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GARDEN COUNTY

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SETTLEMENT

This locality was a favorite hunting ground of the American Indians. In the north the scores of beautiful lakes; in the center, Blue Creek, with its miles of willow fringed meadows and a little farther south the broad North Platte River with its cedar covered bluffs and canyons furnished ideal places for camp, hunt or battle ground.

In the mad rush to the west the pioneers during several decades scarcely stopped to take a second look at the territory, which is now Garden County! Westward Ho! Farther. Farther west, was the cry.

Not more than fifty years ago, the cattlemen began ranging stock in the valley here. One of the first permanent habitations in the county was a camp built near the mouth of Blue Creek by the Ogallala Company. The site of this old camp is near where the farm buildings of William Rolfing now stand, a little over a mile west of Lewellen.

This part of the North Platte Valley land did not look very attractive to the early settler. The big herds of cattle kept the grass eaten off and the sand trampled up; so that the soil looked to be too sandy for any use. Furthermore, the homeseeker would often be told that the place of his choice had already been filed upon or patented, when in reality, it was open for homestead entry.

Mr. William Lisco was one of the first cowboys to ride the range in this vicinity. His first job here was in 1872 and it was nearly fifteen years later that he took his claim on the valley just west of the present line between Garden and Morrill counties.

Previous to the year 1885, when the Lewellen settlement was started by D. C. Hooper and others, and the Oshkosh settlement was started by John Robinson and H. G. Gumaer, Rueben Lisco had located on Rush Creek and S. P. Delatour on Blue Creek.

In 1885, the Bowers brothers opened up headquarters for a horse ranch about ten miles west of where Oshkosh now is located.

The south table was the first part of the county to receive much attention, the settlers working north from the main line of the Union Pacific railroad.

After settlements were made on the north side of the river and teaming had to be done via Chappell, the Geo. W. Hulse place was the half-way house and feeding station. William Keiser established the Kowanda post office in 1899, bringing the mail up from Julesburg by stage. The post office is still being used, the mail coming over from Chappell now. Mrs. Henry G. Smith is the present postmistress. She also carries a small stock of goods for the accommodation of its patrons.

The years, 1885-86-87, seemed to be the great years for settlement, as well be seem by looking over the history of the different localities. Settlers continued to come until the dry years, 1890-92-93-94, when so many grew discouraged and left. It was a kind Providence though for it left more pasture for those hardy ones who stayed. The hardships of these years tested the endurance of these brave people to the limit and only the strongest ones remained.

There were very few settlers in the Sandhills then, few and far between. In the early days, a family wished to get up to a northern settlement so struck out across the county through the Sandhills. They got lost and wandered around for some days. They ate up all the provisions they had and fed the straw out of the bed-ticks to the horses before they finally came to the head of Blue Creek. They knew they would find somebody by following that down.

They reached the Davis ranch tired and hungry. After resting and getting a fresh supply of provisions they secured a cowboy guide to take them through the hills. It is easy, even now, to get lost in them and there are many more settlers.

The usual and popular residence of the early settlers was of course the "Soddy". Even the Kinkaid homesteaders of 1905 to 1910 most all built sod houses.

About 1906, the fashion changed and the frame house or concrete house became popular.

The wagon bridges at Oshkosh and Lewellen were not built until 1891. Previous to that time crossing the river was usually dangerous. Many would get caught in the quicksand, losing their horses, loads and sometimes even themselves.

BOUNDARY DISPUTES - AS BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS

The original land surveys in Garden County, being indistinctly marked, have been the source of continual trouble. In some of the townships no interior corners are to be found. The current rumor is that the Indians bothered the surveyors so much that the surveyors could not do their work in a proper and thorough manner.

The early settlers in township 17, range 44, where Oshkosh is now located, took up a collection and hired a surveyor to resurvey the township and mark every section and quarter section corner. So this central township has been free from boundary line quarrels.

AGRICULTURAL AND LIVE STOCK INDUSTRIES

The southern part of Garden County is a high plain about three hundred feet higher than the North Platte River bottom. This is the wheat country par excellence, and is not a bad country for diversified farming.

The descent from the wheatland to the North Platte River is rough, precipitous, and bluffy, there being but a few comparatively narrow strips of bottom land on the south side of the river. This so-called canyon strip is excellent grazing land.

The principal irrigated land belt of the county lies along the north side of the river. This strip of alfalfa and beet land is about two and one-half miles in width and extends clear across the county. Until the year 1916, but little of this valley was in cultivation. It produced abundant crops of wild hay without irrigation, and the owners were satisfied and prosperous. Now, however, the "big noise" of the sugar beet is heard in the land and the old order is changing. In 1918, automatic beet dumps were constructed at Oshkosh and Penn and numerous tracts of from twenty to two hundred acres were planted to beets. The yield was so satisfactory that in the year 1919 the acreage was greatly increased, and the sugar beet industry is with us to stay. The 1919 crop was about 15,000 tons.

No doubt most of the whole valley of the North Platte is good, but if there is any place more worthy to be called the garden spot of the great plains, than Garden county's irrigated belt, we know not the name of that place.

North of the irrigated belt before reaching the real sand hill grazing country, there is a strip about fifteen miles wide in which lie numerous patches of excellent farm land. The largest of these is called the "west table" which lies north of Lisco.

Another body of good land is Antelope Valley which is a few miles northeast of Oshkosh. It is about the largest dry valley in the county and it has been famous for its big corn crops ever since the coming of A. M. Pringle, Casper Zorn, W. W. Fought, John Blausey, and W. C. Plummer, the first homesteaders.

Farther north lie the hills and lakes, the real ranch country. The land now being practically all patented, the larger ranches are being squared up and extended. Many wet valleys have been improved by draining by means of open ditches. Some cattlemen have experimented enough with sweet clover and alfalfa to make it apparent that within a short time the range steer will have some tame hay to vary the monotony of his diet, and the flavor of his wonderful carcass.

OSHKOSH

In the year 1885, Henry Gumaer, Alfred W. Gumaer, George P. Kendall, H. W. Potter and John Robinson started a cattle ranch at the present site of Oshkosh, They organized a company and as the Gumaer brothers were natives of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, they named it the Oshkosh Land and Cattle Company. They had been informed that there were several thousand acres of school land at this point in addition to section 36, and they expected to be able to purchase the whole tract. They built their headquarters ranch near the east side of section 35, purchased section 36 and applied to purchase the balance of the tract. They soon found that the whole tract outside of section 36 was government land, so they filed on as much as possible and were able to have and hold a good sized ranch, which was soon cut up considerably by the homestead filings of Charley Mills, Floyd Jones, J. H. Duffin, Jim Duffin, Peter Duffin, Susie Duffin, Delia Duffin, and Winnie Duffin. Henry C. Gumaer and John Robison drove their first herd of cattle through from St. Paul, Nebraska. In 1889 they built a two-story frame building on the W 1/2 of the NW 1/2 of section 36, township 17, range 44, in which they started a general store and post office named Oshkosh. This building is now the Miller hotel. It was just before this time that Hartman post office was established about eight miles north of Oshkosh on Lost Creek. Sebastian Hartman was the first postmaster. He had started a small store in 1888 and secured a post office in the spring of 1889. Fred Teppert was postmaster for about one and one-half years just before it was discontinued in 1899. The mail was brought up from Ogallala three times a week, via Lewellen and Ramsey. Hugh Boggs of Lewellen had the contract for carrying the mail to Oshkosh, and employed Charley Ransom to drive part of the time. They used a span of vicious mules that were always hard to hitch up and always looking for a chance to run away. Hartman's carried the mail from Oshkosh to Hartman. Before securing the post office they had been obliged to go to Ramsey for their mail.

In 1890 the Oshkosh public school was organized in a sod building up on Lost Creek. The building of a bridge across the North Platte River in 1891 opened up a new channel for development. Now Chappell came to be the chief shipping point.

Eugene Fish, Henry Sudman and August Sudman of Chappell organized a mercantile company called the A. Sudman Company and in 1894 bought out the Oshkosh store and the eighty acres of land on which it was located. Mr. A. Sudman became the new manager and postmaster. In June 1897, Mr. Sudman married Miss Pearl Plummer, and they lived over the store. This was the first wedding in Oshkosh. It was celebrated with great pomp in the rooms which were to be their home, over the store. About this time Mr. Kirk McCall bought a "Drug Shop" which Robert Day had been running in a small building just north of the store.

Among the first buildings in Oshkosh was Jim Monahan's blacksmith shop just south of the store. It was a most busy and important establishment in those days. He later sold out to Noah Brewer. In 1909 Mr., Noah Brewer who was anxious to get into the automobile game sold his blacksmith shop to King Rhiley and moved to Sidney. Strange to say Mr. Rhiley soon got into the auto business himself in the old Brewer shop. At that time there was only one motor vehicle in Oshkosh; it was a high wheeled International owned by Archie Wynes and John Delatour. Although owned by two men it required about four men and a boy to coax it along.

Mr. Rhiley went to work to build an automobile that one man could run, and he succeeded (almost). He got one finished up and in running condition and succeeded in trading it off to Jim Duffin. He then got an agency for the Oakland and did a good business. He is now the Western Nebraska distributor for Buick automobiles, G. M. C. trucks and the Hudson Super-Six and is the seventh oldest dealer in the state.

It was in 1898 that the Woodman hall was built. It served as society hall, church services, in fact all gatherings of any size went to the hall. It has looked upon a variety of scenes and festivities. They had the public school here one year.

At this time, the Wehn Telephone Company established a telephone system from Bridgeport to Oshkosh, Lewellen and other points. It was a great convenience, as well as a pleasure and is still appreciated. In 1920 the Wehn Company sold out to a company with Mr. Warner of Chadron as manager. All these lines are now consolidated under the name of Platte Valley Telephone Company.

A plat of the original town site was now laid out by A. Sudman Company in March 1905. A bank building was built near the lumberyard, but it being directly in the Union Pacific right-of-way was sold to the railroad company in 1907. The railroad company sold it to Wynes & Bushnell, and it was used as a post office and residence by Archie Wynes who was postmaster until 1915, when the post office was moved to its present location on Main Street.

Mrs. Wynes remained in the post office until June 1915, when Gilbert Swanson was appointed. He is still there, March 1920. One rural route was established in 1913 out east and north of Oshkosh; on which the mail is carried daily.

In 1906 Col. Wisner of Bayard became interested enough in Oshkosh to come here and start a newspaper called the Oshkosh Herald. It was published by various owners in a small building on the east side of Main Street until the building over by the depot was built in 1911.

In 1905 Fred Williams built a two-story frame hotel on Main Street. He soon sold it to J. C. McCoy of Lewellen. This hotel was run by Jim Caslin, and later by Leo Fox.

When Oshkosh was made a county seat in 1909 a company of Oshkosh men bought the hotel and rented the lower floor to the county for a courthouse, and they rent out the second story for a rooming house. The building is still used; so any traveler can, for a dollar a night, have the unique experience of lodging in the upper story of the courthouse. At present this rooming house is managed by Mrs. S. E. Valentine, who took charge in 1914.

In 1905, LaSalle & Miles built and opened up a general store, half way between the hotel and Corner Store, and Dan Atchinson started the first drug store just north of them and called it the Oshkosh Drug Company.

The Oshkosh Lumber Company was formed May 1, 1906, with Robert Quelle, manager. It continued in business until the fall of 1916, when it sold to the Sterling Lumber Company.

The Woodman hall was sold in 1905 to Newkirk and Burchard who put in a stock of hardware.

After the sale of the Woodman hall, where the social life of the community centered, the need of a hall was so apparent that Wynes and Bushnell erected the stone Opera House in 1907 just north of the Union Pacific right-of-way before the track was laid. Just at this time the coming of the Union Pacific Railroad up the valley was a sure thing. It was completed in 1908. The rails were laid and the first train reached here August 8, 1908. That spelled grow to Oshkosh. The division of the county came the next year with Oshkosh for county seat.

New additions to the town had been platted and Oshkosh was spreading out. In 1911 the village was incorporated and many improvements have appeared, as grading the streets, cement walks, electric lights, water works, etc. Oshkosh has no museum but Miles J. Maryott has a collection of mounted birds, Indian relics, bones, coins, etc., that is worth traveling across the continent to see. Mr. Maryott is an artist and finds ready sale for his paintings. He paints animal and landscape pictures, but his wild bird pictures take up a large part of his time. His hobby is collecting prehistoric animal bones and Indian relics. He also collects and mounts rare birds.

Mr. Maryott was born in Burt County, Nebraska, in 1873, and has been a resident of Oshkosh since 1909. He homesteaded in 1910 in the sand hills of Garden County for the sole purpose of being closer to his life work as a naturalist and painter of western scenery.

The farmers are beginning to take a prominent part in the business of the town. They have organized two corporations, one of which handles the only grain business of the town, and is called the Farmers Elevator Company. In 1916 this company was chartered and bought out the elevator which had been run for several years by the Oshkosh Lumber Company. The other farmers' corporation is the Garden County Supply Company, which is doing a big general merchandise business in the building formerly occupied in succession by H. A. Davis, Jacob H. Roudebush and L. H. Stroud, each of whom spent several years in the general store business.

Oshkosh had reached the stage where electric lights were needed. On September 11, 1915, a plant was put into operation by A. D. Riddile. It has been enlarged and improved and in 1919 it was sold to the village. It is now run under village management, as well as a water system being started. Bonds for the water and lights were voted June 5, 1919. Some defect was discovered in the proceedings so they voted on them again January 22, 1920. The bonds were carried both times. The sewer system will be put in operation in 1920. The electric plant now gives twenty-four hour service.

Since the As Sudman Company platted the original town of Oshkosh in 1905, the following additions have been platted: The A. Sudman Company Addition, Duffin's Addition, Maloy's Addition, Bott and Hart's Addition. There are about six hundred and forty acres of land within the corporate limits of Oshkosh. On March 1, 1920 the population was 725.

LEWELLEN

In 1884, S. P. Delatour, the first settler in this part of the county, selected his home on Blue Creek and with abundance of water and unlimited range, he prospered in the cattle business from the start.

The next year, 1885, D. C. Hooper came with a company of settlers among them Ed. Hartman, Ira Paisley, Bergeson, Colyer and Duvall. W. D. Marsh came in the same year. All settled in the river valley and on Blue Creek. Soon afterward, about 1886, John Mevich, James Wilson, James Winters and Mr. Meeker settled on Blue Creek. Ora Meeker was the first girl born in the present limits of Garden County, June 4, 1886; and Dick Wilson was the first boy, in April 1887.

About this time, 1886, Frank Lewellen started a store and post office in his residence four miles east of the present site of Lewellen. The mail was brought up from Ogallala; in fact, all of the hauling was done from there as the Keith county bridge near Ogallala gave a much better way than fording in crossing the North Platte river.

About seven miles northeast of Lewellen, on the present site of Lutherville, a post office was started by Mr. Ramsey, about 1887, called Ramsey post office. The mail also came from Ogallala. This post office was moved to the John Mevich home on Blue Creek in 1890.

Up the creek about ten miles, a branch post office was established in 1891, at a settlement composed of Levi Prouty, Mary Flock, P. S. Peterson, Hans Madison, John Twiford, A. S. Kingery, John Lamberty, Davis Bros., Gus and Paul Rentzch, Jake Miller, Jim Usher, Dave Sleezer, Tom Snell and possibly other families. This post office was called Hutchinson and was located at John Lamberty's house. He was the first mail carrier, bringing the mail from Ramsey twice a week.

In 1893, the Ramsey post office was discontinued and Lewellen post office was moved to the present site of Lewellen into Robert Graf's store. He was appointed postmaster at that time.

One of the first enterprises of Lewellen after the store and post office was the Bank of Lewellen, organized in 1905, a history of which is given in "Banking and Finance." The frame building in which it carried on its business is now occupied by the telephone exchange.

The first telephone line was one coming in from Big Springs. Its stockholders were the farmers along the line and it was put up in 1900, in order to get in touch with the rest of the world. It has since been extended to surrounding towns as well as a number of rural lines. In 1903 the Wehn Telephone Company extended its lines from Bridgeport and Oshkosh to Lewellen and also leased the farmers line from Big Springs.

After the railroad was surveyed through the valley, J. C. McCoy laid out the village of Lewellen in July 1906. The first addition was soon needed and was platted in October 1907. Two additions have since been added, making about sixty acres altogether.

The completion of the railroad to this point in 1907 gave new life to the village. The first station agent

was W. A. Hostetter who remained there a number of years. F. J. Ritter is agent in 1920.

Dr. Hall, a druggist, came in 1907, and opened up a drug store in a tent. A frame building was soon put up and the stock moved into it.

An electric light plant was established in December 1917. This gives Lewellen good light for business houses and homes.

The village hopes to be incorporated this year (1920), but some are opposing it, so it is rather uncertain.

GARDEN COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION

The citizens in and around Lewellen believed that an annual fair for the exhibition of products would be a benefit. It was decided to hold a Corn Show in the fall. On September 21, 1910, the Garden County Fair Association was organized with John Mevich, president; C. G. Berquist, secretary, J. H. Wehn, treasurer. A board of directors consisted of J. C. McCoy, F. H. Barber, Richard Clark, Cal McCormick, Cris McCormick, Stephen Brown, J. H. Orr, Geo. Cochran and Van Delatour. It has held a successful fair each fall with 1919 capping all with the largest attendance and successful financially. The officers then were, Mrs. Beebee, President, Mrs. Crosby, Recording Secretary, Mrs. McCall, Corresponding Secretary.

LISCO

Nineteen hundred and nine was an eventful year in the history of Lisco. The railroad reached there in the fall of 1908. So Reuben Lisco laid out the village of Lisco and opened up a store and post office in January 1909, in a small frame building near the Lisco ranch house on the north side of the river. The store, which was practically in a cornfield, was called the Lisco Mercantile Company; W. F. Gumaer was manager. A lumberyard was connected with it. U. F. Gumaer's family was the first one on the present site of Lisco. His daughter Viola was the first child born in Lisco.

To get the post office started, the mail was carried from Oshkosh twice a week for six months, either by team or train, the Lisco post office paying for the transportation.

The telephone line was continued up to Lisco in 1909, branches to other points and the farmers line coming on soon after.

Just at this time the dreams of the old settlers came true and a bridge was built across the river in the spring of 1912. It being only one-half mile from the county line between Garden and Morrill counties, Morrill County helped pay for its construction.

RAILROADS

The carrying into effect of the plans of the Union Pacific railroad to build a line on a water grade from North Platte to the mountains, brought to our North River country its first and only railroad. This line was built in 1907 and 1908, reaching Lewellen in 1907, and the first train arriving at Oshkosh on August 8, 1908. In September a huge celebration and barbecue was held at Oshkosh to show to the world the gladness of a new railroad town.

Lewellen, Oshkosh and Lisco at once began to boom. The rapid growth of these towns, and the development of the surrounding agricultural lands, soon brought on clamor for county division, and in 1909 the new county of Garden was formed out of the north part of Deuel.

SCHOOLS

During the early days, the school advantages were the same as in all new settlements. Very few schools and often none for many miles.

The first school building in the county was in what is now Joint district No. 2, known as the Wendt School on the south table west of Ash Hollow. It was built of sod in 1887.

Mrs. Robert Dailey, near Lisco, had no school near at hand. In order to get the children to school, she took them to Lodgepole, often fording the river to do so. Once she placed the children on a cake of ice to serve as a raft. She waded the river; her struggle to keep the raft from carrying the children down stream in spite of her would be a lesson in courage and determination.

The first county superintendent was T. C. McKee, elected in 1910. His health failed and he was obliged to resign in October 1913, when Nellie Olson (now Mrs. Ed. Stroud) was appointed to fill the vacancy. Then having been elected and re-elected, she remained in that office until March 1, 1918, when she resigned. Miss Esther Johnson was appointed to fill the vacancy and has since been elected to the office.

Lewellen had the first village school in 1890. A frame building was put up and used until 1908, when it was sold. They had expected to have a new building ready for the next year, but there was some trouble about the bonds, leaving the community without a school building for three years. During this time school was held in the Hall, L. H. Warner and Lyle Mewhirter were two of the teachers who taught in the Hall. In 1911 a good frame building was completed. In 1918 the 11th and 12th grades were added, making a high school course complete. A large brick building is being erected this year for its accommodation. It will be a needed improvement.

As early as 1890 a small school was carried on in the sod house on John Robinson's pre-emption on Lost Creek, one mile north of Oshkosh.

That old sod house was used until 1896, when a new sod building was put up in the north edge of town near where the old stone building now stands. The stone building consisting of two rooms was erected in 1905. It was quite a pretentious building at that time, but soon became too small. In the fall of 1910 the primary grades were moved into a small frame building on Fish street, just north of the railroad track. Here Bonnie Twiford taught. During the summer of 1911, a small frame building was built in the yard with the stone one.

Oshkosh school soon had outgrown its quarters. The eleven grades needed more room so a commodious brick building was erected in 1914, giving ample space to accommodate the school for some years to come. But now, 1920, that building is filled to its full capacity, employing seven teachers for the pupils of the first eight grades.

The first school in Lisco was held in a room over the Lisco Mercantile Company store, during the year 1909-10. It was a private school supported by the few residents of Lisco. There were fourteen pupils enrolled with Jessie Lee Colyer teacher. It was made a public school the following year with Miss

Williams as teacher. The room over the store was used until 1911 when the present frame building was put up with two rooms and two teachers, Miss Goodmanson and Miss Davis. Last year, 1918, they were obliged to fit up a room over the Lisco Mercantile Company store again. In 1919, two rooms over the store were needed as the tenth and eleventh grades were added to the course.

GARDEN COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

June 26, 1915, a Garden county high school was organized under the control of a Board of Regents.

The first graduates were Walter Olson, Bess Blair, Beulah Blair, Marguerite Day, Bernice Miller and Fern Bentz.

In 1918 the grades, needing the entire building, a new high school building was built in the west part of town on a five acre tract under irrigation.

CHURCHES

The first church in the county was an organization on the south table, eleven miles southwest of Lewellen near where the Day church now stands. It was a Methodist church organized in 1887 by Dennis Clary, W. H. Gilliard and Cris McCormick, Sr. Mr. Clary had been in the ministry for thirty years. The building, which has now fallen, was of sod, with a small cemetery in connection with it, which is still there. When the frame building was built, it was put up two miles southeast and is now called Day church.

The first church in Lewellen was a Methodist church built in 1899. Revs. Coslet, Eggers, and Bolla preached in the schoolhouse before the church was built. Rev. Elmer Keller was the first pastor to preach in the new church. It naturally was a small organization at first. The churches of Lewellen and Oshkosh hired a pastor together for a number of years. It has been only since 1915 that each church has hired its own.

The Lutheran church organization of Lewellen was formed in the fall of 1906, by William Heidenrich, from Oshkosh, with a Sunday School and Ladies Guild in connection. That year a nice church was built and dedicated, during Rev. Clark Powell's pastorate.

In 1911 a Baptist church was built. Rev. Elkins was pastor. The organization has steadily been growing. They have decided to build a parsonage this year. The present pastor is A. J. Coffey.

The first church organization in Oshkosh was the Methodist Episcopal. It was a branch of the Methodist church at Lewellen, and helped in the support of the Lewellen pastor, who came to Oshkosh for services every other Sunday. Services were held in the schoolhouse or hall until the Lutheran church was built in 1909. Then services were held in that every other week, alternating with the Lutheran pastor who went to Lewellen every week until 1912, when they built a church home. The Methodist church was dedicated July 1913, while Rev. McAbee was pastor.

On June 10, 1906 Rev. Wm. Heidenrich came to Oshkosh. He organized a Lutheran church September 9, 1906, calling it St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran church.

At Lisco the Presbyterians were the first denomination to get busy. Rev. Currens, seventy years old, came from Alliance into the neighborhood south of the river and held meetings in a sod schoolhouse during the winter of 1908-09. In his visiting he would wade the river even though it was full of ice. An organization was formed there. The church was built in Lisco the following spring, but not dedicated until the spring of 1910.

In 1915 the Catholics in and around Lisco determined to have a church home and that summer it was begun. Father Burns from Scottsbluff came for services. The following spring it was dedicated with the usual ceremonies. They have forty members.

Out on what is called the west table about eight miles northeast of Lisco we find a thriving Adventist church called the Lisco Adventist church. In June 1908, an organization was formed consisting of

forty-two members. The building was erected that same year.

Some of the people living in Antelope and Lost Creek valleys wished to have a church building for preaching services and Sunday School. A subscription list was started and funds raised for the building. One was put up in 1916 of cement blocks. It was named the Silvia Union church, in honor of Mrs. John Kiley, who had been one of the main starters of the movement. It was dedicated in June 1917. Money enough was raised that day to pay off the debt.

THE PRESS

The first newspaper was established in Oshkosh in 1906, by Col. Wisner of Bayard. This was a weekly paper named the Oshkosh Herald.

In the fall of 1908, Mr. Tomppert and Walter Bentz formed a partnership, and embarked on the sea of journalism, in full charge and ownership of the Herald. They managed to print four pages each week on their Washington hand press. Within a year, they had increased the circulation to several hundred and were doing a paying business.

At this time the Bentz Company were publishing three papers in the county The Oshkosh Herald, at Oshkosh, The Lewellen Gazette at Lewellen and Lisco Tribune at Lisco. They did most of the printing at the Herald office. In 1913, they sold the Tribune to Mr. Cary of Lisco. The Herald and Gazette were run by different members of the Bentz family until May 1919, when they discontinued both papers and moved to Florida.

This leaves just one newspaper in Oshkosh, one in Lewellen and one in Lisco.

In 1919, Mr. David J. Colyer bought the Lisco Tribune from Mrs. Cary. He is rapidly improving it, building up the circulation and making a real newspaper out of it.

Mr. John B. Barton established the Lewellen Optimist on March 22, 1917. Each year, it is steadily increasing in quality and circulation and it is loyally supported especially in the eastern part of the county.

THE BENCH AND THE BAR

Garden County has no resident district judge. When first organized in the year 1910, this county was in the thirteenth judicial district of Nebraska presided over by Judge H. M. Crimes of North Platte.

In 1911, the new seventeenth judicial district was created, of which a short time later, Ralph W. Hobart of Scottsbluff County was elected judge and he has held the office up to the present time.

BANKING AND FINANCE

Garden County has only five banks but they are all solid, thriving institutions. Two of them are located at Oshkosh, two at Lewellen and one at Lisco.

The first bank here was the Deuel County Bank, organized at Oshkosh in 1904, By J. W. Wehn.

On moving into their new building in 1911, this bank was converted into a National Bank, and named First National Bank. In 1915, however, it was converted back into a State Bank under the name of First State Bank of Oshkosh.

Lewellen's first bank, The Bank of Lewellen, was organized in 1905.

In 1911, the Garden County Bank was organized with a capital of \$10,000, S. P. Delatour, President; Eugene Delatour, Vice President, and B. C. Delatour, Cashier.

Two banks were unnecessary, so, in 1914, the Delatours bought the Bank of Lewellen, and consolidated the two under the name of Bank of Lewellen.

In March 1917, the Oshkosh State Bank was organized at Oshkosh.

The only bank of Lisco is the Lisco State Bank, which was organized May 19, 1909, the same eventful year in the history of Lisco.

THE COUNTY'S PART IN THE WORLD WAR

At the declaration of war, by the United States, the county responded to all calls with good spirit.

Lewellen was the first in the county to organize a Red Cross Chapter. This was done August 28, 1917. Oshkosh and Lisco soon followed with organizations September 1917. Each started with the regulation ten members, and a few others besides. The drives for membership brought good results. Before the Armistice was signed Lewellen had five hundred members, Oshkosh and Lisco had over nine hundred.

A company of home guards, consisting of about fifty men, was formed at Oshkosh, with W. F. Gumaer, Captain; Chas. Carr, 1st Lieutenant.

Each company trained twice a week in military tactics and became quite proficient for "awkward squads."

We know of no official or authentic roster of those who joined the colors from this county. It is sure that the number is over two hundred, but regret to say that our list is incomplete.

Company "H." Sixth Nebraska Infantry was recruited and after June 24, 1917, in two detachments, one at Chadron, Nebraska, and one at Lewellen, Nebraska, and vicinity.

On August 3, orders to mobilize at Chadron were received, and the company was mustered into the Federal service on August 8, 1917.

On September 13th, the company entrained for Camp Cody, New Mexico, arriving there on September 17th. Two weeks later, the company together with sixty-five enlisted men from Company "I", and forty men from Company "F," Sixth Nebraska Infantry, was transferred to the 109th Engineers and announced as Company "F", 109th Engineers.

Day after day and month after month, the boys expected orders to go "over there". After a year of training, worrying and waiting at Camp Cody, the orders came, and they started for the front, "rejoicing as a strong man to run a race,"

In January, 1919, when the regiment was separated into several detachments, Company "F," remained on duty at Mesves Hospital Centre, Francs, until the middle of May; when for about two weeks, station was changed to Nevers; then sent to LeMans area and from there to the embarkation port and home, being demobilized at Camp Dodge, Iowa, on July 2, 1919, having had ten months of service in France out of their two years of service.

THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

Garden County has never been blessed with many members of the medical profession. The first settlers were obliged to go for many miles to reach a doctor. Forging the river was only one of the difficulties of such a trip.

Eventually in the fall of 1899, Dr. H. H. Hough and wife arrived in Oshkosh, from Aurora. They were gladly welcomed.

He opened up an office in his residence, a sod house in the south edge of town. His work here was appreciated by many and he stayed until the spring of 1917, when he decided a change of climate would benefit his wife's health. They moved to Weiser, Idaho, where they are on a small dairy and fruit form.

In the meantime, in 1909, Dr. Morris came to Lewellen and Dr. Stanley Clement opened up an office in Oshkosh. The latter only stayed about two years.

Dr. Morris stayed in Lewellen, but has since given up practicing.

By this time, in 1911, Dr. Geo. H. Morris located in Oshkosh, making two doctors by the name of Morris in Garden county. His efforts to relieve the sufferings of humanity have been quite successful.

Horses were too slow for a doctor's long ride in this country, after the coming of the automobile. He used a Ford for a while, but declared it was also too slow, and he bought a Buick.

He has always been a worker for good roads. He has furthered many interests for the good of Oshkosh and the county. He served on the Draft Board during the war, started the Red Cross and boosts the Chautauqua and Lyceum. He married Miss Ruth Mevich, of Lewellen, in the summer of 1918.

Oshkosh had needed another physician, as the work was too heavy for one; so, many were pleased when Dr. Kelly arrived in May 1917. His work here was cut short by the "Flu" epidemic. He and his wife were both down with it and Dr. Kelly died in November, 1918, after being here only about one and one-half years.

Dr. C. L. Hooper came to Lewellen in 1916. When war was declared, he volunteered for service and was called May 19, 1917, entering the Medical Corps.

After his varied experience in the army the citizens of Lewellen petitioned him home. He returned to Lewellen May 1919, to resume his medical duties there.

Dr. Phillips practiced in Lewellen during Dr. Hooper's absence.

Garden county teeth have been very well looked after by the dental profession. The first dentist to locate in this county was Dr. Moses Wetherby, who left his home and practice in Chile, South America, to come to Oshkosh in 1903, arriving when the town consisted of a store and blacksmith shop. He has ever

since been our principal tooth doctor and did all work free for the local boys who needed tooth repairing preparatory to their acceptance as soldiers in the World War.

Dr. Baker came in 1909, opening an office in his residence. His health was poor and he passed away in February 1914.

At Lewellen, Dr. Gainsforth came in 1917. Mrs. Gainsforth taught in the public schools there. They soon gave it up and left Lewellen to its fate in 1919. But this last summer, in 1919, Dr. Rice, a young man just graduated from Dental College has opened up an office there.

Throughout the year 1919, Dr. Morris was the only medical practitioner in Oshkosh. Being nearly worn out by the enormous amount of work, he as well as the people in general, gladly welcomed Dr. D. L. Hibberd, who arrived in Oshkosh early in 1920. He had recently returned from France and selected Oshkosh as his permanent location. Both doctors are kept very busy, as they have many patients in the county, their territory extending out a long distance, especially to the northward.

It was also in 1920, that Dr. A. J. Dunlavy, the dentist, located in Oshkosh, and opened his new office on Main Street just south of the post office. Oshkosh having been without a licensed dentist for several years, Dr. Dunlavy jumped into a big business from the start.