

Phelps Helps



Volume 12, Issue 4

Winter 2003

President's Message

Holdrege Area Genealogy sponsored a workshop given by Bobbi King. She had an excellent program. Thanks to all of you who helped with lunch, registration, mailing invitations and set up.

Holdrege Area Genealogy Club will be sponsoring a Christmas Tree at the Nebraska Prairie Museum's Holiday program December 6 & 7. Ada Hinson and Margaret Stutheit will be in charge of decorating the tree. We hope many will be able to attend.

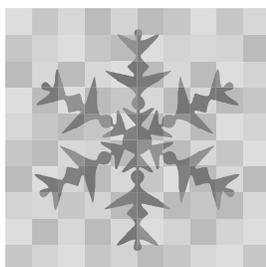
Soon we will be starting a new year. Please remember each one of you are important to our organization. Everyone has something to contribute. Working together and contributing new ideas will help us have a great year.

Your President, Sandra Slater

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

The public is welcome!

Visit us on the Web!
Phelps Helps Web Page via
[http://home.alltel.net/
ps60313](http://home.alltel.net/ps60313)



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Crandell Family Letters

Letters from Burnet and Ida Crandell

(These letters were written when the Crandell family resided in Holdrege Nebraska between 1888-1894. Burnet Crandell worked for the F. Johnson Store which sold clothing and other miscellaneous merchandise in Holdrege.)

December 21, 1892, letter from Ida Crandell:

Dear father--The clock has just struck nine but I don't look for Burnie before 10:00. Our way of living is so different from what we were raised. When we are compelled to go to bed so late we have to get of late. Have not been getting up until seven lately. Burnie did not get down to dinner, yesterday so I took him up a lunch. Had made arrangements with a little girl to stay with Susie while I went to have a tooth fixed that the filling had broken off of and was bothering me for considerable. Today he took a lunch along and did not try to get away for dinner. Was so tired at super time. We will be so glad when Christmas is past as the rush will be over and he can take a good breathing spell once more. Mr. Harrison gave us a big Christmas Gobbler and I guess we will roast it some day next week and invite the ministers folks to help us eat it. It would be grand if you and

(Crandell Continued on page 9)

New Books On Our Shelf

Given by Ben and Dixie Boell

- Historic Grand Haven and Ottawa County Michigan.

Given by Holdrege Area Genealogy Club

- Phillips County Kansas Settlers prior to 1900
- Civil War Veterans in Phillips County Kansas

Given by Floyd and Sally Massey

- Phillips County Kansas Marriages, Book A 1873-1886

Given by Greg Hamm

- 1916 Kearney County, Nebraska Atlas

Given by Jean Meyer

- 5 Orphan Home Books

Given by Mary Lou Abramson

- Holdrege United Methodist Church directories

Given by Lila Johnson

- Life's Flavor on a Swedish Farm by Willis Lindquist

Given by Marjorie Dyas

- Land Records and Genealogy Symposium book 2003

Given by Bruce and Roger Peterson

- 1904 Dawson County, Nebraska Atlas

Given by Ada Hinson

- Phelps County Rural Directory 1991

Other Donations

- 100th Anniversary of the Mascot-Bethel United Methodist Church, September 18th, 1988
- My Story by Whanton T. Funk
- Farm and Home Directories, Phelps County, Nebraska, 1989, 1992, 1995, 1997, 1998, 1999
- The Storm of March 29th, 1976, by Nebraska Public Power District

More Microfilm Added to our Collection

We have purchased two more 1930 Nebraska census microfilms. We now have the following films available at our library: Adams, Antelope, Arthur, Banner, Boyd, Buffalo, Butler, Chase, Cass, Cedar, Cherry, Custer, Dakota, Dawson, Dundy, Franklin Frontier, Fillmore, Furnas, Gage, Garden, Garfield, Gosper, Grant Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Hayes, Johnson, Keith, Keya Paha, Kimball, Kearney, Knox, Lincoln, Loop, McPherson, Merrick, Morrill, Nemaha, Nuckolls, Pawnee, Perkins, Phelps, Pierce, Red Willow, Platte, Rock, Polk, Saline, Richardson, Valley, Wayne, Wheeler, Webster, York.

Harlan County, Nebraska

FROM THE FIRST PIONEERS TO SETTLE AT FREEWATER

1879 -

CHARLES R. POTTER

Charles R. Potter was born in New York State on March 3, 1840. He lived in Owego, on the Susquehanna River until he was 20 years old, at which time he went west to Illinois. It was here in 1860 he married Jennie McDougal and the following spring moved to Grand View, Iowa. He then responded to his country's call and enlisted in Co. F. of Iowa. After recovering from wounds he took charge of the Magazines of the Detroit arsenal.

At the close of the Civil War returned to Iowa to live near Muscatine until the fall of 1875 when he moved west to Red Cloud, Nebraska, settling on the old Indian stockade south of town on Pony Creek. In 1879 he moved his family to the Freewater Community: It was here he took a homestead on the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 23 where he built a store near the center of the section. This building measured 16x24 feet and Mr. Potter stocked it with a few good which he had brought from Red Cloud. As he was building his homestead he sold goods to his neighbors and travelers.

The part of his building used for the store measured 20 X 52 feet, 18 feet high with six living rooms over the store. After four years, he built a warehouse along the west side, running the full length of the store and a residence wing was built at the same time. The entire building measured 32X54 feet.

The Freewater store was large and well stocked, containing most of the needs of the early settlers, consisting of groceries, dry goods, clothing, hardware, implements,, such as cultivators, wagon, plows and also the much needed drugs used at that time.

A young Doctor boarded at the store much of the time. This store was much appre-

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.

ciated by the homesteaders of the area.

Soon after the store and residence was completed, a blacksmith shop was erected. The homesteaders could fill most of their needs there. They found the Freewater store a place to sell and trade their produce for much

needed items. Mr. Potter raised a number of hogs, which he butchered and cured the meat. He had an abundance of meat for the customers, thus occasionally he took meat, by train, to sell in Hol-drege.

Soon after the town of Wilcox began, Mr. Potter moved there to build a store lot 10, block 3, which he used for general merchandise. Over this store he finished a room to be used as a hall, known as potter's Hall, which was the only one in town until November 1, 1890.

C. R. Potter built a flour mill on the south side of the Kansas City and Omaha railroad tracks, near the southwest corner of the east half of the northwest quarter of section 31, Oneida Township, in the summer of 1889. This mill had a capacity of 75 barrels of flour per day. It burned in August of 1892. Mr. Potter moved his store from lot 10, block 3, into the place where the mill had been burned and put flouring machinery in it, which was completed September 1, 1893. This mill had a capacity of 65 barrels per day. In 1895 the flour mill and store was destroyed in one of the rash of fires that Wilcox suffered. Mr. Potter opened a store in Ragan which he sold to Charles Holmes in 1896.

The first part of March of 1907 C. R. Potter moved to one of his farms south of town from his residence south of the Methodist parsonage in Wilcox,. The last twelve years of his life was spent in Alma. It was here that Mrs. Potter died on August 1, 1931 at the age of 91 years, at the home of his son E. L Potter who lived north of the park in Wilcox.

Welcome New Member!

ERNEST PARIS, 885 Yucca St. Bullhead City, AZ 86429

Loomis, Nebraska—Past & Present

Loomis Sentinel, November 31, 1930

This beautiful up to date little burg was once a dusty prairie, the roving place of antelope Coyotes and buffaloes. Its history is the story of hardships, privations suffered by the hopeful pioneers who preceded the railroads and even passable roads.

The whole of Phelps County was once under water as attested to by the hundreds of small shells that have been found, none of them over a half inch long. For 300 years the land was owned by the Pawnees although former title belonged to France. However, it was sold to the United States with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803.

The land that Loomis is situated was part of the territory ceded to the U. S., Government in 1834 by the Indians.

Most of the early settlers homesteaded lands along the rivers and creeks because of easy access to food and water; so it was not until 1876 that many people settled here. A colony of Swedes arrived in Phelps Center land office that year and two weeks later began their homes near the present sight of Loomis.

The colony consisted of the following families, Dahlstrom, Gustave Johnson, Stoenfelds, August Carlson, Anderson and John Johnson. As the best way to give you an example of the life of these pioneers, we will consider personal experiences of a member of one of these families. He relates that the water supply had to be hauled five miles from Phelps by oxen and sledge. Not very fast work you will admit. Their nearest post office was at Kearney, which was also the chief trading center since it was the nearest railroad town until 1884.

A well was soon dug with pick and shovel which eliminated the tedious trip to Phelps Center. His family was one of the first to enjoy a frame house in the county of "soddies". They raised sod corn and broom corn. The first year the corn was destroyed twice by grasshoppers; The second year these dreaded clouds of insects appeared again to repeat the distraction of the previous year. The whole family gathered buffalo bones by wagon load to trade for necessities in Kearney. He said there were many antelopes, coyotes and rattlesnakes.

This man's father purchased a yoke of oxen from a Mr. Crandall who had used them in freighting goods to and from California. Crandall bought a horse-operated threshing machine in 1879. At one place it took two weeks to thresh fifty acres of 10 to 15 bushel of the acre wheat.

Times were so hard that one threshing bill was paid with a set of single harnesses. Mr. J. O. Johnson whose experiences are related above finished his tale of saying: Don't forget to tell your readers that I rode a white steer to the first fair in Phelps county and won first prize. I had begun to ride him when he was six months old and rode him until he was almost two.

Nebraska Nugget

Phelps Center, Nebraska

Wednesday, February 7, 1882

Phelps Center was County Seat of Phelps County before Holdrege was started.

Mr. R. Seaman, who is with Halgren and Hansen, the successful land agents of Kearney, was in town last week. He stated that the firm had sold over 50,000 acres of land in the past six months and that the greater part of it was sold in Phelps County, Nebraska. Nearly all of this land will be occupied by actual settlers this spring.

Six new building will be erected immediately in Phelps. No town or county ever had a bigger boom than is now in prospect for Phelps in the year 1883. All over Eastern Nebraska the story is being circulated that Phelps County is the garden spot of the west, and it has created an anxiety and curiosity to see which can only be satisfied by the actual survey of our rich beautiful and cheap lands.

The certainty of the railroad which is to be built through Center of this great rich Divide, between, Hastings and Arapahoe, this coming spring, adds a new charm to our country, and already the start of a long line of immigration has reached us. They are coming not only from eastern Nebraska but from Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, Ohio and all the Far Eastern and Southern states. Not

long since, a letter reached us from New Jersey, 2000 miles away from a Negro subscriber saying buy me a lot. I will be there in the spring. Seventy lots have been sold and occupied in the town of Phelps in the past year. Almost every mail we are called upon for letters of information or sample copies of the Nugget and our citizens may rest assured that none of these calls are neglected. We cordially invite home seekers to come and see us. Come and get acquainted with our people, examine our soil, and see our products. Look at our schools, our churches our market advantages, and our natural resources and outlets. Phelps County people are proud of their home and they want you to see it.

The best way to reach Phelps County is by rail to Kearney, from which point a daily stage runs to Phelps, our flourishing County Seat.

We already have 3,500 inhabitants, twelve post offices and five different trading points.

Phelps has two hotels either of which affords good accommodations.

To give the reader some idea of our agricultural resources and productions we might state that \$30,000 worth of implements were sold at Phelps Center in the year 1882,

Come and see us and you will stay.

2004 Membership Dues

This will be your last newsletter for 2003. We hope you have enjoyed the numerous articles and information provided in these publications.

We need and appreciate any new ideas or requests you have for the Phelps Helps. It is your publication. Queries and articles from our members are welcome.

Dues for 2004 are \$10 and checks should be sent to Holdrege Area Genealogy Club, % Ada Hinson, Box 164, Holdrege, Nebraska 68948.

Nebraska Nugget

Holdrege, Nebraska - June 10, 1893

Duval Jackson of Wallace, a brother of the Nugget man, visited on Thursday.

Dr. E. H. Maberly is out of the Cheyenne Branch doing dental work.

The Misses Cooper, of Benkelman, visited Holdrege, Friends, this week.

The ladies of the Congregational church met with Mrs. H. Randall Thursday afternoon.

Hon. J. E. Cocran, lately of McCook, is not practicing law at Salt Lake City, Utah.

The Social Circle of the Presbyterian Church met at Mrs. Sheldon's.

Misses Mabel, Fannie and Lulu Johnson are visiting Mr. and Mrs. Philip Swanson at Bertrand, Nebraska.

Rev. Clark on Sunday last completed his first year in the pulpit of the Congregational church of Holdrege, Nebraska.

The Nugget is printing the bar dockets for the June term of the Phelps county district court, which convenes June 22.

If you contemplate having some new stationery printed we ask that you give this office a trial. Special pains will be taken neat and attractive work.

FOR SALE—A house and lot in West Holdrege. House is 24 by 24 with kitchen 10 by 14. Price \$1200. Inquire of T. M. Hopwood or John Herbert.

George D. Benjamin returned Monday after an absence of two months in Lincoln where he was under medical treatment. He is much improved in health.

Mrs. A. J. Shafer is in Chicago viewing the fair. Afterward she will visit relatives in Pennsylvania and New York, and will not return until fall.

The late high prices have called out all the marketable hogs in the country and it is certain that prices for pork will stay up among the clouds for the next year or two.

Editor A. H. Davis, of the Wellfleet Argus, was a caller Wednesday. Al is one of the liveliest and most popular boys in this part of the state, and is always welcome wherever he goes.

Ground oil cake by the ton or 100 pounds at Snow Brothers.

Wall paper at Norris and Co.'s Drug store. The very latest designs and shades.

There will be a grand Fourth of July celebration held at Rock falls. Everybody cordially invited.

WANTED -To exchange stock or western land for a residence property in Holdrege. J. H. Goodrich

Dame Rumer is responsible for the report that there will be a fashionable connubial knot tying not far from the brick blocks on West Ave before another week ends its tedious rounds---Citizen

Miss Hatty Chittenden returned to her home in Holdrege last Sunday Morning. She was accompanied by Miss Julia Larsen, who spent a portion of the week visiting before returning to her home in Kansas. Minden Gazette.

United States Senator Allen will speak in Holdrege June 20. In all probability the meeting will be in the opera house, but whether in the afternoon or evening has not yet been decided. Senator Allen has made a good impression on the public since his election last winter to the Senate and should be greeted by a large audience on the 20th. He is making a tour of the state under the auspices of the Independent state central committee.

Do not despair of having some fun this summer just because you cannot take in the world's fair. Maybe by tending right to business you can get out of debt. That would be fun enough to last a lifetime. But then you should take a few days off, anyway, and go fishing, camping, swimming, boating or hunting. Take the children along, plenty of victuals and bedding and bait. Turn yourself loose and you will come home feeling like a new man.

Frank Taggart, formerly a Hastings attorney and at one time a member of the Nebraska legislature, has been acquitted on the charge of furnishing a revolver to a client imprisoned in the Cheyenne, Wyoming jail. Proceeding to disbar him from practice has been commenced, however.

Names of Pioneers in Phelps County

Information probably given in 1960

Taken from a guestbook given by Everett Watters

Information is listed by NAME; DATE when came to Phelps Co; ADDRESS; and any COMMENTS.

- Anderson, A. J. Anderson**, June 9, 1876, Loomis, NE, all my life, first boy born in Phelps County, Nebraska.
- Anderson, John A.**, 1876, Bertrand, NE, lived here all my life.
- Anderson, Mrs. John**, 1887, lived her all may life.
- Anderson, K. Leonard**, 1899, Galesburg, IL, 450 miles
- Anderson, Nancy**, Galesburg, IL, 450 miles
- Anderson, Roy A.**, 1873, Loomis, NE
- Baily, Charlotte V.**, 1885, Bertrand, NE, 75 years in NE
- Bankencamp, Harry**, 1875, Loomis, NE, resided in community all his life.
- Bankencamp, John W.**, 1881, 1884 Holdrege, NE, 75 years
- Bard, Frank**, 1887, Bertrand, NE
- Boelman, Charles J.**, 1887, Bertrand, NE
- Bord, Margaret Boelman**, 1892
- Carlson, Mrs. Oscar A.**, 1892, Bertrand, NE
- Carlson, Oscar A.**, 1883, Bertrand, NE
- Clark, Mrs. G. W.**, 1882, Bertrand, NE. lived 40 years in community.
- Dannehl, Anna**, 1879, lived here
- Davis, Mrs. J. S.**, 24 April, 1879
- Cole, Burr**, Sept. 14. 1878, 81 years old
- Duff, Charles H.**, 26 Jan, 1882, Bertrand, Nebraska. 78 years in community, all my life.
- Gainsforth, Jessie Livingston**, 1886, Ogallala, NE, Bertrand, NE
- Goosie, Albain**, 1901, Oxford, NE
- Hanson, Albert S.**, 1888, came to Bertrand, lived here 45 years
- High, Alfreda**, 1889, Bertrand, NE, 71 years old, born on homestead.
- High, Carl A.**, Sod House 14x14
- High, Elmer**, 1884, Bertrand, Nebraska, 76 years in community, all my life.
- High, Nellie J.**, Oct. 11, 1887, sod house 74 years old
- Hosick, Mrs. W. O.** Mesa AZ, 1200 (guest)
- Hosick, W. O.**, 1889, 1200, Mesa, AZ, 1200 miles (guest)
- Johnson, Ayda**, 1889, Wahoo, Nebraska (guest)
- Johnson, Ellery K.**, Silver Spring, MO, 1411 miles. (guest)
- Johnson, Lois High**, June 17, 1920, Silver Spring, MO, 1411 miles. (guest)
- Junkin, Russell J.**, 1890, Bertrand, NE
- Kruback, Mrs. Deloras**, 1934, Ottumwa, Iowa, formerly Bertrand, 475 miles.
- Lappert, Anton W.** 1880, Holyoke, Colo., (guest)
- Lappert, John C.**, 1889, Loomis, NE
- Lappert, Mrs. Katherine**, 13 May 1665, came to Phelps Co. March 1776, 74 years old.
- Larson, Harry**, 1881, Loomis, NE, 75 years in county.
- Longnecker, L. C.**, 1878, Indianola, NE (guest)

(Pioneers Continued on page 8)

(Pioneers Continued from page 7)

McDowell, John, Mountain Home (guest)

McDowell, Harvey and Mary (guest)

McPeck, Mrs. John, Redlands, CA (guest)

Moffatt, Mrs. Julia, 1877, Bertrand, NE, 83 years old, in Gosper and Phelps Co.

Moore, Frank, 1883, Holdrege, NE, 68 years old,

Moore, Julia Floyd, 1880, Smithfield, NE, born 16 miles south of Elm Creek, NE

Morse, A. A., 1884, Oxford, NE (guest)

Nelson, Christine, 1867, Bertrand, NE

Nordensram, 1886 Bertrand, NE

Nutzman, Alfred, Jan. 8, 1876, Bertrand, Nebraska, resided here 62 years

Netzman, Mrs. Clara, Oct. 1882, Bertrand, NE, 77 years old

Olson, Lincoln, 14 Dec 1887

Olson, Mrs. Lincoln, March 25, 1893, 1650 miles (guest)

Opitz, Viola Schroedr, 1885, lived in Community 74 years, Bertrand, NE

Peterson, Jascar, 12 Apr 1882, Bertrand, NE

Peterson, Warner, 1890, Durham Calif. (guest)

Phillips, Ralph D., 1888, Portland, Oregon, 1600 miles (guest)

Roepke, Mrs. Emma, 1872

Sand, Justice A., Longmont, Colo., Born in School House 56, Bertrand, NE March 28, 1885.

Sand, William, 1879, Holdrege, NE, came here before the railroad was built, 76 years old.

Sandstrom, August, 1873, lived her 79 years

Sandstrom, Emily, 1878, Bertrand, NE

Sandstrom, Etta, December 19, 1885, lived here all her 75 years

Schroeder, Ernie, 1890, Imperial, NE (guest)

Sodergren, E. A., 1893, Holdrege, NE (guest)

Sodergren, ED, 1881, Holdrege, NE (guest)

Spring, Pansy Hill, 1889, lived in community 43 years, Bertrand, NE

Stein, Mrs. G. D., 1929, Imperial, Nebraska

Stein, H. D. G., 1928, Imperial, NE

Swanson, Mrs. Emily, Nov. 25, 1889, Bertrand, NE, 70 years old

Swanson, Theodore, 1890, Still lives on place he was born.

Terson, Willie, 12 Apr 1882, resided in Bertrand community all my life.

Tregar, Oscar, 1869, 1880 came to community, 80 years old

Wickwire, Mr. Ray, June 1891, came to Bertrand, 5 Jun 1912

Watters, Roy S., Dec. 31, 1881, Bertrand, NE, 78 years old, born in a dug out.

Womack, Harry, 1916, Pueblo Colorado, visited here off and on for 44 years.

Womack, Carlson, 1883, Josie, Denver Colo. Left Bertrand in 1910

Wood, Lottie L., 1877, Loomis, NE

Morehouse and Banzette

Early Northeast Settlers

From Holdrege Daily Citizen Souvenir Historical Edition 1958

Two of the earliest northeast Phelps County settlers were John Morehouse and Henry Banzette, who came to Nebraska from Pennsylvania. They took claims in Phelps County and settled here in 1875.

By the year 1879 these men were spoken of as the most prosperous farmers in that part of the county, owning 400 acres of land, 130 of which were broken. In that Year they had 100 acres of fine wheat, 20 acres of "as good corn as you ever saw." Besides oats. Potatoes, etc.

Jonas Peterson was another early northeast settler, coming here in the spring of 1876. By 1879 his holdings comprised 1,100 acres with 320 broken. Andrew and A. M. Olson came in the summer of 1876, and had 200 acres of their section broken by 1879. Andrew J. Olson had, through his efforts, secured a post office for that section of the country named Oscar with received daily mail.

A correspondent for the Sacramento paper from the Oscar neighborhood, wrote:

"Since the above pioneers struck up their little sod homes, hundreds have followed, and today, only four years after the first sod was turned, hardly a square foot of government land can be found all the country around, except in the sand hills, which is worthless, except for pasture."

"All that is necessary to insure us all success and prosperity is to attend to our own business and keep out of debt. Debt at 10 percent is what crashed and drove many of us from pleasant homes in eastern states, and let us not forgets it; The credit system has cursed more then it has blessed. Remember this and your goods and your chattels, your farms, and your homes will not be sold at the Sheriff's sale"

(Crandell Continued from page 1)

Ma and all the rest could come in and eat it with us. Burnie is nearly well of his dyspepsia though I hardly dare brag. His stomach does not hurt him a particle and he has not been able to say that before since we were married. He doctored right for nearly a year and then I have been careful about seasoning vituals high and he thinks the change from steady office work has helped a good deal.

I sent Annie and Jennie (her sisters) a couple of little books for Christmas. Wish I could remember you all with something but by the time our Dr. bills and coal bills, grocery bills and dry goods, and a hundred other bills are paid there are not many cents left to quarrel over. I realize more and more that I cost a good deal to live in this country. Our room is rented again after being empty several months. I made thirty dollars off of it the past year, not counting the work or the washing I hired done, but I think it cleared twenty five dollars easy. The dollar a week I get will pay for all the washing I hire and then I will have left from 25 to 50 cents. I saved up room rent money and have bought a Webster's Encyclopedic dictionary, and will surprise Burnie with it for his Christmas. It cost me \$9.50.

Have you seen the Christian Herald advertisement for the bible and the paper a year for two dollars? They made the same offer last year and Burnie got it. It is a real nice little bible and the paper is splendid, so we think. I have thought it would be nice if you could get it and give the bible to Annie as she has none. I will close with love to all. Your Loving Daughter, Ida



Holdrege Area Genealogy Club
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Holdrege, NE 68949