

Phelps Helps



Volume 17, Issue 1

Spring 2009

Meetings held at the Nebraska Prairie Museum on the first Monday of the month at 2:00 PM.

The public is welcome!

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*Donald O. Lindgren
Genealogy Library Addition*

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Don O. Lindgren Library Addition Almost Completed

After many months of planning the library addition will soon be completed. There are many who have worked tirelessly to make this become a reality. Ken Mosman who has spent many hours in our library to collect information on the Christian Children's

Home book, gave the first donation for the library addition, Roy and Mary Pearson also gave a large donation to make sure that there would be enough funds to complete the addition, also funding for a flyer to promote the genealogy library. These two were our largest contributors. There were several others who also donated to the library. All these donations were instrumental in completing this addition. We thank you all.

Also thanks to the Phelps County Historical Society Board and

their President, Bob Butts; Museum Administrator, Dan VanDyke who has oversaw the building of the library; Bill and Susan Perry who built, varnished and painted the library addition and Warner Carlson and Marvin Klassen who also helped paint.

The library addition will have another function as a meeting room for small groups. We invite you to visit the library any time the museum is open. The library staff is there to assist you on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Don O. Lindgren Staff

Sandra Slater	Ada Hinson
Lourie Johnson	Renate Emken
Virginia Lindstrom	Martha Tweety
Rose Ann Messersmith	Ben Boell
Mary Hammond	Susan Perry

Microfilm Collection Additions

Dick Dyas Donations:

Schedules of the Nebraska State Census 1885, Harlan, Hayes, Hitchcock counties.

1880 Federal Census of Hamilton, Harlan, Hayes, Hitchcock, Holt, Howard and Jefferson Counties.

The Holdrege Area Genealogy Club has purchased all available newspaper microfilm for the Loomis Sentinel. There are seven rolls of microfilm starting with November 18th 1910 and ending with the April 7th 1938 newspaper.

These are wonderful additions to our microfilm library

New Members & Queries

Beverly Stitt
226 West Second St.
Chadron, NE 69337

Richard L Dyer
7857 Scarborough Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80920-7117
I am researching the Dyer family that resided in Phelps, Gosper and Dawson County, NE.

QUERRIES:

Sara Firehammer
17108 Mayfair Ct.
Granger Indiana 465530-7488

Would like to share information with anyone researching these Phelps and Harlan County, NE families: SKOOG, BERGSTROM, McNIEL, LENEY, POWELL, LINDSTROM,

MAGNUSSON AND HAINEY.

Looking for descendants of John August JOHNSON (1834 Sweden-1915 –Nebraska). Married first ?; son Carl Alfred JOHNSON. Married 2nd 1880 Nebraska Sophia ABRAHAM; Daughter Adla, Adla's half brother was Emil NELSON. Associated Surnames: BORG, McNEIL, and LENEY.

New On The Bookshelf..

Ada Hinson – 1999 Thayer County, Nebraska Farm and Home Platte

Donation of Dick Dyas – The Trek of the Jayhaws by E. W. Mecum, 1930.

Sharon Schrock – Schrock Farms 1908-2000

James E. Almquist – Freewater Congregational Church records 1880-1906. This information has been transcribed by Mr. Almquist from a microfilm from the Nebraska Historical Society.

Warner Carlson – Green Waves and The Wolf Loomis Year Books 1954-1962. 1973 Viking Bertrand Year book; Andrew G. Linden, A Family History.

Delores Cavanaugh –Christian Home Children's Scrapbook

Sally Massey – I Remember...Family Stories from Hamilton County, NE

Holdrege Area Genealogy Club – Who's Who in Nebraska, Bicentennial Edition of Notable Nebraskans 1976-1977.

R-4 School, Phelps Co. NE – School Yearbooks 1998-2008; Principals Albums of school children and activities and Scrap Books of teachers, school children and activities; Book of Class photographs 1971-2007.

Holdrege Public Library – Kansas Newspapers, A Directory of Newspaper Holdings in Kansas.

Family of Lorena Smith – 100th Anniversary of Evangelical Free Church, Loomis, NE 1886-1986

Children's Home Book & Museum Display Bring New Information

From:
Kenneth Freeman Mosman,
Sandra Slater and
Beverly Frerichs:

Calvin B. Darnell lives at Grand Rapids, Minnesota with his wife Eileen (High) Schroeder. He is very much a part of the history of Phelps County, Nebraska. In 1936 he was a thirteen year old resident of the

Christian Children's Home. His parents were Lester Cuvelier and Sarah (Burger) Darnell. Calvin's ancestral lineage, Lester C. Hezekiah, O. Anderson, Samuel M., and James extends eastward to Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and North Carolina.

The complete story of this Darnell Family will appear in a Supplement now being written about some of the children of the

Christian Children's Home.

For information about your Phelps County ancestors contact Sandra Slater at the Don O. Lindgren Library, Box 164, Holdrege, NE 68949.

The library is a major conduit of human history into and out of Phelps County.

Carter, Harlan County, Nebraska

This hand written article has no authors name listed. This history was written about 1964. Carter School was moved about 1976 to John Fletcher Christian College Academy in Kearney County. This area is now a historical site that includes the Salem Methodist Church building built in 1885.

This is the story of Carter, Nebraska, and a small village in Harlan County.

In 1880-1881 the railroad was built up the Republican Valley and a sidetrack for unloading supplies was built halfway between Orleans and Oxford, Nebraska. The town of Carter was built near this place. A grain elevator was erected in 1906 and soon afterwards a lumberyard was started.

Edward Johnson was appointed postmaster so he erected a building for a general store with a post office. A large crowd celebrated the opening day September 1, 1906. The Johnson's made their home there in the rooms at the back of the store.

Carter maintained a post office until 1916 when the patrons were put on Route 4 out of Orleans, Nebraska. Previous to this time, when Carter had a post office, a mailman brought mail from Kearney to the post offices at Melrose and Orleans, and to the homes of Carlisle, McNees and Watson. They also handled a few supplies.

The years between 1906 and 1912 saw many buildings erected in Carter. The railroad built a section house and stockyards and moved in two freight cars to be used as passenger and freight depots. There was another store, cream and produce business, lunch counter, blacksmith shop, hardware store, another elevator and several residences.

A bridge was built across the Republican River southwest of Carter in 1908, which made it more convenient for the farmers south of the river to trade

NOTE: The Phelps Helps Newsletter highlights Harlan County in this section. With many of our subscribers interested in and from Harlan County, and since Harlan County is a connecting county to Phelps County, the Phelps Helps will publish history information on Harlan County.

in Carter.

Around 1912 the farmer's began to buy automobiles. Fords, Overlands, Oaklands, Hupmobiles, Studebaker and Maxwells were some of the cars made. They could now drive to the larger towns and the decline of Carter began.

During the next ten years many of the buildings were burned down and others were moved away.

In 1941 the stockyards were sold. The schoolhouse is all that remains of a once prosperous little village.

To complete this account of Carter we must add the history of the school and the church, of which were the lifeblood of the community.

School was first held in the home of the teacher Mrs. Julia Crockford in 1874 and the parents paying for her hire.

The first school board was elected April 2, 1877 and they voted 25 mills on the dollar. Nels Peterson was moderator, Peter Berquist, director and John Gahley, treasurer. A sod schoolhouse was erected seven miles northwest of Orleans near the creek that was then named school Creek. Fifteen students attended three months of school and sat on log benches with their slates learning the three Rs and spelling from Anna Wright who was paid \$25 per month. By 1890, there were 43 enrolled in school for six months term.

A log building was erected around 1881 and used for both school and church until 1893.

There were many spelling contests, ciphering matches, literary meetings, and debates which also provided social entertainment for the community.

In 1893 an acre of ground was purchased for

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\$5.50. In the middle of the section a frame building was erected for \$633. In 1910 a two-room schoolhouse was built in Carter with the intention of having two teachers, one for the lower grades and one for 9th and 10th grades but requirements could not be met for high school grades. Daisy Olson was hired to teach the 20 pupils in the 1st-8th grades for \$45 a month for a nine-month term.

Carter is one of the few rural schools still in session in Harlan County in 1964, with 18 pupils attending.

The first church was built of logs and located 4 miles northwest of Orleans by the river. The railroad was built close to the church and the train scared the horses of those attending the services, so they decided to move the church to a location about 2 miles north of the river. It was known as the Swedish Mission Church and was served by ministers from Phelps County and other traveling through. Rev. Stromberg was called to be the minister in the 1880s and served many years.

They brought an organ each Sunday and his daughter Augusta (later Mrs. Justus Johnson) played it.

Rev. A. E. Lane was Minister from 1905-1922. After this he retired from the farm and moved to Alma to become a county judge.

Ministers from Oxford and Stamford have conducted services intermittently along with the American Union Sunday School Missionaries.

The Sunday School was organized in 1875 and continued without interruption until 1963. The first Sunday School consisted of three teachers and was re-organized each quarter. Supplies were ordered from David C. Cook. The Sunday School became affiliated with the American Union Sunday School in 1925. Since 1910 the meetings have been held in the two-room schoolhouse in Carter.

The cemetery was started near the church on the Bloom land near the river but when the church was moved, the bodies of the twenty Swedes were also moved to the Bloom land east of Schoolcreek and close to the new location of the church.

Poker, Ham, Chickens and Turkeys

Gambling was a crime in the 1890s. In September of 1891, the City Marshal found a poker [game] above the Merritt implement store on a Sunday morning.

For some reason, only four were taken before the judge. Three were fined \$1 and costs while the other was fined \$5. "This looks like play work, the Citizen said. "There had been considerable said about poker playing for the last three months and that it was carried on by those ought to be in better business. If

there is not a change made, there may be some interesting news given in these columns."

Subsequent columns did not list any persons convicted on gambling, but in a December 8th issue found the story of Ben Wade, who was arrested on the charge of stealing a ham. He was fined \$10 and \$23 court costs.

"As Wade did not have the money, he is now staying in the calaboose at the rate of \$1.50 a day," the Citizen said. Ham is not the only object of the theft.

John Reid, apparently of Atlanta, was charged with stealing turkeys and chickens. His wife stood by him and made a "vigorous defense." "It is said that she and the county attorney had several battles of words that highly amused the spectators," the Citizen reported. It did little good. Reid was found guilty and fined \$10.

T. M. Hopwood - Early Phelps Leader

Hopwood Had a Hand in Many Enterprises of 1870s—80s—90s

In the early history of Phelps County, Phelps Center and Holdrege probably no other name stands out more prominently than Thomas M. Hopwood. Without doubt, the main reason for this was the fact that he was owner, editor and publisher of the Nebraska Nugget, Phelps Center newspaper which was moved to Holdrege with the establishment of the new town. Much of the history of the county, most of the history of the county and of the new town of Holdrege, on which these articles are based, is from the pen of Editor Hopwood.

Disregarding the fact that he was a newspaperman and was never averse to mentioning the name Hopwood, he was without question, one of the guiding lights of the new county in the late 70s and through of the 80s. Not only did he operate a newspaper that was sparked with pungent editorials, he was also a homesteader and later a county commissioner. He was president of the Holdrege Board of Trade for several years, an organization devoted to the promotion of the city.

He was a candidate for the state legislature in 1887. He lost out for this office when a three-corner race developed between him and the Citizen editor. Eric Johnson and James Rhea. Johnson

backed the Swedes, who were gaining a majority in Phelps County at the time won out by a slight margin.

Hopwood was also one of the founders and organizers of the Holdrege National Bank. He operated a hotel and eating house in Phelps Center, that business he moved to Holdrege with the newspaper. He owned a livery stable in Phelps Center as well as a farm implement house; he sold organs; he was a real estate and loan agent. He later became an extensive landowner and also owned considerable property in Holdrege. Mrs. Hopwood served county superintendent for a time and was one of the first school-teachers in the county.

Native of Pennsylvania

A native of Pennsylvania, T. M. Hopwood was born in 1847 and moved with his parents to Iowa in 1861. Here he grew up on a farm and attended Western College. After his health failed he became a representative of several fire insurance companies. He was married to Mina Woodridge of Minnesota, a graduate of Western College.

The Hopwoods came to Phelps County from Vinton, Iowa. In 1878 T. M. and his brother came into Phelps County across country from the east, driving a team and wagon. Homesteaders in

Kearney County had told them that there was good government land farther west and setting up temporary quarters in Kearney County, they started west on their land-seeking trek.

About three miles over the county line at a point about five miles north of the present village of Funk, they found a vacant half section (Section 340 on which they made a pre-emption filing the next day in Kearney.

Mr. Hopwood, who arrived in the area with a broken arm, a "young but cultured wife," and \$18, had to borrow \$3 from his brother in order to make a filing on two claims. His pre-emption filing on the quarter in section 34, twp. 7, Range 17, cost him \$3 and he also filed a timber claim cornering the pre-emption in section 28, Twp. 7, Range 17, for which he paid \$18.

The first house built on the preemption was a 6x8 sod house into which he and Mrs. Hopwood moved, along with a 12 year old boy.

Following the destruction of the Hopwood sod house as a result of a prairie fire, another larger sod house was built in which Mrs. Hopwood conducted a three months school term. The \$60 was a Godsend for the family whose belongings were destroyed

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by the fire, and that, along with \$100 which he was able to borrow from friends back east, saw them through the winter.

County Commissioner

In the fall of 1878 Mr. Hopwood was elected Phelps County Commissioner, and on December 23 of that year he rode mule-back toward northwest to seek out the county seat of Williamsburg. He hoped to secure a bank bond there and secure signers for same "preparatory to taking of the official examine for county commissioner."

Mr. Hopwood continues: "We went mule-back and alone, and as it was our first trip we had no idea of what the town looked like, and had but a faint idea of where it was, only knowing that it was on the Platte bottom. We took a northwesterly direction and traveled for miles and miles across the rolling prairie looking and longing for the sight of a man, or some sign of habitation, but not a soul nor a house did we pass or see in that long 20-mile ride. Then we came to the site of the grand old Platte River, and on its wide stretch of bottom lands would here and there be seen a modest dwelling, but nothing that led us to believe that we were nearing the county seat.

"Seeing a little white house some distance ahead of us

we went to it hoping to learn the way to Williamsburg. We found the door closed and locked and no one to be seen. Passing around the house we found a south door open. Riding to another nearby house, which we afterwards learned being that of Albert Hanson, Williamsburg postmaster, we inquired where Williamsburg was. To our surprise we were directed to the vacant house we had just left."

Mr. Hopwood managed to get his bond signed after riding several miles up and down the river and visiting homes of the residents and several county officials. The bond was approved and he took his seat on the board in January 1879.

Williamsburg Fading

Williamsburg was beginning to fade away as early as 1878. Mr. Hopwood noted that he saw holes in the prairie here and there, and on inquiry learned that there had been a number of buildings in the settlement, but many had been burned down and several moved away, and nothing but the cellar holes remained. He saw the county safe standing out on the prairie, over 100 yards from the building used as a courthouse. This was the safe for which the county had paid \$1,000. The county treasurer, who at the time was Christopher Jensen, continued to deposit the county funds in the upgraded safe.

Mr. Hopwood later learned that the safe was moved out of the small courthouse in order to move the building. The building was moved, but the safe was never moved back and replaced. The safe had cost the county more than three times over what the building was worth, but said Mr. Hopwood, "It was allowed to sand out and keep vigil, as it were, over the deserted village and over the scene of the county administration which had been so disastrous to the taxpayers and which was corrupt and rotten to the very core."

The Hopwood story begins to move at a more rapid pace from this point on. The same year Mr. Hopwood took his seat as county commissioner, he became an associate editor of the Phelps County Pioneer, published by Bert O. Wilson at Sacramento. With the establishment of the new town of Phelps Center, and the Hopwoods removal there, the newspaper also pulled up stakes and moved to the new town. Soon Mr. Hopwood became sole owner of the newspaper, and the name was changed to the Nebraska Nugget.

Busy Years

The early 1880s were apparently busy years for Mr. Hopwood. The new town of Phelps Center was booming and was "just as sure of a railroad as if we had it." In addition to being

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(Hopwood Continued from page 6)

owner and editor of the newspaper, Mr. Hopwood owned and operated the Phelps Motel in connection with a livery and feed stable "at the corner of Pennsylvania Ave. and Victor Street." A hotel in these days was always on the "American plan" which always meant an eating and hostelry. The Phelps Hotel later became Hopwood's Hotel and on its removal to Holdrege in October 1883, was rechristened "The Arlington Hotel."

That many irons in the fire would seem to be enough headaches for the average man, but Mr. Hopwood could hardly be considered "Average." He also operated a machinery and implement house in Phelps Center, as well as a real estate agency. Another advertisement indicated he sold "cottage organs" to further the culture of the neighborhood.

Mr. Hopwood in a "Nugget" advertisement of July 4, 1883, had 15 farms listed for sale at prices ranging from \$300 to \$1,000 per quarter. During 1883 he built a new home on Illinois Avenue in Phelps Center, and also owned a large barn that was used as a community-gathering place. He still owned his farm in eastern Phelps County, which was rented.

Hopwood was one of the first to pull up stakes at Phelps Center and move to the new town

of Holdrege, when it was apparent that the railroad could not be persuaded to change their route. He was the target of considerable criticism by the die-hards at the county seat, and was accused of being paid off by the railroad to the tune of \$1,000 cash and 10 free lots in the new town of Holdrege. This he denied in no uncertain language in his editorial columns, and naming the perpetrator of the lie as "a species of baboon."

There is no doubt that Hopwood was one of the prime forces in encouraging emigration to the county, and the lush '80s that followed the droughty '70s gave him plenty of reason to extol the virtues of the new country to the outside world through the columns of his newspaper.

Leases Hotel

It appears that by the middle of 1885, Mr. Hopwood had amassed a comfortable amount of this world's goods and he decided to ease up and enjoy the fruits of his labors. In June of 1885, he leased the Arlington Hotel to a Hastings man and planned to devote his time to the newspaper. His account of the transaction was headlined "Milty Has Gone Out."

On Tuesday Mr. J. W. Young, a well-known Hastings man, leased the Arlington Hotel for a term of years, and we, T. M. Hopwood, better known perhaps as "Milty, the Sneak" bowed

ourselves out from grub service. We went in to make money. We tried hard to please. We made the money. Some we pleased and will try our successor. Those we didn't, please forgive, and we ask an interest in your prayers.

We go not from among you, but drive a stake in the west Holdrege to which we tie Mrs. H. and the Boys, Ted and Chet, while we will watch at the corner for those who owe us.

The Nugget, our adopted child; what a flood of thought its name brings us. The Nugget, a little infant taken up while in its swaddling clothes, and petted and fondled; resurrected from the ashes, kicked about from cellar to garret; besmeared with calumny, vituperation and slime for six long years, to at least emerge into a metropolitan sheet with the same old name and the same guiding hand at the helm. With the Nugget we have had lots of fun. Some have tried to call it names; others have tried to ride it down. Hazelett called it bad names. Another fellow said, "There is a place for it in Gosper County." Office seekers have moneyed with it; some could ride it while other couldn't. We even got kicked off our self in one instance, while brother Einsel rode through in a manner so graceful as to even surprise himself.

Sells Nugget Instead

"But hold on, what we

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intended to say was this: From now on we want to give our special attention to our pigs, the boys, Mrs. H and the Nugget. If the paper improves from now on, lay it to the settled condition of the weather, and the lavishing smiles Mrs. H. lavishes upon its editor in payment for retiring from the Arlington Hotel”

Three and one-half years later Mr. Hopwood sold the interest in The Nugget to C. L. Coffman who became manager of the mechanical department. Mr. Hopwood remained as editor, but in March 1889, he and Mrs. Hopwood took off for the southwest. He remained for a time in Raton, New Mexico, where according to word received here, he benefited in health from the change of climate. From Las Vegas, New Mexico in May, “decidedly improved in health.”

In June of 1889, an

advertisement in the Nugget offered most of Mr. Hopwood’s holdings for sale: The Arlington Hotel, his residence property in west Holdrege, a farm in Anderson Township, his school land (320 acres) in Anderson Township, a lease on a section of school land in Colorado, and town lots in Holdrege “on your own terms.”

According to the advertisement Mr. Hopwood made the offers “A Good Chance for investment” on account of his failing health.

The name Hopwood began to fade from the news along about the turn of the century. However, in 1897, when Mr. Hopwood was in his early 50s, one of the newspapers reported that he was thinking seriously of making a trip to the Klondike in the spring. In the spring of the following year (1888) he and Mrs. Hopwood, along, with Mr. Hopwood’s sister, Bell, left for Kear-

ney and expected to go to Seattle from there. He was still undecided on the Klondike trip, and whether he made his trek to the gold fields was never revealed in later issues of the newspaper.

*Above from the 1983
Centennial Edition of the
Holdrege Daily Citizen*

Research on the Internet revealed that Thomas Milton Hopwood died in Seattle, Washington in 1934. He had resided in Washington for several years selling real estate. He and his first wife, Mina Wooldridge Hopwood, were divorced sometime before 1900. In June of 1900 T. M. Hopwood was residing in Holdrege and Mina Hopwood was a farmer in North Dakota. In December of 1900 Mr. Hopwood married Catherina Sophia Bonning. It appears that the Hopwoods resided in Seattle, WA most of their married life.

Don't Let Your Girl Go To Hastings

Taking a girl to Hastings was a serious offense for one Holdrege man in the fall of 1908.

William Fox, identified as a former employee of the sewer contractors, was arrested for inducing a 17-year-old girl who lived in east Holdrege to “accompany him to Hastings

last Friday night.”

Fox apparently left her there because he came home alone the following Tuesday. The girl did not return until Wednesday.

Fox was arrested and held until the girl’s father, who lived in Omaha, arrived in Holdrege.

Charges were pending, but later editions of the Citizen don’t show any charges being filed.

Customer Wasn't Always Right

This story happened in the summer of 1901: C. A. Jarvis had an implement shop in East Avenue. He had sold a buggy to Doc Brown, a farmer from South of Atlanta, but the paint on the buggy wasn't satisfactory.

Jarvis Apparently not wanting an unsatisfactory customer told Brown to bring in the buggy and he would have it repainted or "settle with him in some other satisfactory manner."

Brown brought the buggy in, Jarvis had it repainted and Brown took it home.

A few days later, Brown smashed the buggy up in some

kind of accident. He brought the remains in and asked Jarvis to give him a new buggy in replacement of it, Jarvis said no. Then the trouble began.

Every time Brown came to town, he dropped in on Jarvis. If Jarvis had a customer, Brown would stand around, find fault with the goods and "make sarcastic remarks, claiming his purchase from Jarvis had proven worthless and not as represented," the Citizen said.

One day, Jarvis, had enough. He ordered Brown out of his place. Brown responded by picking up a chair and attempting to strike Jarvis over the head. Jarvis blocked the

attack and knocked Brown down.

"Brown arose and made for his antagonist," The citizen reported. "Jarvis again knocking him down and continued to do so to the extent of five times, the fifth time Mr. Brown failed to respond. The fourth time the floor hit Mr. Brown, he was kicked several times by Jarvis."

When Brown finally managed to get out of the shop, he had a warrant sworn out for Jarvis' arrest, Jarvis later pleaded guilty, but was fined only one dollar.

Drunkenness Leads To City Crime Report

Drunkenness was probably the most common crime in the 1900s—at least that's what a couple of reports to the city council shown us.

A police judge's report submitted in 1902 showed 17 persons had been arraigned for various

crimes. Five were for drunkenness, one for fighting, one for provoking assault, one for discharging firearms, eight for gambling and one for fast driving.

Strangers In The Box

Come look with me inside this drawer,
In this box I've often seen,
With the pictures, black and white
Faces proud, still, serene.

I wish I knew the people
These strangers in the box;
Their names and all their memories
Are lost among my socks.

I wonder what their lives were like;
How did they spend their days?
About their special times and lives
I'll never know their ways.

If only someone had taken time
To tell who, what, or when;
These faces of my heritage
Would come to life again.

Could this become the fate
Of pictures we take today?
The faces and memories
Someday to be passed away?

Make time to save your stories,
Seize the opportunity when it knocks,
Or someday you and yours could be...
The strangers in the box.

--by *Pamela A. Harazim*

