 9-Jennie Garrison, 10-Mamie Terry, 11-Jess Kettley, 12-unknown, 13-George Garrison, 14-Frank Callison, 15-Pearl Hines, 16-Will Franz, 17-John Goodman, 18- — Terry, 19-Henry Franz, 20-Eva Terry, 21-Myrtle Wood, 22-Harriet Wood, 23-Nettie Goodman, 24-Alta Wood, 25-Conrad Wedeking, 26-Christine Franz, 27- — Kettley, 28-Rosa Ratzwell, 29-Reka Waterman, 30-Louisa Wedeking, 31-Ethel Wood Blauvelt, 32-Emily Bailey, 33-Judson Wood, 34-Florence Garrison, 35-Minnie Franz, 36-Pearl Theobald, 37-Ben Terry, 38- — Ratswell, 39-Charlie Waterman, 40-Otha Wood, 41-Frank Terry, 42-Frank Garrison.

District No. 10 was organized under the supervision of G. R. Wolfe, county superintendent. Mr. McLaughlin was directed to notify every qualified voter in the district that the organizational meeting would be held on Wednesday, September 20, 1871, at one o'clock at the home of John Shuster. The first director was Mr. A. Lee.

From the records of the superintendent's office:

Friday, June 21, 1872

Visited school in District No. 10 taught by Susan Mott in a dug-out. Ten pupils present. School in state of fair progress. Good system of teaching.—John A. Dempster.

July 7, 1951

By action of petition of Districts 9, 10, and 34, District No. 10 has been eliminated and the territory added to Districts No. 9 and 34.

School opened in 1873 with 35 pupils attending for a three-month term, with two teachers instructing. Susan Mott received \$18 per month and William Garrison \$30 per month. This school's enrollment remained fairly constant, not showing the big fluctuations that many schools experienced. A record enrollment of 59 pupils attended in 1899. The first full nine-month term came in 1914, when the teacher was paid \$55 a month. In 1912, the number of pupils dropped to nine, rose to 15, and then, in 1915, dropped to five. The school closed after the 1951 term.



Photo from Clarence Rippe

School picnic at District No. 34 about 1954.

District No. 34 was established after a petition of voters in the district by County Superintendent John A. Dempster. This district was laid out to comprise Secs. 19, 20, 30, 31, N ½ of 29, W ½ of 21, S ½ of 18, NW ¼ of 28, all in T5, R1W. Mr. Dempster notified Cecil Flowers that the meeting for the election of officers was to be held at the nearest central place at 2 P.M. on August 12, 1872. The NE ¼ of Sec. 24, T5, R2W, was then added to the district. Another change in district boundaries was made later: to detach from District 34 and attach to District 83 of Thayer County the SE ¼ of Sec. 31, T5, R1W.

December 21, 1885

The boundary lines of District 34, 83, and 76 of Thayer County have been changed by granting of request which reads as follows: As basis for this request we hereby represent that the location of our dwelling house is such that on account of streams of water or certain seasons of the year, it is impracticable and almost impossible to have our children attend school in said District 34 for a period of from 2 to 3 weeks each year.

(Signed) E. F. Medlar

Martha J. Medlar

This request was granted.

Mrs. Clyde Gewacke of Ohioa wrote of District 34:

My grandfather, James W. Burt, was director of this school for several years and my mother, Maye Quinlan, taught this school during the year of 1900. I attended this school from 1911-1916 inclusive. I have many vivid memories of the walks to and from school and the rides in a wagon on stormy days. School lunches under the willow trees, skating on the thin ice, baseball games, and drowning out gophers in Henry Molthan's pasture were exciting. The reading contests, the school programs, and box socials will always be highlights in my memories. I could never forget the games of pull-away and "old cat," especially when "German School" was in session during the winter months and all of the big kids were attending and adding to the fun at noon. If the pupils were on good behavior we were always invited to, and allowed to, attend the numerous weddings at the Lutheran church across the road. I remember that I missed the little rural school the next fall when I started to High School in Ohioa.

School opened in 1873 with nine pupils. J. H. Bremer was the first director, and the first teacher was John A. Williams, who was paid \$33.33 per month for the three-month term. Enrollment soared to 43 pupils in 1876, and fluctuated during the following years until 1895, when the record number of 69 pupils were enrolled. The first full nine-month term was held in 1914, when the teacher's salary was \$45 a month. In 1955, there were 33 pupils, and the teacher's salary had risen to \$2,250 per year.

District No. 40 is included under Ohioa.

District No. 41 was founded when a meeting to elect school officers was held on March 29, 1872. School opened in 1873, with R. L. Clemons as director and with 21 pupils enrolled. In 1874, 32 pupils were taught for a three-month term by J. A. Buthnell for \$25 per month. Conrad Most was elected director. The first full nine-month term was held in 1914. By 1924, the number of pupils started to decrease; in 1956 only 11 students were enrolled. It is interesting to note that Fred Sieckmann served as director of this district for 26 years, from 1907 to 1932.



Photo from Grace Matthies

District No. 41 in 1914. Back row, left to right: Ruth Schafer (teacher), Helen Tischer, Lillie Most, Marie Tischer, Clara Most, Andy Kronhoffman, Harry Most, Edward Sieckmann, Ervin Most. Middle row: Dora Most, Lydia Most, Grace Sieckmann, Roy Most, Amalia Most, Howard Sieckmann, John Kronhoffman, Jess Most. Front row: Elsie Mussman, Lillie Mussman, Stella Mussman, Freda Most, Will Most, Elsie Most, Jess Sieckmann, Clarence Most.



Photo from Mrs. Joe Bors

District No. 73 in 1911. *Back row, left to right:* Anna Pivmiska, teacher; Ella Matthies (Mrs. John Bornschlegl), Lou Bornschlegl. *Second row:* Margaret Fries (Mrs. Joe Bors), Bertha Woltje (Dietrich), Gust Schropfer, George Bornschlegl, Will Matthies. *Front row:* Margaret Bornschlegl (Mrs. Seth Heston), Esther Woltje (deceased), Ida Fries (Mrs. Jess Most), Mary Bornschlegl (Mrs. Ben Matthies), Herman Woltje, and Ed Matthies (deceased).

District No. 73 was organized in 1874, with Francis Story as director, and school began in the same year with four pupils. No school was held from 1878 through 1881. The school reopened in 1882, with George P. Fries as director and with Sam Kruse teaching 25 pupils for a three-month term at \$25 per month. The highest enrollment recorded was in 1909, when 45 pupils attended. Full nine-month terms were not held until 1921. Two men served long terms as director: George P. Fries, 17 years (1882-1898), and Herman Bartels, 15 years (1922-1936). This school closed after the 1936 term, when 25 pupils were enrolled.

The teachers and directors who served District 73 were as follows:

Year	Teacher	Salary and term	No. Pupils	Director
1874	No record		4	Francis Story
1875	No record		9	Francis Story
1876	No record		11	Francis Story
1877	No record		12	G. P. Fritz
1878	Through 1881	No school		
1882	Sam Kruse	\$25 mo.—3 months	25	George P. Fries
1883	Flora Angstead	\$30 mo.—3 months	25	George P. Fries
1884	Ella Thomas	\$30 mo.—3 months	23	George P. Fries
1885	Emma Thomas	\$40 mo.—3 months	35	George P. Fries
	John A. Story	\$30 mo.—2 months		
1886	Jonas Kissel	\$30 mo.—3 months	42	George P. Fries
	Ida Hickey	\$30 mo.—3 months		
1887	Ella Thomas	\$33.33 mo.—2 months	42	George P. Fries
	Ida Hickey	\$33.33 mo.—4 months		
1888	Ella Thomas	\$33.33 mo.—6 months	41	George P. Fries
1889	No record	No record	30	George P. Fries
1890	No record	No record	39	George P. Fries
1891	No record	No record	42	George P. Fries
1892	No record	No record	42	George P. Fries
1893	No record	No record	40	George P. Fries
1894	No record	No record	44	George P. Fries
1895	No record	No record	36	George P. Fries
1896	No record	No record	30	George P. Fries
1897	No record	No record	26	George P. Fries
1898	Anna Casper	8 months	27	George P. Fries
1899	Anna Casper	No record	25	August Maynen
1900	F. A. Stech	5 months	29	August Maynen
	Anna Casper	4 months		
1901	No record	No record	25	August Maynen
1902	No record	No record	27	August Maynen
1903	No record	No record	23	Henry Claussen
1904	Daisy McWilliams	\$30 mo.—6 months	30	Henry Claussen
1905	Daisy McWilliams	\$30 mo.—6 months	30	Lewis Matthies
1906	Olive Folger	\$30 mo.—6 months	26	Lewis Matthies
1907	Bessie Nottingham	\$35 mo.—1 month	23	Lewis Matthies
	Happy Johnson	\$35 mo.—5 months		
1908	Happy Johnson	\$40 mo.—1¼ months	—	Charles Bennett
	Nellie Murphy	\$40 mo.—5 months		
1909	Happy Johnson	\$40 mo.—7 months	45	Henry Fries
	Nellie Murphy	\$40 mo.—5 months		
1910	Lillian Hollmoz	\$45 mo.—6 months	26	Henry Fries
1911	Hazel Sherbondy	\$50 mo.—3 months	31	Henry Fries
	Lola Fussell	\$50 mo.—4 months		
1912	Anna Pivinska	\$50 mo.—7 months	34	Henry Fries
1913	Anna Pivinska	\$50 mo.—8 months	32	Henry Fries
1914	Ruth Shafer	\$52.50 mo.—9 months	32	Henry Fries
	Mary Barta	\$50 mo.—8 months		

Year	Teacher	Salary and term	No. Pupils	Director
1915	Josephine Domeier	\$50 mo.—8 months	36	Henry Fries
1916	Josephine Domeier	\$55 mo.—8 months	26	Henry Fries
1917	Josephine Domeier	\$55 mo.—8 months	26	Henry Fries
1918	Josephine Domeier	\$65 mo.—8 months	29	Henry Fries
1919	Josephine Domeier	\$85 mo.—8 months	28	Henry Fries
1920	Josephine Domeier	\$100 mo.—8 months	30	Henry Fries
1921	Amalia Most	\$85 mo.—9 months	16	Henry Fries
1922	Amalia Most	\$85 mo.—9 months	22	H. W. Bartels
1923	Amalia Most	\$80 mo.—9 months	15	H. W. Bartels
1924	Helen Schilke	\$80 mo.—9 months	9	H. W. Bartels
1925	Ethel Plantz	\$80 mo.—9 months	11	H. W. Bartels
1926	Mrs. Willa Most	\$80 mo.—9 months	7	H. W. Bartels
1927	Mrs. Willa Most	\$80 mo.—9 months	9	H. W. Bartels
1928	Mrs. Willa Most	\$80 mo.—9 months	29	H. W. Bartels
1929	Mrs. Willa Most	\$80 mo.—9 months	14	H. W. Bartels
1930	Mrs. Willa Most	\$80 mo.—9 months	14	H. W. Bartels
1931	Sadie Nadza	\$70 mo.—9 months	11	H. W. Bartels
1932	Sadie Nadza	No record	10	H. W. Bartels
1933	Emma Krisl	No record	10	H. W. Bartels
1934	Emma Krisl	\$45 mo.—9 months	19	H. W. Bartels
1935	Alice Krisl	\$40 mo.—9 months	19	H. W. Bartels
1936	Alice Krisl	\$40 mo.—9 months	25	H. W. Bartels
		School closed		

FAMILIES

John Samuel Craddock and his wife, Viola Moore Craddock, came to Nebraska in 1878, and settled on a farm in Franklin township (Sec. 26), 9 miles north of Alexandria, the nearest railroad town. Their first home was a crude shack, so they dug a basement, lined it with rock which they hauled 10 or 12 miles from a quarry near Alexandria, and later built a house over it. During the blizzard of 1888, their cattle strayed, and their faithful dog, who had become in the process a veritable snowball, rounded them up and presented them to Mr. Craddock. The Craddock farm is now owned by William Pribyl.

—Mrs. Mabel Craddock



Photo from Wesley Craddock

The John Samuel Craddock home after a snow.

John and Christina Moore came to Franklin township (Sec. 24) in 1877 from Lee County, Illinois, via covered wagon, with their eight children and grandfather Ephraim Moore. John Moore was a Civil War veteran and a member of Hunter Post 122, G.A.R., by transfer from J. W. Morehouse Post 188. Their farm had a maple grove which was used for picnics in the 1890's. Both Mr. and Mrs. Moore are buried in Pleasant Ridge Cemetery, which is on the site of their farm.

—Mrs. Mabel Craddock

Conrad and Minnie Most, with four of their children, came to Nebraska from Beecher, Illinois, in 1874, in a covered wagon. They settled on a farm 5 miles SE of Ohioa. Their first home was a dugout in which they lived several years. Later they built a log house, which in time was succeeded by a frame one. Their family consisted of 10 children: Lena, John, Minnie, Sophia, Henry, Mollie, Alvina, Anton, Emma, and Conrad. The only survivor of this family is Emma (Mrs. Will Mussman), who resides in Ohioa.

Henry Mussman, born in Germany, came to America at the age of 22 in 1866, and settled near Chicago. In 1868, he married Dorothea Dittmer. They moved to Indiana in 1875 and eight years later came to Nebraska and settled on a farm 4 miles east of Ohioa. Mr. Mussman spent many active



Photo from Wesley Craddock
John and Christina Moore (about 1885)



Photo from Willard Mussman
Mr. and Mrs. Henry Mussman, Sr., and family. Back row, left to right: August, William, Howard, Henry, Jr., Harry. Second row: Emma, Alvina, Rose, Viola (Anna is not in the picture).



Photo from Wesley Craddock
Lewis Charles Schafer in 1951

days in the fields so that his family might be comfortably provided for. He retired in 1935 and moved into Ohioa.

Their family consisted of 10 children: Anna, Emma, Alvina, Rose, August, Will, Viola, Howard, Henry, and Harry. Mrs. Mussman passed away in 1936, and Mr. Mussman in 1942, having reached the age of 98 years.

In 1898, Lewis Charles Schafer and Martha Adaline Schafer came to Nebraska from Illinois and settled in Franklin township (Sec. 26). They arrived in sub-zero weather and had to live in an old house. They raised a family of seven children, and are buried in the Ohioa cemetery.

—Mrs. Mabel Craddock

Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Thole came from Holt County, Illinois, in 1881 with a family of 10 children, including twin daughters, Johanna and Wilhelmina. They homesteaded 1½ miles east of Ohioa on the SW ¼ of Sec. 10 (now known as the Walter Fries farm). In 1900, the twin sisters were married to brothers: Johanna to Henry Fries, and Wilhelmina to Gust Fries. (See *Fries*.)

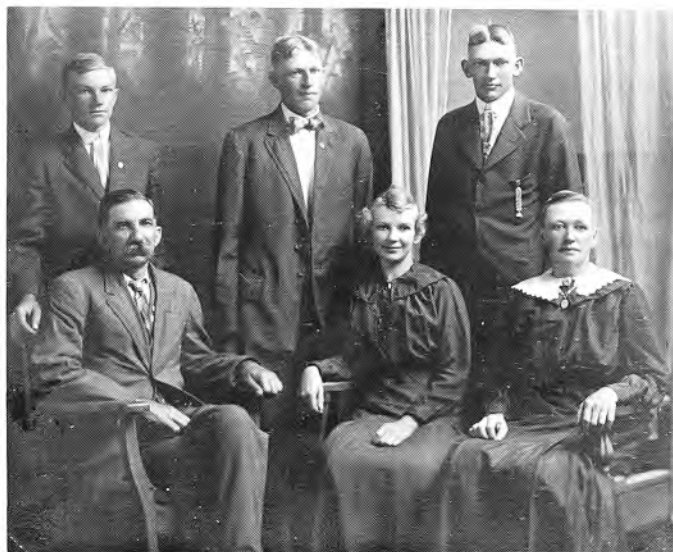


Photo from Henry Thole
The Frederick Thole family in 1918. Front row: Mr. Thole, Rose Mrs. Thole. Back row: William, Fred, Henry.

Ohioa

The village of Ohioa occupies much of the central portion of Sec. 8. The following early history of the village, written in February, 1891, by W. R. Fulton, then editor of the *Ohioan*, was read at a meeting of businessmen. It was reprinted in the *Nebraska Signal* for October 31, 1929.

Perhaps no portion of the inhabited globe has witnessed as sudden and remarkable changes as have characterized the growth of the American states. The wonderful development of the natural resources of the country, the immense accretions to the population by immigration, find no parallel in the world's history. The changes of a decade exceed those of a century on the continents of the Old World.

Truly the history of our country is stranger than fiction. Today the tangled forest, the impenetrable swamp, and arid desert, affords a home only for the wild beast and the savage red man. Tomorrow the forest is felled, the swamp drained, the desert irrigated, and the wilderness is transformed into fertile fields, into populous cities and beautiful villages, giving homes and employment to industrious millions gathered from every quarter of the civilized world.

The possibilities of this marvelous development none can foresee. Ten years ago no one had dreamed that a village would one day exist where Ohioa now stands. The name of Ohioa is much older than the town. It is the result of a compromise. When the first country post office was established in 1870 at the house of A. F. Clemons near the present site of the town, some of the pioneers who hailed from the Buckeye State wished to call it Ohio post office. This faction was opposed by another composed of Iowa men who desired to give it the name of their native state. The feud waxed warm and would doubtless have resulted in the complete extermination of the settlement had not a compromise been effected by which the two names were blended together into one, giving the euphonious name of Ohioa. A very desirable settlement of the dispute, considering the sparseness of the population at that time.

Many interesting stories might be told to illustrate the strange customs of the early pioneers, among whom existed an utter disregard for those conventional forms, a violation of which in the older states of the East would have been considered an unpardonable offense. Men were then judged according to their merits rather than by external appearance.

No time was wasted upon the frivolities of dress and personal adornment. Coats were used only for protection, while boots and shoes were not deemed a necessity except during the winter season. Indeed, I am creditably informed that the total expense for shoe leather of one of these pioneers, now a prominent banker of Ohio, did not exceed \$2 for the first five years of his residence in Nebraska.

Not infrequently the entire congregation at church was barefooted. The man was considered very fortunate who possessed more than one pair of pantaloons. These were of the coarsest material, worn inside out during the week in order to appear new on Sunday when they were turned the right way.

The preliminary survey of the Burlington Railroad which runs through Ohioa was made during the months of April and May, 1886. The place selected as a site for the town was a portion of the farms of William Sieckmann, J. H. Luke, E. D. Babcock, and R. L. Clemons. The first trains were run in October of the same year, the railroad company being represented in the town by William Riddell, a man peculiarly fitted for the position he occupies on account of his great size and strength which not only enables him to successfully protect the property of the company but to accomplish a greater destruction of the baggage than would be possible with a man of less muscular ability.

The foundation of the first building in Ohioa was laid in May, 1886. This building was erected by the Clemons brothers, who have since occupied it in the banking business. During the summer and autumn of 1886 a number of business blocks were erected and the following businessmen located in town: I. J. Hasterlick, who had been for many years engaged in business in the village of Chicago. Mr. Hasterlick thought Chicago was not as prosperous a town as it should be and [so] resolved to try his luck in a town with brighter prospects. Chicago is too slow, like Strang.

C. C. Enslow, who came here from Alexandria, Nebraska, for the purpose of educating his children in a better moral atmosphere and to assist in superintending the affairs of the Ohioa baseball association. Mr. Enslow is not himself a baseball player although he has in him the material for a first-class shortstop, if he didn't try to dodge the balls [Mr. Enslow ran a large general store].

B. F. Bothwell opened the first store. David Conner engaged in the real estate and loan business. H. E. Larimer established the *Ohioan*, the first newspaper of the place. Mr. Larimer is a native of Iowa. He was educated for the ministry, but finding the newspaper business better suited to his tastes, entered upon the perilous duties of an editor on July 19, 1886.

John O'Boyle and Mrs. Nancy Storie became rivals in the hotel business. Ed Metcalf was assistant cashier of the Bank of Ohioa for two years. Mr. Metcalf afterward engaged in the hardware business but recently has devoted all his time to politics. W. C. Fitzer engaged in the furniture business. During the same summer, Babcock & Burruss started in the hardware business.

The first drugstore was established by Carpenter & Crowl. The lumber business was first represented by J. G. Burruss, also of Alexandria. Ohioa's first physician was Dr. H. W. Strader, a native of Parisburg, Virginia, and a graduate of the college of physicians and surgeons at Baltimore, Maryland. The doctor has been uniformly successful in his practice.

The first attorney of Ohioa was C. A. Fowler, a brother of the celebrated O. C. Fowler, the great phrenologist. Mr. Fowler was engaged in the banking business at Alexandria for several years before coming here and never made any attempt to escape to Canada. Never having been convicted of any offense against the law, Mr. Fowler is not a criminal lawyer.

In the fall of 1886, J. W. Quinlan erected the opera house block and entered into the agricultural implement business, which he conducted until the winter of 1890 when he sold out to J. M. Curran. Another early resident of Ohioa is W. F. Buchmeier, also engaged in the implement business.

P. J. Quinlan became a resident of Ohioa in May, 1887, at first assisting his brother, J. W. Quinlan, in the implement business and afterwards forming a partnership with his brother-in-law, S. E. Matthews, and engaging in the musical instrument and jewelry business.

The Farmers Bank was established in January, 1887, with D. P. Abbott as president and L. J. Dunn vice-president, C. C. Conner becoming cashier in August, 1887. There is no danger of Mr. Conner going to Canada. He knows all about the new extradition law. R. A. Harvey became assistant cashier in April, 1889. Mr. Harvey is a native of Missouri but is now fully naturalized and is rapidly learning the language and adopting the customs of this country.

Ohioa has a fine school building and excellent schools now superintended by Professor J. C. Clegg of Ohio. Great pains have been taken to employ skillful teachers and the schools are in a flourishing condition.

The Baptist and Methodist societies erected church buildings

shortly after the town was started. The Evangelical Lutherans also have an organization and building here.

Of the more recent business enterprises of the town, lack of time forbids a complete account at present. Chenoweth Brothers & McFarland, Bothwell & Dufur, and Conner & Clawson are dealers in general merchandise. The clothing business is represented by I. J. Hasterlick, the millinery business by Mrs. Hayes and Mrs. C. A. Reed, the drug business by C. C. Conner, hardware by D. Pumphrey and Patterson & Hollaway. The two butcher shops are kept by C. S. Stover and William Corp. Blacksmithing is represented by D. L. Clark, D. B. Gillespie, and Frank Krisl, lumber by P. Jenkins and C. H. Ketrledge, and the barbershop by William Bunce. Of the two livery barns, William Matson is the proprietor of the Red Front and David Conner of the other.

Post Office

The first post office called Ohioa was established at the Al Clemons homestead $\frac{1}{2}$ mile east of the present town in 1870. On October 3, 1872, Austin Adams was commissioned postmaster and the office was moved to the Adams homestead $\frac{3}{4}$ mile south. Mr. Adams's commission was signed by J. W. Marshall, first assistant postmaster general. Mr. Adams served as postmaster until the fall of 1883, when he was elected county treasurer. He was succeeded by Ryland Clemons. When the railroad got as far as Tobias it was planned to locate the town a short distance southeast of the present location and B. F. Bothwell started a small store. The post office was moved to this store and Mr. Bothwell acted as assistant postmaster.



Courtesy Nebraska Signal

Ohioa Post Office about 1900. The man in the center is James Bart; the others are unidentified.

At this time the mail came by carrier from Alexandria. The route served included the Gazelle post office, Ohioa, and Belle Prairie, where E. G. Beers was postmaster. Then the route ran from Alexandria to Exeter, through Ohioa and Glengary. The Gazelle post office was discontinued January 19, 1884, at which time Emma Garrison was postmistress.

When the town site was finally fixed at the present location, John Hollister was named postmaster. For the first quarter of 1887 his salary was \$135.87. Hollister was succeeded by Hugh McLaughlin.

The two rural routes were established in 1904. Herb Cooper and A. L. Averill were the first carriers. In 1908, E. C. Adams carried the mail on Route 1. In 1924, George Hurley became carrier for Route 2 and is still (1967) carrying the mail.

Village Board

The incorporation of the village of Ohioa was authorized by the Fillmore County Commissioners on March 25, 1887. Appointed to serve as the village board until an election could be held were: Dr. T. J. McGee, J. W. Quinlan, Phil Jenkins, William F. Buchmeier, and D. Hesse.

The election was held April 5, 1887, at J. W. Quinlan's office and the following board was chosen: Dr. T. J. McGee,



Standard Atlas of Fillmore County (1905)
Map of Ohioa in 1905

William F. Buchmeier, S. Radford, J. W. Quinlan, and Charles Summers. The board organized by making Mr. Buchmeier chairman. H. E. Larimer and C. A. Fowler were candidates for village clerk, Fowler being elected. R. L. Clemons was made treasurer; C. A. Fowler, attorney; Frank Badger, marshal; and Hartford Wood, street commissioner.

The first ordinances passed by the board related to streets and crossings and sidewalks. On June 7, 1887, a committee was appointed on a calaboose and the board authorized the building of a corral 50' square. In July the same year Ohioa celebrated the Fourth in an appropriate manner and the board appropriated \$25 to help defray the expense.

In 1888, the following board was chosen: J. W. Quinlan, S. D. Radford, C. E. Summers, W. C. Fitzger; and W. H. Wychoff. Edwin Metcalf was appointed clerk, Morris Thomas overseer of streets; R. L. Clemons, treasurer; and B. F. Durkin, marshal.

In the spring of 1889, on petition of Dave Conner and others, the board passed an ordinance regulating the planting and protection of trees. At the election of this year L. H. Corbine, S. D. Radford, Joseph M. Walker, C. E. Summers, and J. W. Stevenson were made members of the board, and Mr. Summers was chosen chairman.

In 1891, Ed Metcalf, S. E. Matthews, M. H. Cott, C. S. Stover, and J. A. Fulton were elected board members. W. R. Fulton was made clerk, a position he held until 1899, when Sam Spelde took up the work.

Space does not permit the listing of all the board's activities or personnel year by year, and so we detail instead a few years chosen at random, which may be taken as typical.

In July, 1902, a combined town hall and jail was built. G. W. Phelps became clerk in 1904, serving two years. He was succeeded by F. J. Sieber, who held the office until 1911.

Sam Spelde became clerk again and served seven years.

The village board in the year 1929 was composed of F. J. Seiber, E. J. Lynn, and L. Kaderabek, with Mr. Sieber as chairman. J. P. Moor served as clerk for a number of years in an efficient manner.

In 1962, the board members were Henry Molthan, serving his ninth year with two years as mayor, Dale Sieckmann, Ray Dittmer, Joe Bors, and Mrs. Claude Hall, clerk.

Businesses and Professions

The records give us some ideas of the efforts of those who lived in Ohioa 75 years ago—and later.

C. E. Babcock was a real-estate dealer in the early days. The Clemons brothers, A. F. and R. L., were in the banking business. J. W. Quinlan built the Opera House building which stood for more than 40 years. The first floor was used for an implement business, a drugstore, and the Farmers Bank. After the hard years of 1893 and 1894 the bank went out of business.



Photo from Mrs. Helen Langhorst
Ohioa street scene (about 1900)—man in apron is Cal Stover.



Courtesy Nebraska Signal
Ohioa street scene in 1908

The auditorium upstairs was used for public gatherings until the high-school auditorium became available in 1923. Here the William Lewis and Chick Boyes players played to good crowds. Commencement exercises, dances, Epworth League meetings, and high-school plays were held. The old landmark burned to the ground in the fall of 1929. A few years later a new auditorium was built on the same site.

Paul J. Gundermann, one of Ohioa's pioneer businessmen, came about the time the town was started. In the late 1890's Mr. Gundermann started his own drugstore and continued in business until shortly before his death on January 7, 1941.

J. C. Pflug came to Ohioa from Mound City, Missouri, in 1897 and had a hardware and implement business for 36 years. The Pflug children all grew up in Ohioa but live in many places now.

Fred Wolter came to Fillmore County in 1888. He worked as a blacksmith, then as manager for the Lincoln Grain Company. He was appointed postmaster in 1916 and

served in that capacity for many years. From 1938 until near the end of his life, he was in the gasoline, oil, and tire business. He also served for several years as village clerk, light and water commissioner, and Fillmore County supervisor for Franklin and Belle Prairie townships. One of Ohioa's oldest citizens, he died on April 15, 1963.

The Averills and Phelps were early settlers. For many years, Alphonso Averill carried mail. T. E. Averill kept a hardware store. I. C. Steele had a furniture store, and Conrad Arneke was a faithful shoemaker. Alice and Mabel Arneke have been and still are active in church and community work in Ohioa.

As recollected by Claude M. Chenoweth, the following firms and people were active in Ohioa in the years following 1890:

General Merchandise: Chenoweth & McFarland; C. C. Enslow; Ben F. Bothwell; John G. Wollam; George F. Jenkins; Mr. Donahue; A. L. Averill; Frank Spelde; J. P. Moor; Steele Brothers.

Drugs: Harris & Davis; Paul Gundermann. (Mr. Gundermann was also the undertaker and photographer.)

Doctors: J. D. Patterson; M. S. Bias; J. L. Brown.

Banks: Farmers Bank of Fillmore County (C. C. Conner, Clayton Babcock); Bank of Ohioa (R. A. Harvey, F. J. Sieber, H. C. Rowland, R. R. Chenoweth, R. H. Marks, A. F. Clemons).

Clothing: I. J. Hasterlick.

Feed Stores: Fulton & Whitman; E. F. Medler.

School Superintendents: J. C. Clegg; V. D. Timmerman; C. W. Taylor.

Farm Implements: William Buchmeier; John Curran; Bennett Hayes; Ben F. Dunkin; J. C. Pflug.

Postmasters: H. McLaughlin; J. A. Hollister; W. R. Fulton; C. M. Chenoweth.

Blacksmiths: Olaf Forselle; Boyd Gillispie; Henry Parker.

Grain Buyers: R. L. Clemons; J. A. Hollister; Mate Cannon; W. C. Moore; W. S. Pool; R. R. Chenoweth; Herb Cooper.

Harness Shops: Ed Metcalf; Lorin Heston; J. W. Crawford.

Lumber Yards: C. E. Summers; R. A. Harvey.

Restaurants: Jerry W. Forbes; Ernest Wisroth; Clyde Rakestraw.

Barbers: W. G. Davidson; L. B. Frankforter; Ben Grant.

Editors: H. E. Larimer; W. R. Fulton.

Attorneys: Charles A. Fowler; W. R. Fulton.

Saloons: Sieckmann & Brown; Meyer & Wertz; I. J. Hasterlick Tom Peterson; Hy Unger.

Painter: Joseph M. Walker.

Livery: Fulton & Whitman; David Conner; William F. Young.

Railroad Agents: A. Riddle; Charles F. Hollenberger; Fred Holtz; Mert Allen.

Hotels: J. O'Boyle; Ben Bothwell; W. H. Walker; Mrs. S. P. Sharp.

Auctioneer: James T. Walker.

Draymen: John Bell; J. A. Robinson; Jim Moore; Charles Williamson; Henry Domeier.

Cobblers: Adam Brunner; Conrad Arneke.

Hardware: Byron L. Tripp.

Farmers Union Co-operative Association

In 1912, a group of farmers in the Ohioa community desired to form a co-operative in order to get better prices for their livestock and grain. They secured information from the Extension Department of the University of Nebraska, and after a number of meetings in various schoolhouses, they formed an organization which they named the Farmers Equity. At first they loaded their grain directly into box cars on the siding by scooping it from their wagons. This was one of the first co-operatives in Fillmore County and among the first in Nebraska. It was incorporated in 1916. A grain elevator, stockyards, and even a grocery store and cream station became part of the organization. Some of the original organizers of this co-operative who are still members are Cyril Bernasek, Henry Schelbitzki, Mrs. Frank Schelbitzki, Omer Schroll, Frank Sieckmann, Mrs. Dave Sweney, Robert Weber, Mrs. Corb Williamson and A. O. Wood.

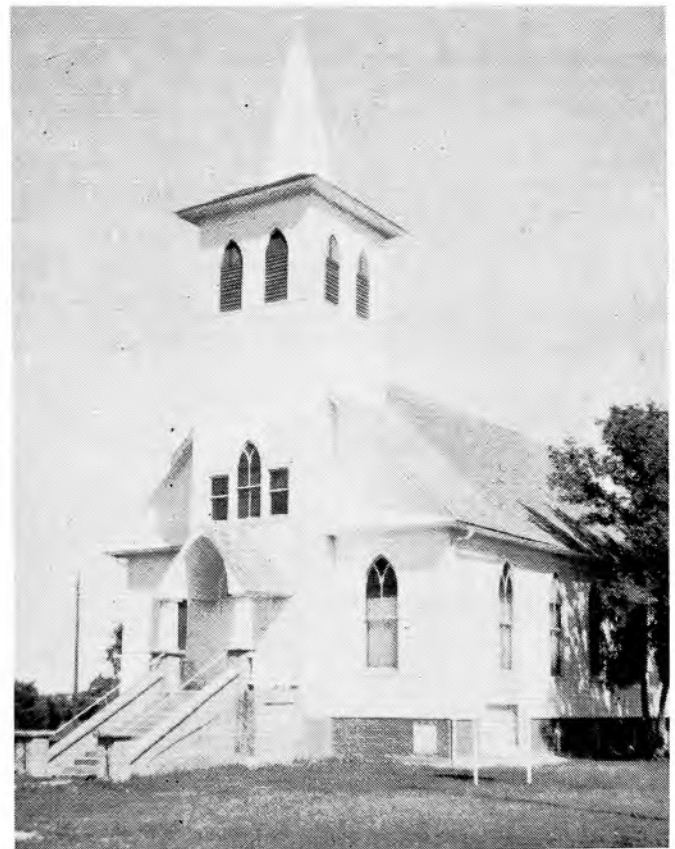
There have been a lot of changes, but the original grain elevator was still in operation until 1958 when it burned. The organization is now known as the Farmers Union Co-operative Association. Present facilities include a modern elevator, office building, 240,000-bushel grain storage, a new feed mill, fertilizer plant, bulk petroleum plant, and a 50-ton, 60-foot scale. The present board members are Joe Schelbitzki, Lloyd Schelbitzki, Herman Nun, Roy Most, Melvin Thomas, and Arthur Wulf. The present employees are Ross Munn,

who has been the manager for 15 years, Lester Bahe, Verlin Most, Earl Peppie, LaVerne Deke, and Willard Meyer.

CHURCHES

The Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, commonly called the South Lutheran Church, began its career on September 25, 1887. For several years it was served by itinerant pastors. Only 15 members were on the roll when the church was organized: William Nierstheimer, Christ Gewecke, William Molthan, Ernest Molthan, Henry Gewecke, Henry Dearing, Christ Schweer, Henry Schweer, William Schweer, Henry Rippe, Barnhart (Bernard) Krug, William Schroder, Henry Kappmeier, Louis Rippe, and William Gewecke. In 1888 the first church building was completed.

The pioneer pastor in 1887-1888 was the Rev. J. Ramser. He was succeeded by the following pastors: Rev. R. Gardew, 1888-1890; Rev. Rhinehart Bauer, 1890-1891; Rev. Max Henning, 1891-1894; Rev. H. Fricke, 1894-1901; Rev. W. Kronsbein, 1901-1903; Rev. Otto Klatt, 1903-1907; Rev. P. C. Martin, 1907-1908; Rev. Rudolf Lentz, 1908-1910; Rev. A. Theodore Mikkelsen, 1910-1912; Rev. Walter Fieg, 1912-1913; Rev. G. Klatt, 1913-1927; Rev. William Harder, 1928-1937; Rev. V. R. Pietzko, 1938-1942; Rev. Fred Loeffler, 1943-1944.



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Ohioa (1962)

This church became one parish with the St. John's congregation in 1944 and was served by Pastor H. J. Diekhoff from 1944 to 1950, at which time the congregations were again separated until 1953. In 1953, through a final vote, the congregation decided to become a separate church, and the former South St. John's became the Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The Rev. Henning Pearson was the first pastor to serve the newly reorganized church. During his four years as pastor, a new electric organ was purchased, a garage was built, and other changes were made, all through donations and the willing work of members.

Various improvements have been made from time to time. During the pastorate of the Rev. Otto Klatt, the high

steeple was built and the bell (weighing about one ton) was installed. In 1911, during the pastorate of the Rev. Mr. Mikkelsen, the convenient parsonage was built. In 1917, a new church was erected. Other improvements included a new cave, new sidewalks, a garage, numerous tree plantings, a new lawn sowed and beautifully kept, a cemetery fence and a gateway arch erected.

The five-acre plot on which the church, parsonage, and cemetery are located was donated for that purpose by William Molthan when the church was organized. The many improvements testify to the loving care of members who have valued and cherished the influence of this church over many years.

The first confirmation class of this church was composed of Adolph Gewecke, Joseph Gewecke, Minna Gewecke, Emma Dearing, Martha Molthan, and Anna Krug. The first baptism to take place in the congregation was that of Minnie Meyer, who later became Mrs. Herman Schroder.

"Pastor Heinrich Wilhelm Fricke was born in Hanover, Germany, and was trained in the Hermansburg Missionary Institute. He came to America in 1871 and served as a schoolmaster for a few years in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Corning, Missouri. In 1878 he entered Carthage College and studied theology, was licensed by the Nebraska Synod in 1880, and ordained at Waverly, Nebraska, in 1881. He had a kindly disposition coupled with a voice with the penetrating powers of a buzz-saw.

"Other pastors answered the call to go to America and by 1890 there were just as many from the Old Country as there were American-born pastors in the Nebraska Synod." (From Lorin J. Wolff, *Story of the Midwest Synod*, as quoted by *Nebraska Signal*.)

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church published a booklet in 1955 issued to celebrate the church's 75th anniversary. (Most of this account is drawn from that booklet.)



Courtesy of Mrs. Clyde Gewecke

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Ohioa (1955)

St. John's Lutheran Church was the first organized Lutheran church in Ohioa. Before its formation in 1880,

preaching services and religious instruction were given in farm homes. Later, services and the administration of the Holy Sacrament were held at the District 40 schoolhouse and at the home of Mr. J. H. Bremer.

The homes of Claus Claussen, Frederick Matthies, Sr., and Frederick Vogt, Sr., were opened for church services and religious instruction. The first Lutheran service was conducted by a Mr. Williams, a teacher by profession, who came from Switzerland. Mr. Williams came from Chicago to Beatrice to take up a homestead. There he met George Fries. Taking a homestead claim, Mr. Williams settled where Jim Schropfer now resides. Mr. Williams was in poor health and soon died of consumption and was buried on his claim.

The Rev. Simon Meeske was the first ordained Lutheran pastor. The Lutheran people from this community and from Swan Creek (near Tobias) were served together. A meeting for the organization of a Lutheran congregation was held at the home of Mr. Hothan at Tobias, but because of disagreements, plans failed to mature.

On January 1, 1880, Lutherans of this community organized the St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church. The charter members were: Henry Claussen, Sr., Frederick Matthies, Sr., Henry Langhorst, Sr., Christian Claussen, Frederick Mussman, Sr., Hans Claussen, Gerhard Hopken, Anton Domeier, John F. Goebel, William Schielke, John H. Thole, and Gottfried Schielke.

The first pastor of the new congregation was the Rev. William Thole, a brother of John H. Thole. Although he was badly crippled, he was a true servant of God and served about eight years, bearing all the hardships, troubles, and hindrances of pioneer days. Right at the beginning, a little frame church was built, and also a two-room parsonage. The first buildings were located two miles east of Ohioa on Sec. 9, land now owned by Gust Nun, Sr.

On April 24, 1881, the new congregation voted to join the English Lutheran Synod of Nebraska, a district of the General Synod. When the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Nebraska was organized in 1890, with all-German congregations, 16 in number of the English district withdrew, among them St. John's Church.

On April 8, 1883, a permanent and regular Sunday School was organized. After the residence of the Rev. Mr. Thole, the Rev. J. Bond served from 1887 to 1889 and the Rev. O. L. Luschei from 1889 to 1890. The Rev. Herman Schumann became pastor on August 24, 1890. He served 4½ years, preaching also for Lutherans at Turkey Creek. As the church building became outgrown, the members voted, on April 3, 1893, to build a larger church. The new church, a fine building, was continuously used for worship from that time until 1955.

The Rev. C. Thomsen served in 1895-1896; he was followed by the Rev. F. Schwarz, who served from 1896 until he was appointed superintendent of the Synod in 1899.

In the spring of 1899, one week after the departure of the Rev. Mr. Schwarz, the Rev. M. Kossick became pastor and served for eight years. During his ministry, a new parsonage was built in 1904. His successor was the Rev. L. H. Traubel, who served 4½ years. During his ministry, the interior of the church was remodeled and new pews, altar, pulpit, and baptismal font were installed.

The Rev. J. A. Bahnsen preached his first sermon and was called as pastor on December 8, 1912. During his pastorate the church and parsonage were moved to the present site in Ohioa, in December, 1921. The first services held in town after the church was moved were on January 15, 1922. This was an important move, for the congregation experienced wonderful progress and growth in every way. The membership of the Sunday School and church increased 100 per cent. It was during the pastorate of the Rev. Mr. Bahnsen that the *Frauenverein* was organized (October 4, 1922) and the Tabitha Missionary Society (March 27, 1927). Pastor Bahnsen served faithfully until 1932, nearly 20 years, the longest pastorate in the history of St. John's Church.

In the beginning of the trying 1930's, the Rev. E. C. Hansen was called as pastor in 1933 and served until 1936.

He was followed by the Rev. W. F. V. Churchill (1936-1939). Both these men are remembered with gratitude for their service during these economically difficult years.

The second longest pastorate in St. John's was held by the Rev. H. J. Diekhoff, who was called in 1939 and served until July, 1953. These were "war years" and required even greater consecration on the part of the pastor. During his pastorate, all church debts remaining from previous years were abolished. He served the congregation faithfully, serving also the Lutheran congregation south of Ohioa for nearly five years.

On October 15, 1953, the Rev. Burnell W. Hartman was called as pastor of St. John's together with South St. John's congregation. The two congregations had tentatively voted to merge. Much work was accomplished, resolutions of merger were drawn up by elected members of both congregations, and a vote was called for on February 22, 1954. At that time, the congregation in the country felt that they wished to withdraw from the planned merger, and the Rev. Mr. Hartman was released and called to St. John's Church in Ohioa, as their full-time pastor.

It had long been realized that the church building required attention. A committee appointed to study the situation recommended the initiation of a program to build a new church and parsonage. The congregation adopted this recommendation at a special meeting on June 6, 1954. The building committee consisted of W. A. Philippi, Clarence Higel, Leslie Matthies, Leonard Borschlegl, Theodore Schilke, and Kermit Mussman. On October 10, 1954, the congregation contracted with Richard and William Reinke of Byron, Nebraska, who designed and constructed the beautiful new church.

The last services were held in the old church on October 13, 1954, at 9:30 A.M., and the work of razing the building began immediately following. Ground-breaking services were held October 24, 1954, with the Rev. Karl Koenig, Jr., of Sutton, as the speaker. For the next 11 months, services were held in the village auditorium; funerals and Lenten services were held in the Methodist Church; and the meetings of all organizations were held at the parsonage.

At last, on September 4, 1954, the new church was dedicated, and the congregation settled into its new home; by the time of the 75th anniversary celebration in 1955, the building was debt-free. A new parsonage was completed in 1958.

Pastor Hartman resigned his charge and left St. John's on Easter Sunday, April 1, 1956. Pastor Karl Koenig, Jr., left his pastorate in Sutton to come to St. John's on April 7, 1956, and served until 1963. In that year he was succeeded by Pastor Robert L. Hoefft, who still serves (1967) in that capacity.

Methodism in Ohioa and Vicinity

The history of Methodism in this vicinity goes back farther than most of us might suppose. The Annual Conference minutes and records left by the Rev. W. D. Gage, the Rev. George H. Wehn, and the Rev. O. W. Fifer, show that this community was included in the Meridian Circuit in 1871. In 1872, this area was included in the Virginia Mission. The first quarterly meeting of the Virginia Mission, Beatrice District, Nebraska Conference, with J. B. Maxfield as presiding elder, was held at Little Sandy, and W. T. Hill was again employed. Present as members were H. C. Rhodes, local deacon, J. E. McClellan, class leader, and J. W. Easley, steward.¹

At the third quarterly meeting held at Pioneer, September 28, 1872, W. T. Hill had left the charge and H. C. Rhodes was employed as preacher in charge. The minutes give four members present, viz.: J. E. McClellan, H. C. Rhodes, T. E. Allen, W. H. Garrison. The minutes of the last quarterly meeting held at Little Sandy said that there were four members present: H. C. Rhodes, J. W. Easley, W. H. Garrison, and J. E. McClellan. There were elected George Selleck, James R. Jackson, B. F. Ryman, P. Garrison as stewards, with a membership of 106 and nine appointments. J. Grey was licensed to exhort, and thus closed the year of 1872.²

W. P. Grantham, a supernumerary preacher of the conference supplied for a short time after W. T. Hill and preceding H. C. Rhodes.



Ohioa Methodist Church (1964)

The Nebraska Conference met at Plattsmouth on April 10, 1873. Bishop Anderson presided . . . J. B. Maxfield was appointed to the Beatrice District and Wm. D. Gage to the Little Sandy Circuit. We had about 60 members on the circuit and will have 160; 26 on probation; five Sabbath schools, 155 scholars, 39 officers and teachers, 350 books in library, 70 *Advocates* and *Good News*. Schools paid this year \$29.10 for books. They have paid me this year \$211.20. The conference coming on in September, the harvest was not sold, and it made a sorry time for them; but we hope and trust in God.—W. D. Gage.³

Now let the Rev. George H. Wehn tell us about the year of 1874 and 1875.

"From the Conference Session of 1874, Bishop Bowman presiding: W. D. Gage was again appointed to this work, but owing to his wife's illness failed the appointment. At the conference of 1874, Hebron Circuit was formed by a division of the old Little Sandy Circuit or Mission. I was appointed to the Hebron Mission; in March 1875, the two were joined together—being then styled Hebron and Little Sandy Mission—embracing a little more than the south half of Fillmore County, all of Thayer County, and a part in the SE corner of Clay County, also a part in NW corner of Jefferson County. We also supplied Nuckolls County with preaching a part of the year and organized the class known as Elton Class, 2 miles E of Elkton. During the year we organized a class at Hebron, one at Howard's S. H. [schoolhouse] Fillmore County, one at Martin's S. H. in same county. We had precious seasons of waiting upon the Lord. We reported in full membership 106 at conference with 35 probationers. Out of the entire number of probationers know but one backslider who we doubted at the time of uniting. During this year we built a parsonage at Geneva which we think when plastered will be worth \$400 and call it good considering that the people are just emerging from the terrible plague of the Grasshopper of last year the consequences of which are still felt severely. Temporally the year will be remembered because of its trail of our faith (in God to provide) by the threatening millions of grasshoppers that passed us daily for weeks in the early part of the season, followed by threatening of drouth, then the storms, hail and rain in torrents—threatening to and in many cases even destroying crops. The floods of water swelling and flooding to overflowing the streams taking before them bridges and these things were appalling; these with growing of wheat in shock and stack were truly causes of discouragement to farmers and in fact all, as all were dependent upon the agriculture. Our Spiritual interest was not so great as could have been desired but a steady growth has through the entire year been manifest. At our fourth quarterly meeting it was recommended that a division be again made of the mission as follows viz. Geneva, Martin, Howard, Chelsea, Franklin, and Walnut to be called Geneva Mission; then as follows viz. Hebron, Belvidere, Carlton, Alexandria, Elkton and Kiowa to be known as Hebron Circuit. With pleasure we add that Bro. W. H. Blaine Local preacher did good and effective service preaching regularly every sabbath and thus kept up 5 appointments. All the summer of 1875 we count him a good help, a laborer in the Lord's vineyard, also Bro. Peter Vanhosen an Exhorter did good and acceptable service in holding meetings. The year in the whole has been a pleasant one not a jar nor discord but harmony entire seems to have prevailed. We close in prayer for still greater and greater and greater blessing to rest upon the people that the years to come may be more and more abundant in labor for Christ and his Kingdom. We might have noticed many others whom we shall remember for their zeal and earnestness in labor for Christ and His cause. Respectfully submitted, George H. Wehn."⁴

¹ Record Book of Little Sandy Circuit and Later of the Geneva Mission.

² *Ibid.* ³ *Ibid.* ⁴ *Ibid.*

In his history dated September 23, 1876, the Rev. George H. Wehn says, "Franklin Class, the oldest of the circuit, has had less pastoral attention than any and yet a good revival influence did pervade and does still. The membership are so scattered, 6 miles E or W of the S. H. their influence cannot be so concentrated. Their Sunday School has been a success."⁵

There are no details for the years 1877 to 1880. The Rev. J. A. Chapin (October 1876-October 1879) and Rev. R. C. Johnson (October 1879-October 1880) were the pastors of the Geneva Mission at this time.

In 1880, the conference appointed Lewis D. Willard to supply the Franklin Circuit and reappointed him in 1881. In the following year, 1882, the conference minutes show 60 members for Franklin but make no mention of a pastor.

The Annual Conference minutes of 1883 report Franklin and Chelsea to be supplied and list 40 members. But a "Brief History of Ohioa M. E. Church," compiled by the Rev. A. T. McFarland and assisted by the Rev. G. M. Jones, tells us that the Rev. Samuel Jones, of one of the Pennsylvania conferences (a located Elder), was pastor of Franklin and Chelsea in 1883. The Rev. G. M. Jones held quarterly conference for him on March 4, 1883, in a schoolhouse south of where Ohioa now stands.⁶

In 1884, the Franklin Circuit was supplied by the Rev. J. D. Smith and a "church was finished and ready for dedication at Chelsea on Franklin Circuit and a parsonage was built on the same circuit. Church value \$1,400.00 Parsonage value \$500.00."⁷

In 1885, "Ohioa is a large country circuit and has within its limits the possibilities of a number of strong charges. The Rev. J. D. Smith has supplied the work for two years with a good degree of success. A church and parsonage have been built and paid for to within \$400."⁸ The church building was "Chelsea" church that later became the property of the United Brethren. The parsonage was built ½ mile W of the Franklin schoolhouse (District 10), on the old Garrison farm where a small cemetery is still located. At this time Ohioa charge included Chelsea, Harmony, Prairie Grove, Franklin, Walnut Creek, and possibly others.⁹

In 1886, the Rev. M. C. Smith was the pastor of Ohioa with Marshall, Chelsea, Harmony, Prairie Grove, Franklin, and Walnut Creek as a part of the charge.¹⁰

In 1887, Strang was a new circuit. Having been formerly a part of the Ohioa charge, it now included Chelsea, Prairie Grove, and Strang. Ohioa, with the Rev. M. C. Smith as pastor, still included Franklin, Walnut Creek, Marshall, and Harmony.¹¹

During 1888, the Rev. C. S. Kathan was the pastor and two new churches—in Antioch and Ohioa—were built and paid for during that year.¹²

In 1889, Ohioa was joined with Tobias, Daykin, and Antioch with the Rev. John F. Lewis as pastor. "He continued on through 1890 and was used of God in bringing 200 people into the kingdom."¹³ In the following year (1891), Ohioa was separated from Tobias and Daykin. The Rev. John F. Lewis continued as pastor of Ohioa and Antioch until the fall of 1893. During this year a new parsonage valued at \$1,200 was built.

The Rev. George M. Jones was appointed to Ohioa in the fall of 1893 and served Ohioa and Antioch until the fall of 1896. "During the Rev. George M. Jones's ministry the church property was much improved, and there were several gracious revivals which did much to strengthen the church."¹⁴

In the fall of 1896, the Rev. M. C. Smith was again appointed to this charge. The Sunday School report for Ohioa at this time shows an average attendance of 64 for the quarter preceding May 10, 1897.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ "Brief History of Ohioa M. E. Church"—written in the Church Record Book.

⁷ Annual Conference Minutes, 1884.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 1885. ⁹ *Ibid.*, 1885. ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1886. ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 1887.

¹² "Brief History." ¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ "Brief History."

After the fall of 1897, there are no records available for many years; and so we list the names of the pastors as compiled by the Rev. A. T. McFarland. (In earlier days, Methodist ministers were allowed to stay only two years at one church.)

The Reverend P. C. Johnson, 1897-99; W. N. Simpson, 1899-1901; F. W. Bean, 1901-03; C. E. Givits, 1903-04; W. L. Austin, 1904-05; O. T. Moore, 1905-06; E. F. Hutchins, 1906-09; Charles Burns, 1909-11; C. E. Austin, 1911-13; F. C. McVey, 1913-17; B. N. Kunkel, 1917-19; A. W. Steele, 1919-21; A. L. Stearns, 1921-22; E. A. Knight, 1922-24; N. A. Martin, 1925-26; and A. T. McFarland, 1926-27.

In 1910, an excavation was made for a basement. The church was moved over this and an addition was built onto the east side. The alcove for the choir and pulpit was added on the west. This same year the parsonage was moved from the west side of the church to a location 1½ blocks east (now known as the Wood property).

During the pastorate of the Rev. F. C. McVey, the Sunday School records show an average attendance of about 100. The Epworth League records also show an interested group taking active part in the Young People's Department.

During the pastorate of the Rev. B. N. Kunkel in 1917-19, the old parsonage was sold to Frank Wood for \$1,500 and the present parsonage purchased from Frank Theobald for \$3,350. The money from the sale of the old parsonage was applied on the purchase of the new one. Nineteen hundred dollars was borrowed in order to complete the transaction. The church was incorporated at this time.

The minutes of an adjourned session of the quarterly conference of December 21, 1919, contain a motion to sell the Antioch church and the amount received to be applied to the debt on the new parsonage. During 1924, the second year of the Rev. E. A. Knight's ministry, the money was raised to repay the parsonage loan. A gift from the late May A. Garrison made possible the installation in 1939 of a set of accordion doors; these added much to the convenience and privacy of the Sunday School hour.

The following ministers complete the list of pastors:

The Reverend G. W. Wagner, 1927-29; A. M. Dixon, 1929-32; R. R. Kreps, 1932-35; C. M. Shaub, 1936-37; S. G. Rasmussen, 1937-40; A. W. Ahrendts, 1940-43; W. B. Zimmerman, 1943-45; Max McCamley, 1945-48; B. M. Lansing, 1948-50; Jestine Jensen, 1950-55; J. C. Moorman, 1955-56; Carl Spencer, 1956-60; Paul Walker, 1960-66; and Larry Westerbuhr, 1966-67.

School—District No. 40

Before the incorporation of the village of Ohioa, a country schoolhouse was situated on the corner ½ mile E and ½ mile S of the present town site, and the children of the early settlers attended there. A meeting for election of officers was held at the home of A. F. Clemons on Wednesday, March 20, 1872.

Clara Ann Mussman gives us a picture of school in those days:

"Water had to be carried from farm homes to the south until a well was dug on the grounds in 1879. Coal and all other supplies were brought from Alexandria. If you could read the first treasurers' books kept by District 40 you would be amazed or amused. One item Dec. 2, 1887 read: 'Rawhide for teacher, 25 cents.' Tall lanky lads came to school for a few winter months when they did not have to help on the farms."

"One of the earlier teachers was Mrs. Parthenia (Matson) Kelly who taught District 40 in 1880. Eighty-odd years can make a difference. Picture yourself climbing wooden fences, almost stepping on blue racers in the tall prairie grass, or carrying a pail of water on the worn path to District 40."

After incorporation, it was thought advisable to provide a town school that would answer more fully the educational requirements of the growing community. In 1888, a frame schoolhouse was erected on the site of the present building. This two-story building had four large rooms and front and back halls. Later, it was found necessary to erect a two-room addition at the rear. The upper room was used in connection with the high school and the lower room served as a gymnasium.

Miss Ida Sharp, who was teaching in the country school at the time of the erection of the new building, came to Ohioa as the first primary teacher. John C. Clegg, the first superintendent, was noted for his interest in croquet.

Franklin Township Homestead Map

Claus R. Claussen 160 A	William Baldwin 160 A	St. Joe and D. C. R. R. Co.				Lewis Trauger 160 A	Sylvanus Dietrick 160 A	St. Joe and D. C. R. R. Co. 440 A		Francis Storie 160 A	Ira J. Roberts 160 A	St. Joe and D. C. R. R. Co.	Heinrich Langhorst 160 A			
Hans J. Claussen 160 A	John M. Claussen 160 A					William Summers 160 A	Franc C. Claussen 160 A			Caroline Williams 160 A	Charles Spencer 160 A	St. Joe and D. C. R. R. Co. 160 A	St. Joe and D. C. R. R. Co. 160 A			
St. Joe & D. C. R. R. Co.				Wilhelm F. Sieckmann 160 A	Ryland L. Clemens 160 A	St. Joe & D. C. R. R. Co. 480 A		Ludwig H. Koker 160 A	Friedrich W. Buchmeier 160 A	St. Joe & D. C. R. R. Co. 480 A		Reint Jansen Offerts 160 A	Andreas Schropfer 80 A Cyrus McPherson 80 A			
				Henry Most 160 A	Eugene D. Babcock 160 A			Josiah Luke Jr. 160 A	Henry Mathies 160 A	Hiram A. Martin 160 A			James W. McPherson 80 A	Cyrus McPherson 80 A	Augustus H. Kane 80 A	
Harrison Averill 160 A	Ephraim Stevens 160 A	St. Joe and D. C. R. R. Co. 320 A				16 School Land		St. Joe and D. C. R. R. Co. 480 A		George Fries 160 A	Frederick Vogt 160 A			Henry K. Schmidt 160 A		
William Gewecke 80 A	Frederick Gewecke 80 A									George Thomas 160 A	Peter Thomas 160 A	Anna Thomas 160 A	St. Joe and D. C. R. R. Co. 480 A			
19 St. Joe and D. C. R. R. Co. 640 A				John H. C. Bremer 80 A	John Warnke 80 A	Lewis M. Clapp 160 A	Railroad Land 240 A	William Case 160 A	George W. Lowery 160 A	Thomas E. Barnett 160 A	Wm. R. Terry 160 A	Nelson Tracy 120 A	George W. Morley 160 A			
				Ernst Moltan 80 A	Hugh Berkley 160 A							Martin Walker 160 A				
				Carl F. Moltan 80 A	Frederick Moltan 80 A	Railroad Land 80 A	Elwood Bales 160 A	William L. Baker 160 A	John A. Dempster 160 A	Ellis Barnett 160 A	David Hadley 160 A			John Moore 80 A	Jesse F. Snow 80 A	
Cecil A. Flower 160 A	William Eppler 80 A	St. Joe & D. C. R. R. Co. 640 A				John Shuster, Jr. 80 A	John Shuster 80 A	James E. McClellan 160 A	Joseph M. Taylor 160 A	R. R. Land 80 A	William F. Angstead 160 A	Lewis Smith 160 A	Joseph Terry 80 A	25 Railroad Land 240 A		Jesse F. Snow 80 A
Fritz Warnke 80 A												William J. Moore 80 A				
William Sieckmann 80 A	Christian Buchmeier 80 A					William H. Garrison 160 A	John T. McPher- son 80 A	Hugh McLaughlin 160 A	Amy M. Taylor, Widow 160 A	William F. Minshall 160 A	Church B. Rinard 80 A	Lewi Baldwin 80 A	John W. Curch 160 A	Luther B. Thomas Rct. Rec. 160 A		
Ernest Schleut 80 A																
St. Joe and D. C. R. R. Co. 640 A				Andrew S. Stevenson 160 A	James F. Reed 80 A	33 St. Joe & D. C. R. R. Co. 600 A		John T. McPher- son 40 A	John T. McPher- son 40 A	John L. Taylor 80 A	35 St. Joe & D. C. R. R. Co. 640 A		36 School Land			
				Lee Anderson 160 A					Peter Garrison 120 A	Olive W. Patton 160 A						
				John G. Slingerland 160 A					Jesse Lee 160 A							
				George W. Hinthorn 80 A												

The first commencement of the Ohioa school was held on June 2, 1891. The graduating students were Clayton Babcock, Eva Bothwell, Irene Hollister, Charles Matson, Ray Kingsbury, George Matson, Fred Burns, and Ira M. Andrew. The teachers were John C. Clegg, principal; Etta Morgan, grammar room; Isaac B. Conner, intermediate; and Olive Hollister, primary.

In 1892, the graduates were Floy Clark (later Mrs. Charles Roper of Lincoln), Lydia Babcock King, Clara Medlar Bigelow, and Bertha Adams Klatt.

The first class to graduate after the school had 12 grades in 1900 was composed of three members: Maye Quinlan Burt, Alice Walker Dunnigan, and Mae Stowell Grant.

Charles W. Taylor was superintendent from 1899 to 1900; E. F. Monroe held the same position from 1907 to 1909.

Of superintendents between 1901 and 1907 there is no record. Those since 1907 have been:

Ernest F. Monroe, 1907-09; R. O. Severin, 1909-10; P. W. Evans, 1910-12; Gustave O. Fuchs, 1912-14; Mabel C. Metcalf, 1914-16; John

E. Lanz, 1916-18; Gladys Freeman Pavey, 1918-19; William H. Kotas, 1919-22; J. A. Blackhurst, 1922-23; E. D. Clasen, 1923-28; H. C. Rude, 1928-31; Orrin A. Bell, 1931-36; D. L. Jimerson, 1936-38; H. E. Walkow, 1938-41; G. D. Morrison, 1941-42; Perry Jorn, 1942-46; J. W. Peterson, 1946-47; Otto Kucera, 1947-49; Floyd Tillotson, 1949-51; Paul R. Dalton, 1951-52; Howard Zook, 1952-56; Max R. May, 1956-57; Virgil Poore, 1957-59; Orville Schmidt, 1959-61; and Charles L. Phillips, 1961-67.

School opened in 1873 with 21 pupils enrolled and R. L. Clemens serving as director. The first teacher recorded was Nellie C. Carver, who taught 16 children for a three-month term in 1874 for a salary of \$25 per month. Enrollment rose steadily, until in 1882 the number of pupils reached 71. One teacher, Anna Gorden, taught the entire school for a three-month term for \$25 a month.

In 1884, District 40 began holding school for a full nine-month term. By 1900, the school had six full-time teachers. In 1912, enrollment reached its all-time high of 205. After that peak year, enrollment began to decline until, by 1936, there were only 100 pupils registered for the school term.



Photo from Otha Wood

District No. 40 schoolhouse, built in 1888. The exact date of this picture is not known.



Photo from Mrs. Verlin Most

District No. 40 (Ohiowa) in February, 1946

(An interesting sidelight on local history is that the school census in 1895 showed 208 pupils of school age in the district; in 1902, 180; in 1910, 195; in 1912, 205; in 1920, 145; and in 1929, 160 pupils.)

Soon after World War I, the frame building was condemned and bonds were voted for a new schoolhouse. Clara Mussman gives us a good explanation for the condemning of the old school:

"School was dismissed more than once when the old schoolhouse started to rock in a strong wind. The basement of the new school was dug by people of the community with farmers bringing their teams of horses and slip scrapers. It took a great deal longer than it would today with all the big machinery. After classes started in the new building, the old school was taken down. Farmers who got the lumber were Robert Weber, who used it to build onto his house; Henry Wulf, who used it in his house on the farm where Arthur Wulf now resides; some of the windows that Henry Wulf got were used later on by Henry Fries to build a porch onto his house, where Joe Bors lives now; Will Wulf, who used his lumber in a hog house; and Miles Hurley, who built the barn on the farm where Dallas Mussman now lives with the lumber that he got."

The new brick building was erected just south of the old schoolhouse in 1921-1922. It is fireproof and completely modern, has a large auditorium which serves also a gymnasium, and is surrounded by beautiful and well-kept grounds. Teachers and pupils moved into the new building in the winter of 1922-1923. Enrollment increased considerably after the erection of the new building.

The Ohiowa athletes worked hard during the school year of 1938-1939, capturing two state championships. One



Courtesy Nebraska Signal

Ohio High School Basketball Team (1904). *Back row, left to right:* Clarence Bigelow, Supt. Huntington. *Middle row:* Ward Nippert, Dan Warneke, Bert Lynn. *Front row:* Frank Garrison, Ed J. Lynn, Phillip Rose.

was the Class C Tournament in basketball, and the other was the Nebraska State Track Meet Class D Championship. Nine trophies were added to the collection that year. By winning two state championships in that year, Ohiowa ranked with Lincoln High School, which won the Football and Class A Track Championships, and Omaha Central, which won the Nebraska wrestling and baseball championships. In other years, the boys went to the state tournaments, but didn't get to be the state champions. The large collection of trophies displayed in the hall of the Ohiowa school speaks well for all the pupils during the years in all kinds of activities.

In 1955, six full-time teachers were employed in District 40; by 1967, the number had risen to 10.

FAMILIES

Anton Domeier, his wife Louisa, and their family, after spending some years in Illinois and Iowa, came to Franklin township in 1879, where they purchased a half-section of wild prairie land. The family worked hard to improve their homestead. Many grandchildren and great-grandchildren of this family still live in this community.

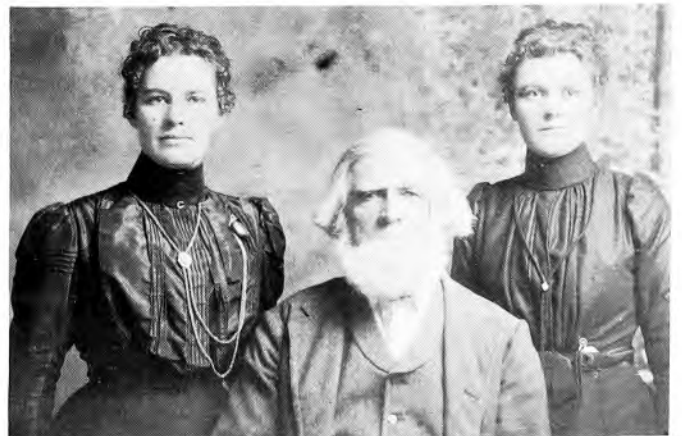


Photo from Bertha Schneider

Anton Domeier and daughters, Anna and Louise (taken before 1900).



Photo from Mrs. Joe Bors
George Fries and four daughters. Front row: Mr. Fries, Ida. Back row: Minnie, Mary, Anna.

Henry Fries, a Franklin township native, was born on the place his parents, Mr. and Mrs. George Peter Fries, homesteaded in 1870, 3 miles E of Ohiova—the NW ¼ of Sec. 14, now known as the Ed Matejka farm. The parents had emigrated from Germany to Wisconsin, then on to Nebraska. Henry was born in a dugout in 1874. Later the family built a sod house, and then a frame house. Henry was third oldest of a family of 10 children. His father worked at Nebraska City to help provide for his family. Coming home, he would carry a 50-pound bag of flour on his back, walking all the way. Henry's father donated a corner of ground for a school, District 73, until 1960 when it was moved.

The Fries family once watched a group of Indians bury a small baby just west of their farmyard, tamping the ground so hard that the mound of dirt always showed. Henry and his schoolmates spent the night of the 1888 blizzard in the schoolhouse.

In 1900, Henry married Johanna Thole, who had come to Franklin township in 1874, when four years old, with her parents, her twin sister Wilhelmina, seven other sisters, and a brother. Wilhelmina married Gust Fries. The Thole twins lived to celebrate their 82nd birthdays together in Ohiova, where they lived most of their lives.

Henry and Johanna Fries had two daughters, Margaret (Mrs. Joe Bors), now living in her parents' home, and Ida (Mrs. Jess Most), living 4 miles E of town. The Frieses celebrated their golden wedding in 1950.

Henry Fries passed away in May, 1959, at the age of 85 years; Mrs. Fries in December, 1959, at the age of 84. They had lived in Ohiova since 1927. Mr. Fries lived in Franklin township all his life.

M. F. Garrison farmed near Dixon, Illinois, until 1878, when he came to Franklin township and bought 160 acres of fine prairie land. He farmed until 1890, when he moved into Ohiova to live with his daughter Mrs. James (Mary A.) Quinlan.

William H. Garrison and his wife Emmogene came here from Illinois in 1871. In September, 1864, at the age of 17, he had enlisted in Co. F, First Illinois Light Artillery, and went through several battles. As a veteran, he homesteaded on Sec. 28. Their first home was a dugout, and for two years they lived in a sod house. He was the first person to

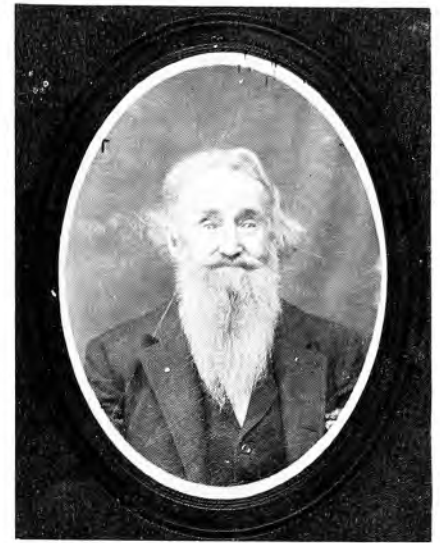


Photo from Clyde Gewacke
Mathias Garrison

raise a crop of grain west of Little Sandy Creek, so thinly settled was the region at this time. He was, in 1872, the first teacher in Franklin township; his wife also taught in 1875. Mr. Garrison wanted the township named Franklin. There was opposition, and so he got out the voters and the name Franklin carried. In 1893, he was elected county supervisor for three years; he also served two terms as assessor. His son, John G. Garrison, died July 15, 1965; but one daughter, Florence Garrison Wood, still lives in Ohiova, as do a number of Garrison grandchildren.

Mrs. Pauline Lapcheska Jenkins, who was born in Germany in 1871, was brought to Illinois by her parents at the age of two years. When she was 12, she came to Belvidere with her grandparents. Mrs. Jenkins vividly remembered life in the early 1880's. The pioneers' first concern was shelter, food, fuel, and clothing. She remembered the hay-burners — a round type of stove which was stuffed full of prairie hay. Later (in bad years) many people burned corn for fuel. There were many sod houses around the country; many pioneer families' first shelters were dugouts. But as soon as each family was able, they built small frame houses. The pioneer families worked hard, thrived, and progressed rapidly, in spite of hardships when drouth and grasshoppers took their crops.



Photo from Mrs. Agnes Burt
Pauline Jenkins and family in 1897. Left to right: Blanche, Mr. George Jenkins, George, Minnie, Mrs. Pauline Jenkins, Agnes. Inset: Daisy (not yet born; date of her picture not known).

Mrs. Jenkins recalled the dry years of 1893 and 1894 when they had to kill young animals as they were born because there was nothing to feed the mothers. Potatoes raised during those years were like marbles but had to be used anyway. Mrs. Jenkins and her brother would shell a load of corn with a hand sheller, and the next day her father would take it to Alexandria, where it was sold for 9 cents a bushel. Mrs. Jenkins, like many others, mentioned the fact that before the town of Ohioa started, that particular section was very low—in fact, a duck pond, where Mrs. Jenkins and her brother Fred Lapcheska used to go to shoot snipe and plover for meat.

Mrs. Jenkins was married to George Jenkins in 1889 and moved to Ohioa in 1896. Here she raised her family: Agnes, Minnie, Blanche, George, and Daisy. Mrs. Jenkins, long a fine example of the old pioneer spirit that nothing could discourage, died at the age of 89, on May 19, 1960.

Ben Bothwell, the first storekeeper, had his store ½ mile E of town. The first school was also held there. Later, when the town site was changed to the center of the section, Mr. Bothwell moved his store building.

Mrs. Jenkins also recalled the business places that lined the street just west of Main Street. In the late 1890's, the town had two banks, two butcher shops, and two hotels, besides many other shops.

Henry (Heinrich) Langhorst came to Franklin (Sec. 1) as a homesteader in 1870. His first home was a sod house, and he cultivated his land with a team of oxen. He worked in the railroad shops at Nebraska City to help provide for his family. In early days, Beatrice was their trading post, and Lincoln was the nearest railroad station. Gradually, pioneer-fashion, he replaced his dugout by a sod house, and then, later, hauled lumber from Fairmont for their first frame house. Indians frequently stopped to beg for food; if given food, they would leave and not bother. In 1878, the Indians were moved to the Black Hills.

Henry Langhorst was a member of the Nebraska Legislature for the 37th District in 1895 and 1896. In 1897, C. A. Fowler was elected to the legislature, but resigned at the end of one year; Mr. Langhorst served in 1898 to finish the term. He was also assessor for Franklin township for eight years. The Langhorsts had seven children, all of whom worked hard, and the name of Langhorst is still familiar in and around Ohioa.

John Langhorst was born on the Henry Langhorst homestead in 1872. He remembered the blizzard of 1888. John married Ann Thomas, who was born and raised in Franklin township on the farm where Will Schropfer now lives. He farmed south of Ohioa in Thayer County for more than 40 years. He moved into Ohioa in January, 1947, and lived there until his death.



Photo from Henry Langhorst
Henry (Heinrich) Langhorst

Fred H. Matthies was brought to Franklin township at the age of 1½ years by his parents, who homesteaded 2½ miles E of Ohioa. He grew to manhood on this farm (the SE ¼ of Sec. 10) with his brothers Henry and Louis. His father departed this life at an early age.

Sophia Most had been brought to Franklin township in 1874, at the age of three weeks, by her parents, Mr. and Mrs.

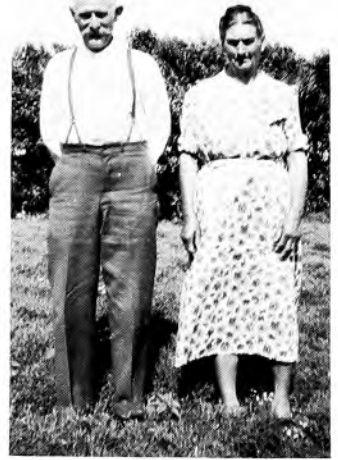


Photo from Grace Matthies
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Matthies in 1943.

Conrad Most, who homesteaded 3 miles E of Ohioa. She was married to Fred Matthies in 1891. They lived on the farm south of the Matthies homestead, where they reared three sons and three daughters: Sophia, Fred, Malinda, Ella, Will, and Ed. He was an excellent farmer and managed everything well. In 1944, they retired from the farm and moved into Ohioa. Fred Matthies departed this life on June 10, 1950.

Mrs. Matthies recalled the blizzard of 1888 and various other pioneer experiences. On occasion, the Most family shared food with some very hungry Indians, giving them boiled potatoes with jackets. The Indians would pray and then eat all. In early days, potatoes were boiled in their jackets because they would keep better.

Sophia Matthies, still spirited and active, passed away November 20, 1963, at the age of 89.

William McCurdy came from Iowa in 1880, at the age of nine, to his new home in Franklin township. His father, Lewis C. McCurdy, purchased 160 acres of unimproved land for \$1,300. They later bought additional land and built an attractive home. William McCurdy passed away May 16, 1960. His son Guy now lives on the home place.



Photo from Guy McCurdy
William McCurdy in 1951.

James W. Quinlan came from Exeter to Ohioa about 1884. He built the Opera House building and engaged in the implement business until 1890. The Quinlan children—Jennie Mae, Rosalind, and LeRoy—grew up in Ohioa. Jennie Mae married Charles N. Burt and lived on her grandfather



Photo from Clyde Gewacke
Jennie Maye Quinlan (Burt)—
Graduation picture (1901).

Garrison's farm until her death in 1929. Mrs. Clyde Gewacke, oldest daughter of the Burt family, still lives in this community.

Frederick Saatmann came from Illinois in 1883 and bought land from Gerhard Hopken, who had homesteaded it. He brought with him three sons—Fred, Herman, and Ernest—who became industrious and prosperous members of the community. Herman Saatmann passed away in 1918. Ernest Saatmann died on May 20, 1951, and his wife on December 28, 1966. Fred Saatmann died November 26, 1944. Mrs. Fred Saatmann still lives here, along with sons and daughters of these families: Frederick, Frieda, Ella, and Chris Saatmann, and Mrs. John Jacobs and Mrs. Rudy Sadlo. The Saatmann holdings have been large through these many years.



Photo from Frederick Saatmann
Frederick Saatmann family. *Standing, left to right:* Herman, Laura, Ernest, Fred. *Sitting:* Henry, Frederick's brother; Frederick, Mrs. Frederick (Sophia) Saatmann; Ernest's wife, Louisa. *Children:* Eleanor, Christ, and Frieda, youngsters of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Saatmann.

William Sieckmann, with his wife Wilhelmina and four children, came to America in 1870 from Hesse, Germany. Coming to Nebraska, they homesteaded on the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 8, Franklin township, the same section in which Ohioa now stands. At that time there was no town. The family first lived in a dugout on the SE corner of that quarter. Later, they built a house in the NW corner, where the buildings still remain. The father and the older sons frequently worked in Nebraska City. He also ran one of Ohioa's early saloons. They went to Nebraska City, Beatrice, and Tobias for supplies.

The William Sieckmanns had seven children: Minnie, William, Henry, Fred, Charles, Sophia, and Mollie. The only survivor of this family is now Mollie (Mrs. Will McGraw), who resides in Lincoln.

Fred Sieckmann was long Ohioa's oldest citizen, a resident of Franklin township for all of his 95 years. Born in



Photo from Grace Matthies
Mr. and Mrs. William Sieckmann

Germany on September 29, 1869, he was only six months old when his parents brought him to America. Fred grew to manhood on the family farm. As a boy, he spent much of his time herding cattle, as there were no fences, in all kinds of weather, at times getting lost in blizzards. He saw herds of antelope passing through, and the Texas cattle drives. Also, as a boy, he worked in the Ben Stockfeld dry goods and grocery store. He remembered Indians coming by and begging for food. He saw the railroad put down and the village of Ohioa built up. Before the railroad came, he and his father made many trips to Tobias with teams and wagons to haul lumber for building purposes in Ohioa. At one time his mother, sister, and he were snowed in for three days in their dugout. His father and older brothers had gone to Nebraska City to work. After three days, Ernest Molthan, father of our long-time mayor, Henry Molthan, with help, dug them out.

In 1891 he was married to Alvina Mussen, who had come from Illinois to Franklin township with her parents, when a girl of 12 years. Mr. and Mrs. Sieckmann farmed near Ohioa for many years, retiring to Ohioa in 1936. Their greatest pride was working close to nature. When working in Ohioa, Mr. Sieckmann worked in filling stations of Brown, Lucht, and Judy. He was township assessor for eight years.

Fred and Alvina Sieckmann had seven children, six sons and one daughter: Fred, Charles, Ed, Grace, Howard, Jess, and Dallas. They were privileged to observe their 69th wedding anniversary in April, 1960. Mrs. Sieckman passed away the following June at the age of 87. Mr. Sieckmann then made his home with his daughter Grace (Mrs. Fred) Matthies in Ohioa until his death on May 23, 1965.

Calvin S. Stover came to Franklin township from Iowa in 1883. He worked for Ralph Stowell for three years and then went into the draying business in Ohioa. In 1888, he married Anna Einhouse, a native of Germany. In 1891, he changed his business to that of stock buyer and butcher. He was said to be a young man of remarkable business ability, and he prospered.

Dan Theobald came from Illinois with his family and lived in the Harmony community before he bought the farm in Sec. 20 of Franklin township in 1896. From then until very recent times there were always Theobalds in this community; but the last—Harry and Dan Theobald, and Myrtle Theobald Silvey—are now gone. Mrs. Dan Theobald's maiden name was the same as that of her husband: she was Margaret Theobald, a sister of George Theobald, but the two families were not related in any way. Mrs. Silvey remembered her parents saying that they came across the prairie in a wagon from the end of the railroad and came as far as the Frank Hurley place before going on to their Harmony home.

Frank Hurley came here and bought land in 1883, before Ohioa was a town. George Hurley still lives in Ohioa, although the other Hurley families have all moved elsewhere.

George Theobald came to Ohioa soon after his marriage to Dora Wolter in 1887. His home, consisting of 240



Photo from Mrs. Henry Langhorst
Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Stover and daughter Hazel (Theimer)



Photo from Norman Wright
George Augustus Wright family in 1899: George, daughter Lucy, son Norman, wife Virginia.



Photo from Ruth Maresh
Mr. and Mrs. William L. Baker about 1915. William Baker homesteaded the SW ¼ of Sec. 22, Franklin, early in the 1870's.

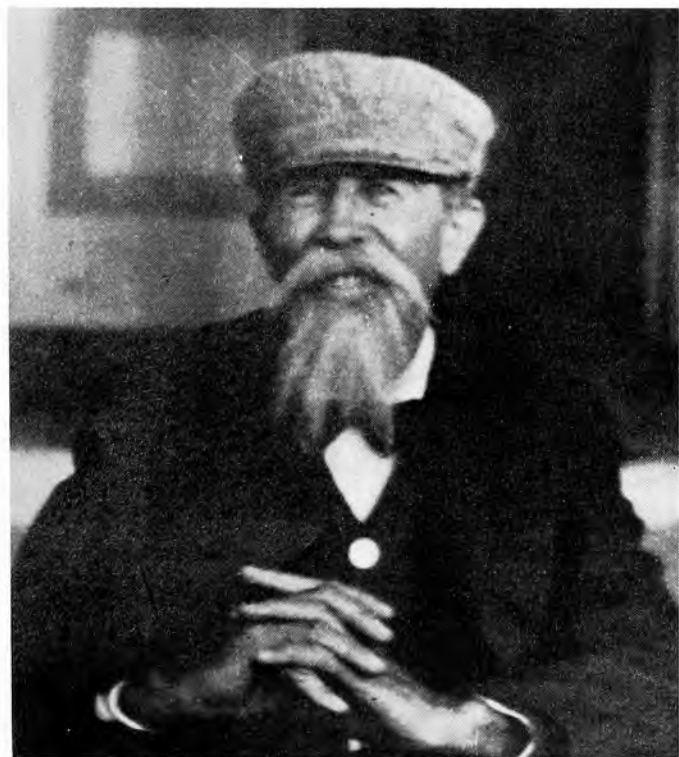


Photo from Jess Theobald
Dan Theobald (about 1913)

acres, was on Sec. 32. He and his wife worked hard and had a beautiful farm home. They had two daughters: Goldie (Mrs. Earl Hill) and Laura, who married Dr. S. G. Panter, once an Ohioa physician. He had several brothers who settled elsewhere in Fillmore County, and his sister Margaret married Dan Theobald.

George Augustus Wright came from Mendota, Illinois, in 1871, homesteading on the E ½ of the NW ¼ of Sec. 34, Belle Prairie. (He is included here because of his connection with Ohioa.) Among the pains and pleasures of pioneer life, he told of walking to Alexandria for a sack of flour, carrying it home on his back, and of walking barefoot to Sunday School with Ralph Stowell. His son, Norman Wright, Sr., who lives in Ohioa, spent some 18 years as a county supervisor and is now (1967) mayor of Ohioa.

Other early residents were **William Baker** and others who came in 1870. Mr. Baker filed homestead entry right in 1869 and moved his family from Ohio in the spring of 1870. The Baker, Lowry, Dempster, and Case families came together, arriving at Beatrice, and built dugouts so that they could live close together. They chose their homesites in Sec. 22 on the creek so that they had water and timber. Later on, the grout house, constructed of lime and rock, was built. According to her daughter, Mrs. Dave Sweney, when Mrs. Baker moved in, no queen was ever prouder. The family was raised on this farm and Mrs. Sweney lived there until very recent years, when she moved to Milligan.

Albert F. Clemons homesteaded ¼ mile E of Ohioa in 1870 and had the first post office; his brother, R. L. Clemons, another early settler, was postmaster in 1883.

We pay tribute, if only by naming them here for memory's sake, to these early families:

Schropfer, Strauss, Krause, Saatmann, Wulf, Claussen, Sieckmann, and Most. Still familiar names in the community are those of Thomas, Fries, Matthies, Pfingston, Hurley, Hopken, Schielke, Vogt, Hill, Schafer, Garland, Theobald, Watermann, Dunse, Chalupka, Molthan, Schroeder, Moore, McCurdy, Warnke, Eppler, Sharp, Franz, Brown, Cradduck, Baldwin, Brunner, Sigman, Sieber, Garrison, Quinlan, Buchmeier, Dearing, Schweer, Blanke, Wright, Medlar, Rippe, Wood, Wedeking, Metcalfe, Babcock, Clemons, Demaree, Peppie, and Heston.



Photo from Mrs. Wesley Cradduck

John and Laura Angstead farewell day, 1907. *Front row, left to right:* Mrs. Harrold, William Angstead, Ruthie Johns, Mrs. A. Johns, Naomi Johns, Sarah Baldwin, Grace Schafer, Gail Schafer, Helen Schafer, Ruth Quinlan, Mrs. Gillans, Mrs. P. Wright (child on ground unidentified). *Second row:* John Angstead, Laura Angstead, Jess Moore, Flora Moore, Mrs. Sam Cradduck, Christina Moore, Mrs. Art Cradduck, Mrs. Schafer, Mrs. Baker, Beatrice Schafer, and Smithy Gillans. *Third row:* Effie Moore, Ellen Coane Scholl, William Baker, Mrs. William McCurdy and baby Ruby, William McCurdy, Mrs. William ("Estey") Baldwin, Emma Schafer, William Baldwin, Samuel Cradduck, L. C. Schafer, and Lewis Morgan. *Ladies in back:* Sarah Baldwin's niece Sarah, and Ellen ("Kit") Wright.



Photo from A. O. Wood

Ohioa Auto Club in 1909



Photo from A. O. Wood

Stacking wheat bundles in summer of 1913: Otha Wood on load of bundles, Bryson Walker on stack, and Ed. Sigman on empty rack.