

By 1882, E. Stowell was operating a hotel located west of the square next to the Platt store, which he operated until it was closed about 1890.

In 1885, the old Platt store building at the southwest corner of the square was rebuilt as a hotel and was advertised to accommodate as many if not more than any other hotel in the county. E. Stowell managed this hotel after the Stowell House closed.



Courtesy Geneva State Bank

The Platt House (about 1889). Notice two sections to the building—the south part erected in 1875 and the north section added in 1887. Mr. Knowler in buggy at left; A. B. Miller on right; others unidentified.



Jameson Hotel, built in 1890—Harry Porter's hack alongside.

The Jameson Hotel was erected by W. H. Jameson in 1890 at a cost of about \$20,000. It was a three-story brick structure 48' x 109'. This building is now the only hotel in Geneva. It was managed for many years by Les Poole, and since his death has been run by his widow, Irma Poole, and his son, Keith Poole.

The Jayne Hotel, owned by Ebb Jayne, began operations about 1900. In later years it became an apartment house, managed by Miss Hannah Gilmore. It was demolished in 1966 and replaced by the new Fillmore County Bank.

Geneva, which had a population of scarcely 50 inhabitants in 1875, had grown to a population of 250 people by 1880 and was a thriving little community. A business directory of that year is listed below.

Carpenter and builder—A. E. Boynton  
 Loan agents—S. B. Camp, — Burr  
 General Merchandise—Camp, A. G. & Sons; Platt, J. T. & Co. (SW corner of courthouse square); John A. Dempster—drugs also (Court Street)  
 Livery stable—J. H. Camp

Harness, boots, shoes—C. H. Carlow (N side of square)  
 Blacksmith—W. J. Carrier; A. E. Coon; W. Keeney  
 Attorney and real estate—D. H. Conant (3 doors W of courthouse);  
 Walter V. Fifield; Hedges & Scott  
 Attorney—R. A. McKee; Northrup & Likes  
 Physician—R. T. Dailey (office at drugstore); G. R. Hart; H. L. Smith  
 Dentist—R. M. Hazlett (office at drugstore)  
 Hardware, furniture, and restaurant—W. Purdy (W end of square)  
 Hardware, stoves, and tinware—Dawson, O. P. & Co.  
 Millinery—Mrs. M. H. Kessler  
 Meat Market—G. T. Lemmon  
 Wagon Maker—H. H. Martin (NE corner of courthouse square)  
 Brick Manufacturer—Merrill Brothers (kiln 3 miles N of town)  
 Hotel—Putnam House  
 Justice of Peace—M. L. Spear

They also had four churches—Baptist, Christian, Methodist Episcopal, and Presbyterian; and two societies—Geneva Lodge, I.O.O.F. and Geneva Lodge, I.O.G.T.

The Geneva Exchange Bank, incorporated June 4, 1880, by Smith, Fisher & Fifield, with a capital of \$20,000, was the first bank in Geneva. This bank was the outgrowth of a collection and exchange business, started about two years before by W. V. Fifield.

In 1889, the Geneva Exchange Bank became the First National Bank, with capital stock being raised to \$50,000. Officers of the bank were G. W. Smith, president; Frank J. Miller, cashier; Dr. A. G. McGrew, vice-president; Walter V. Fifield, attorney. In 1891, the city had three banks to care for its financial business—the First National Bank, Citizens Bank, and Geneva National Bank.

## ORGANIZATION

On July 1, 1879, at a regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of Fillmore County held at the courthouse at Geneva, a petition was received from D. H. Conant and 55 other citizens of Geneva asking the board to incorporate the town of Geneva. A week later on July 8, 1879, the board proceeded to hear parties interested in incorporation of the town of Geneva. After hearing all parties and being fully satisfied that a majority of the male taxable inhabitants had signed the petition for incorporation, it ordered that the proposed town be incorporated as the town of Geneva, to include the following described territory: The SE  $\frac{1}{4}$ , the E  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 36, T7N, R3W, also the N  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  and the NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 1, T6N, R3W.

Five persons were appointed to serve as trustees until their successors were elected and qualified. They were M. M. Neeves, John B. Brazelton, Sherwood Burr, George P. Wintersteen, and D. H. Conant.

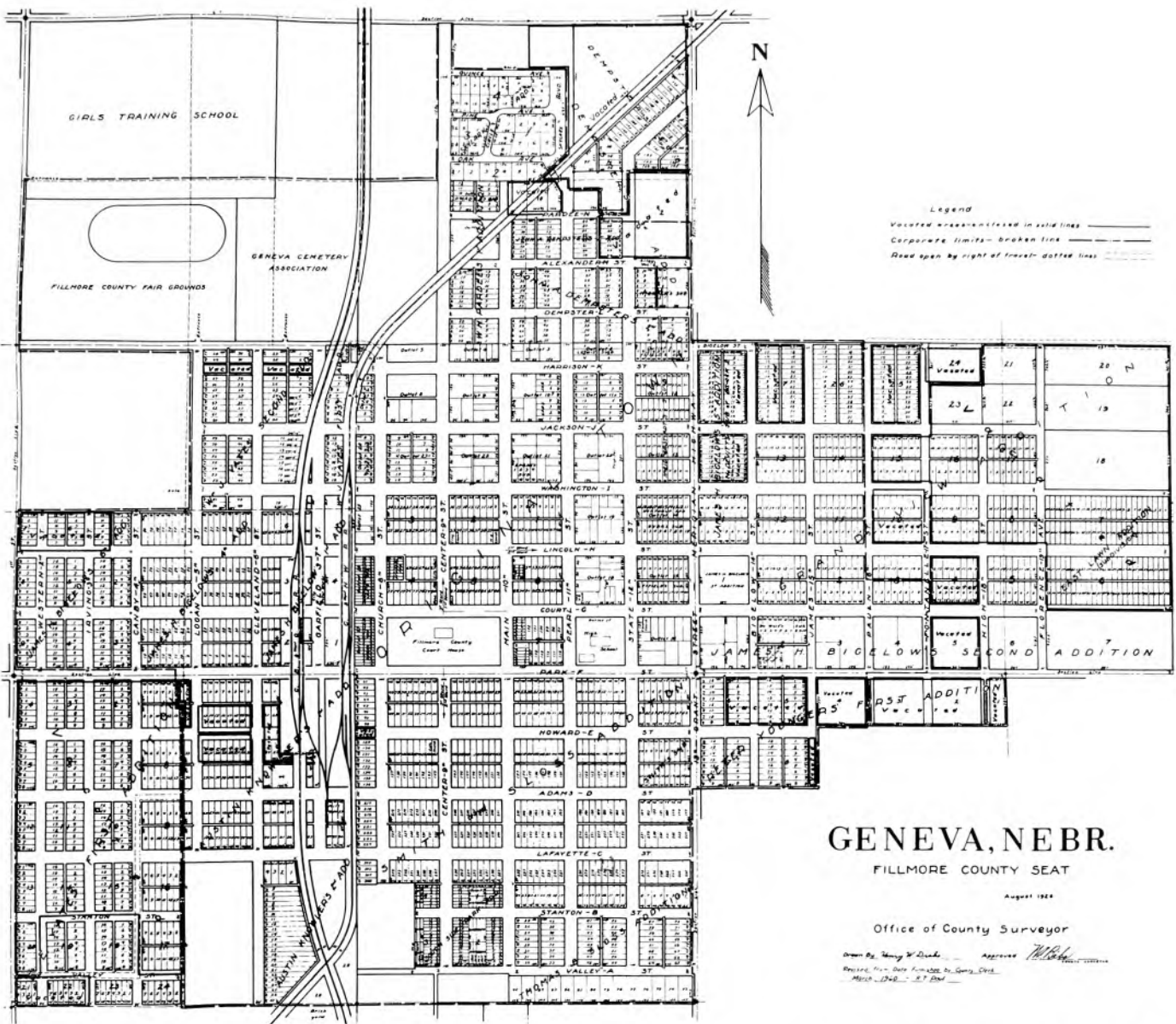
The first meeting of the village board was held at the courthouse on Friday, July 25, 1879; present were M. M. Neeves, Sherwood Burr, George Wintersteen, and D. H. Conant. M. M. Neeves was elected chairman and W. V. Fifield, clerk. An ordinance provided that all regular meetings of the board would be held in the office of W. V. Fifield at Geneva on the first Thursday of each month.

At a meeting on July 28, 1879, John A. Dempster was elected town treasurer. Also M. D. Williams was appointed town marshal, which office he held a very short time. At a meeting on September 20, 1879, Mr. Williams resigned and J. E. Lemmon was elected to fill the vacancy.

On November 6, 1879, it was decided that a town attorney should be appointed and a report of attorney fees be brought to the next meeting. The fees asked were: J. Jensen—\$150, R. A. McKee—\$200, and Gray & Hedges would accept whatever the board saw proper to allow. Gray & Hedges were elected to the office of town attorney.

The next change, from the status of a village to that of a city, second class, was made on March 9, 1889, under provisions of Chapter 14 of the Compiled Statutes of State of Nebraska. At that time the village had grown to a population of more than 1,000 (W. H. Stewart, who took the census, reported that there were 1,360 inhabitants), and it therefore became the duty of the board to incorporate under the new designation, and to adopt such rules and procedure for government as were prescribed by state law.

The city was divided into three wards. Commencing at a point in the center of Court and Church Sts., and running



# GENEVA, NEBR.

FILLMORE COUNTY SEAT

August 1888

Office of County Surveyor

Drawn by Henry W. Dudgeon      Assisted by *[Signature]*  
 Revised from Survey of 1886 by County Clerk  
 Price - 10¢ - 25¢ - 50¢ - 75¢ - 1.00

thence east in the center of Court St. to the center of Main St., thence north to the center of Lincoln St., thence east to the east line of said village, and all territory lying east to the east line of said village, and all territory lying north of said line and east of Church St. to be the first ward. And all territory lying south of said line and east of Church St. to be the second ward, and all territory lying west of Church St. to be the third ward. (Court St. is now G, Lincoln is H, Church is now 8th, and Main is now 10th.)

The affairs of the city were to be conducted by a mayor and two councilmen elected from each ward. Each councilman served for a period of two years. The mayor and other officers were elected every year until 1922 when the term was increased to two years.

Results of the election of Geneva as a city held on April 2, 1889, were as follows: Mayor, H. L. Smith; clerk, J. D. Hamilton; treasurer, A. J. Beals; police judge, A. G. Camp; city engineer, V. A. Jones; councilmen of first ward, F. H. Briggs for two-year term and John A. Dempster for one year; councilmen of second ward, M. V. King for two years and J. H. Ward for one year; councilmen of third ward, F. B. Donisthorpe for two years and J. M. Noyes for one year.

The original town of Geneva consisted of all that part lying between the Chicago & Northwestern R. R. tracks on the west and Highway 81 on the east, and between Highway 41 on the south and a line between K and L Sts. (should this line extend on west, it would join the road south of the cemetery).

Additions to the city of Geneva have been made as follows:

No. 1 original filed April 8, 1878—J. Jensen County Clerk.	
1st and 2nd addition—Smith & Sloss—filed Dec. 4, 1882	
E. R. Spear's & D. Lee's Subdivision of out-lots 26 & 27	No date
Northrup & Burr's Subdivision of out-lot 14	Nov. 17, 1877
E. R. Spear's Subdivision of lots 103 & 104	April 1, 1878
W. J. Yates's First Addition	Dec. 14, 1883
Subdivision of out-lot No. 7	April 4, 1884
S. E. Johnson's Subdivision of out-lot 23	April 4, 1884
Subdivision of out-lot 11	Sept. 20, 1884
F. Heiderstadt's Subdivision of out-lots 12 & 13	Dec. 31, 1885
Austin Knowler's First Addition	April 5, 1886
Smith & Fifield's Subdivision of out-lot 15	Mar. 19, 1884
Thomas B. Sloss's First Addition	April 26, 1886
James H. Bigelow's First Addition	July 1, 1884
James H. Bigelow's Second Addition	Oct. 8, 1884
James H. Bigelow's Third Addition	Aug. 10, 1885
Peter R. Yates's Subdivision of out-lot 24	Aug. 8, 1882
John A. Dempster's First Addition	Dec. 9, 1885
Geneva Cemetery	Dec. 15, 1884
W. J. Yates's Second Addition	June 14, 1886
John A. Dempster's Second Addition	Nov. 11, 1886
James H. Bigelow's Fourth Addition	May 26, 1887
Corporate Extension of Geneva	Dec. 8, 1886
F. Heiderstadt's Subdivision of out-lot 11	Mar. 7, 1887
James H. Bigelow's Fifth Addition	Aug. 12, 1886
Walter V. Fifield's Subdivision of out-lot 1	May 25, 1887
John A. Dempster's Third Addition	June 22, 1887
James H. Bigelow's Sixth Addition	Sept. 20, 1887
C. F. McGrew's Subdivision of out-lot 1 of Dempster's Third Addition	Sept. 30, 1887
W. H. Pardee's First Addition	Oct. 21, 1887
Austin Knowler's Second Addition	Aug. 27, 1888

George W. Smith's Subdivision of lots 89 to 96 inclusive and 169 to 176 inclusive of Smith & Sloss's First Addition	Nov. 3, 1887
Jemima Stobbe's Subdivision of lots 70, 71, and 72	Feb. 25, 1888
John B. Lewis's Subdivision of out-lot 2 of original plot of Geneva	July 25, 1888
George McDevitt's Subdivision of block 2 of Bigelow's Fifth Addition	Jan. 26, 1889
John A. Dempster's Subdivision of blocks 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 8 of Dempster's Third Addition	Feb. 20, 1890
E. E. Yates's First Addition	Feb. 5, 1890
Grand View Addition	June 26, 1889
Dempster and others Subdivision of lots 55 & 56 of original plot of Geneva	Sept. 7, 1889
J. E. Spear's Subdivision of SW ¼ of out-lot 21, original plot of Geneva	Feb. 26, 1889
George W. Dewolf's Subdivision of N ½ of block 2 of Bigelow's Second Addition	No date
Subdivision of original lots 105, 106, and W ½ of 107	April 21, 1890
South Side Park Addition	June 18, 1919
Peter Youngers' First Addition	June 8, 1905
Extension of city limits in Grandview and Bigelow's Second Addition	Sept. 29, 1949
Geneva Cemetery Plot	April 14, 1958
Skylark Addition	April 15, 1959
Churchill's Subdivision of SW ¼ of Block 2, James H. Bigelow's Second Addition	Mar. 2, 1960
Ogg's Subdivision of out-lot 5	Dec. 19, 1960

Social life was considered quite as refined and enjoyable as in larger towns and moral status far above the average. People were united and thoroughly enterprising in everything that concerned local advancement. With all the activities, meetings, concerts, etc., there came the need for an appropriate meeting place. The only place suitable at this time for public meetings was the court room and this became very inadequate.

In 1883, John Jensen and F. H. Briggs built the first Opera House, at a cost of \$4,000, on the north side of G St. between 9th and 10th Sts. This theater opened in 1883 with a home-talent play, "Fruits of the Wine Cup." According to the *Nebraska Signal*, in July, 1898, the old Opera House passed into history when "C. W. Hrubesky, owner of the building, closed the outside stairway and made one inside and used the room for his stock." From that time until the construction of the new Auditorium in 1915, the Fraternity temple room in the National Bank building served as the community gathering place.



Courtesy Geneva State Bank

Geneva's Opera House, constructed in 1883 by John Jensen and F. H. Briggs—frame building from left. The Opera House was on the second floor; Briggs moved his business into the first floor. The large brick building is the Fillmore House.

The Auditorium was built in 1915 at 160 No. 9th St. Early in 1900 an architect named Deuel drew up plans for a new city hall and fire station, but it was not until 1915 that these plans materialized. Contracts were then let to F. B. Bentley, plumber, and L. L. Fisher, contractor. In December, 1915, the new \$20,000 city auditorium was opened to the public by presenting a play, "The Dutch Detective," given by local talent under the direction of A. E. Holt. Proceeds were applied on the purchase of a piano for the auditorium. That same month, the city clerk's office was moved to the council chamber in the city hall, the west room to be used exclusively by the fire company.



Courtesy Nebraska Signal

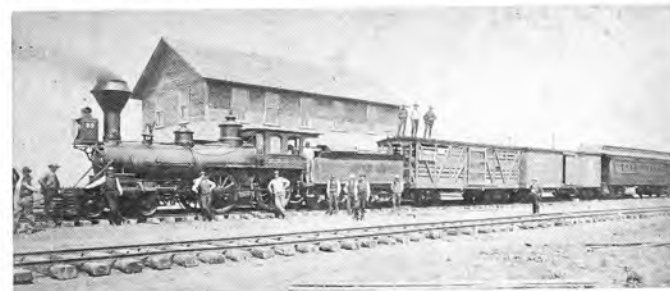
City Auditorium, City Clerk's office, and fire station, erected in 1915.

It was not until 1881 that the first sidewalks were built; the first were constructed along 8th and 9th Sts. This comment concerning the wooden walks appeared in the *Review*, April 22, 1885: "Our street crossings are pretty narrow for two persons to pass on. One more plank of 12" would greatly add to their convenience for the pedestrian. We are aware that all people do not need wide walks and crossings as badly as those in a license town; but we do not like to stand out in the mud to let others pass, or vice versa." In time these wooden walks began to deteriorate and several accidents occurred. Following one accident, a lady, who fell and broke her arm as she tripped on a loosened board, filed a suit against the city for \$300. This prompted the city officials into action. In 1905, they ruled that no more wooden sidewalks be built; all walks were to be built of sidewalk brick, cement concrete, or stone. In 1901 and 1902 the first brick sidewalks were constructed, the first built between 8th and 9th on G St.

The years 1884 and 1885 proved to be years of rapid development. Besides the John Dempster elevator, two banks and a large number of private residences were built; churches were rebuilt and other improvements effected. A "fine" new schoolhouse valued at \$5,000 was constructed.

Building and maintenance materials for Geneva had to be hauled from Fairmont by teams for years, as there was no railroad. This need was met by the formation of the "Fairmont-Geneva Transportation Company," which purchased several heavy wagons and did a good business for some years. This firm did not, of course, survive long after the coming of the railroad line.

After the coming of the railroad in 1886, the village of Geneva grew by leaps and bounds. The population increased from 650 in 1885 to 1,580 by 1890. On May 21, 1886, following the completion of the Burlington track, the construction train "iron horse" was run into Geneva. A tremendous crowd, plus S. B. Camp's band, saluted its coming. The first train to enter Geneva came on the newly completed Burlington line from Fairmont on June 7, 1886. This event was one of great importance to Geneva and the citizens flocked to see the arrival. Later in the day, when the train went back to Fairmont, among the passengers were Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Brown and their older children who were on their way to



Courtesy Nebraska Signal

The first train to enter Geneva on the newly completed Burlington line from Fairmont (June 7, 1886).

Kansas to visit Mrs. Brown's parents. Mr. Brown was the partner of Peter Youngers in the Youngers & Co. Nursery, one of the largest in the state in those early days.

The telegraph also made its appearance at this same time, following the Burlington route.

In March the following year, word came that the Northwestern would be built. Immediately the flag was run up on the courthouse to let people know the goods news and that evening a big crowd gathered to celebrate—the band played, guns were fired, and bonfires burned. The Chicago & Northwestern line between Fremont and Geneva was built in 1887 by the Fremont, Elkhorn, & Missouri Valley R.R. Company, under the guiding hand of John I. Blair of Blairstown, New Jersey. It was extended from Geneva to Superior, its present terminus, in 1888.

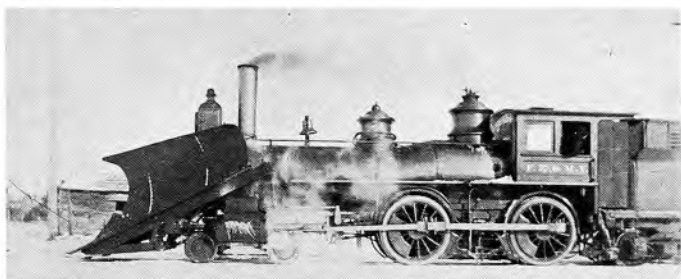


Photo from Delia Fisher

Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley locomotive with snow plow attached (about 1890).

The first grain elevator in this city was the John A. Dempster elevator constructed by Warner & Co. of Chicago in 1885. This building was 60' x 70' and 65' high (outside measurements, includes the office). It had a capacity of 3,500 bushels of grain per hour and cost \$15,000 to build. The November 18, 1885, issue of the *Republican* reported that the new elevator was ready for business, with W. H. McCullough in charge of handling the grain and the general supervision of the elevator.

In 1887, A. Koehler Company built a small grain elevator on the Northwestern right of way which this company still uses.

The first roller mill was erected in 1887, filling a great need. The Geneva Milling Company is one the first businesses that is still in operation at the present time. It was then known as the Geneva Roller Milling Company. Until then the grain was processed by the stone burr mill which ground grain between two large stone burrs such as Sam Yates operated. He ran one of the first tread mills in Geneva, in the early 1880's. It was powered by oxen to grind flour and feed. This mill was located across the street north of the present schoolhouse on G St.



Courtesy Nebraska Signal

Sam Yates treadmill (about 1896). Building on the left is the old Baptist church, located just east of the present Evangelical United Brethren Church. The building to the right of the church was the feed mill erected by Sam Yates in 1883. Notice treadmill at the side of mill. The house on the right was the Sam Yates home. Children in front of the house were May and Roy Yates, both deceased.

Probably one of the most progressive years in the city's history was 1887, when improvements in the way of new buildings alone reached nearly \$200,000. During that period the important brick buildings erected were the Union, Luke, Dempster, Jensen, and Dworak blocks. A larger roller mill (still in operation as the Geneva Milling Company), the Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley R.R. buildings, the Congregational Church, and 75 new dwelling houses were also constructed. Over 1,000 cars of grain were shipped from Geneva that year. By this time the village had a board of trade and under its fostering care many industries had sprung into existence—a creamery, canning factory, foundry, machine shop, and others. (Quoted from the *Nebraska Gazetteer*.)

In May, 1888, 24 cars of cattle were shipped from Geneva to Chicago. This shipment went as a special train and the cars were profusely decorated with flags and banners illustrating Geneva's resources and describing her advantages.

Another year of much advancement was 1890, shown by this newspaper report on October 30, 1890:

"Following is a list of buildings erected or in course of building since January 1, 1890."

Citizens Bank and Masonic Hall .....	\$ 30,000.00
Jameson Hotel, brick .....	20,000.00
Fillmore House, brick .....	10,000.00
David Kessler brick business rooms .....	8,000.00
Windmill factory and foundry, brick .....	16,000.00
Four brick residences .....	11,400.00
Twenty-eight frame residences .....	
Episcopal Church .....	1,600.00
Eleven barns .....	2,700.00
Wight & Blott meat market .....	500.00
(immediately west of 1st Nat'l Bank)	
Nick Longly shop .....	400.00
John Gustafson shop .....	100.00
S. J. Henderson shop .....	300.00
Will Shickley greenhouse .....	400.00
Buildings at fairgrounds .....	2,000.00
Small buildings and additions other than above .....	2,000.00

Aggregating in round number .....

\$128,000.00

Geneva had a total of 31 dressmakers in town at this time.

The city was proud of its modern water system which finally became a reality early in 1890. This meant they could now take care of the increasing demands for water for homes, businesses, and fire control. Dave Mowry, the first plumber in Geneva, installed most of the water system at the Girls' Training School when it was constructed in 1891. Later he sold his business to Frank Bentley.

In 1891, other business blocks were erected: the three-story brick building on the northwest corner of 9th and G which housed the First National Bank, Knights of Pythias, and I.O.O.F., and a two-story brick building put up by Miss Jennie Brown, the second building west of the First National Bank.

For approximately 10 years the city had made several unsuccessful attempts to acquire electrical power. Finally, in 1904, Gregory F. Skinkle secured a franchise to build and operate an electrical plant. In January, 1905, the four street lights were illuminated for the first time. The people were delighted! It was so light outdoors they thought surely the sun was coming up. Only night-lighting service was available at first. In the summer of 1907, day service was started for the purpose of running fans and furnishing any other motor power that could be sold.

Among the first bakeries in town was that of O. P. Lacy in 1878; at that time, his was the only bakery, which he operated in conjunction with a restaurant. A December, 1882, issue of the *Review* announced that "C. J. Hall and Mr. Butt have installed an oven and will be operating a *first class bakery* and are prepared to furnish tickets to those wishing to buy bread." They would be keeping a full supply of the "staff of life" on hand at all times and advertised to have fresh bread every day.

One of Geneva's oldest citizens, William Manning, operated the Geneva bakery in the early 1900's. He purchased and installed the first cake mixer, dough moulder, and bun



Photo from Miss Delia Fisher  
D. B. Bentley, one of Geneva's  
pioneer blacksmiths.



Photo from Mrs. Mabel Wernimont  
Silas Bailor's blacksmith shop in 1897, in the first building north of  
Camp's photo shop on 8th St. Man in foreground is Silas Bailor, father  
of Mrs. Wernimont. The man with the white beard is Silas's father,  
Adam.

divider used here. He recalled selling bread at 4¢ a loaf and delivering hot bread twice daily—at noon, then again between 4 and 6 P.M.—transporting the goods by horse and buggy, wheelbarrow, bicycle, or sometimes walking. He proudly reported having baked 7,000 buns for the first day of the county fair, and having roasted 125 ducks plus three or four suckling pigs at one time.

The appearance of the first automobile caused much excitement and also a few problems, since the horses were unaccustomed to this new vehicle. Even in the early days speed seemed to be a major problem, bringing about the need for the ordinance passed in 1906 to prevent fast or immoderate riding or driving of any horse, mule, or other animal or any automobile or vehicle at greater speed than six miles per hour. Among the first automobile owners in Geneva were Daniel Geiselman, Dr. Joseph Bixby, Dr. J. W. Puckett, and Dr. I. W. McEachran. Some recall Daniel Geiselman with his brand-new auto hitched to a buggy and giving rides on the bicycle track around the courthouse for 25 cents apiece. By



Courtesy Geneva State Bank  
Two of the first cars in Geneva. Left, Dr. Joseph Bixby in his 1907  
12-horsepower Maxwell; right, Elmer Whittle in Dr. J. W. Puckett's  
auto.

1911, Geneva, population 1,741, claimed a total of 42 automobiles.

Obviously, the autos brought a need for a new business, that of auto sales and services. By 1909, William H. Lake had an Auto Garage located in the vicinity of 133 North 10th. By 1911, several garages were advertising in the local weekly paper their various models of cars plus their services. They were (as of November 11, 1910):

- W. C. Peterson and Co.—Buick, Velie, and Jackson Automobiles  
—Home of "Wife Getter Buggies"—
- W. L. Spear & Co.—Ford Model
- Wm. H. Lake—Overland, Regal and Buick  
All kinds of supplies and oils,  
Smooth and nobby tread Morgan & Wright tires
- Brown Auto Co.—the E-M-F "30"—\$1,000; Rooster "30"—\$1,000;  
Demi Tonneau "30"—\$1,000;
- Five Passenger standard touring car—\$1,000  
Coupe "30"—\$1,450.  
(Located on west side of square)

The first filling station was erected and operated by C. J. Warner on the southwest corner of 8th and G Sts., now Eddie's Service (owned by Eddie Reinsch). The day the station opened, March 17, 1922, a pipe broke off of one big tank and some 15,000 gallons, or \$2,500 worth, of gas leaked out.

Before this time two gas pumps located on G St. furnished fuel for the autos. One was located in front of Walt Spear's store at 854 G St. The second was operated by N. E. Thomas at 1014 G St. In 1909, gasoline sold for 12¼ cents a gallon.



Photo from Nebraska Signal  
Baby week parade, May 19, 1917. Notice gasoline pump in front of  
Spear's store.

Through the years the city has progressed; changing times brought new industries, outmoding the old. New and improved facilities have met the needs of a progressive city, such as paving the business district in 1919, building a sewer system in 1921, graveling the residential streets in 1929, constructing a swimming pool and fine city park in 1935, paving the residential district in the 1950's, and building a new hospital in 1959.

Geneva has always been known for its music. In the early 1880's the town had three good bands—the Geneva Cornet Band, the Martial Band of Company G, and the Geneva Juvenile Band.

The early settlers of the county liked to get together at various times to observe certain occasions. The pioneers organized fairs and held picnics and Fourth of July celebrations. The Fillmore County Fair at Geneva and the district fair held for a number of years at Fairmont gave an opportunity to exhibit the products of the county and for the folks to visit together. Travel was sometimes difficult and some events occasionally had to be canceled completely because of rain and muddy roads.

A Fourth of July celebration in 1884 proved a great success. The program for the day consisted of speeches and



Courtesy of Nebraska Signal

Woodmen Picnic in 1896. This picture, taken from the west end of Main Street, shows Sile Camp's band, a contingent of Company G (Nebraska National Guard of Geneva), and floats in the parade. The parade marshal, A. J. Beals, is in the right foreground on the white horse.

toasts in the morning before the races—boys' race, wheelbarrow race, greased-pole race, and sack race; two ball games were played that afternoon, which ended in defeat for Geneva; a grand ball was held all afternoon and evening at the Opera House and "there seemed to be no lack of dancers"; the skating rink was also crowded. To conclude the day's entertainment, there was a fireworks display in the evening.

For many years the annual Woodmen picnic in Geneva was a big affair. One of the most important events in the history of Fillmore County was the return of Company G from the Spanish-American War in 1899. The return of the veterans had been delayed several weeks. On that specific day several thousand people came to Geneva to attend the homecoming. Elaborate preparations were made. Special trains carried visitors from several points to Geneva; a grand reception was in the making. The train was due at 10 A.M., but did not arrive until 9 P.M. By this time many disappointed people had returned home. The program proceeded about

10 P.M., but relatives had taken possession of most of the boys and not many soldiers occupied their appointed seats on the stage. Five bands were present. The parade was in charge of Major T. L. Williams and seven aides mounted on white horses. The Rev. O. W. Fifer of York paid a tribute to the dead. Charles H. Sloan presented the company flag and emblems. Fireworks displays ended the program. Three merry-go-rounds and many refreshment stands did a big business that day.

## PERMANENT COUNTY ORGANIZATION

On March 15, 1871, a large number of citizens of the unorganized Fillmore County petitioned for an election to choose county officers preliminary to organization of the county. On that day, Acting Governor William H. James, by proclamation, ordered that an election be held at the dwelling of Nathaniel McCalla on Sec. 30, T7, R2W, on Friday, April 21, 1871, to select county officers. The governor appointed James Horne, E. L. Martin, and D. W. Dillion as judges, and Warren Woodard and Jacob A. Werts as clerks to conduct this election. However, according to poll books, G. R. Wolfe served in place of D. W. Dillion and A. W. Chase substituted for Jacob A. Werts.

Results of the first election (April 21, 1871), when a total of 82 citizens cast votes, were as follows:

County Clerk .....	H. L. Badger .....	81 votes
County Treasurer .....	Wilbur Deuel .....	81 votes
County Sheriff .....	J. F. Snow .....	63 votes
	W. Walker .....	18 votes
Probate Judge .....	William H. Blain .....	80 votes
Supt. Public Instruction .....	G. R. Wolfe .....	81 votes
Surveyor .....	H. L. Badger .....	81 votes
Coroner .....	T. E. Burnett .....	81 votes
County Commissioners .....	Elisha L. Martin .....	81 votes
	Charles H. Bassett .....	75 votes
	Jesse Lee .....	54 votes
	— McLaughlin .....	21 votes
Judges of election .....	William Merrill .....	81 votes
	S. West .....	81 votes
	S. Baldwin .....	81 votes
Clerks of election .....	A. J. Beals .....	81 votes
	A. W. Chase .....	81 votes

The citizens also voted to locate the county seat in the center of the county on the SE ¼ of Sec. 36, T7, R3W.

The first meeting of the county commissioners, called

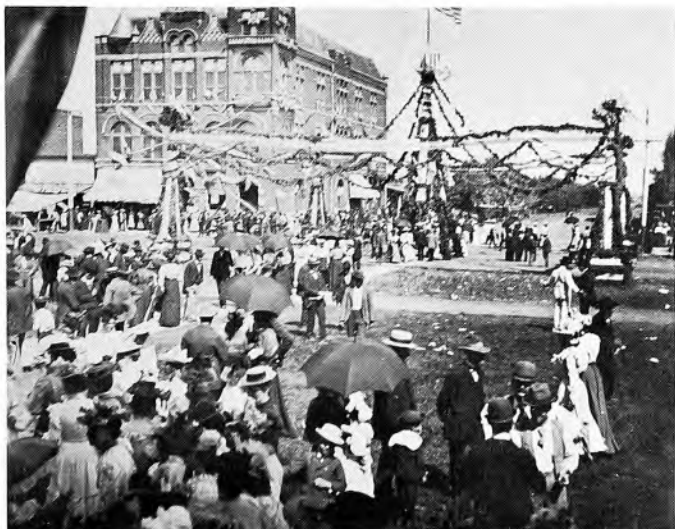


Photo from Delia Fisher

Crowd in Geneva in fall, 1899, the day Company G returned from the Spanish-American War.