

Phelps Helps



Volume 13, Issue 1

Spring 2005

Meetings held at the Phelps County Historical Museum on the first Monday of the month at 2:00 PM.

The public is welcome!

NEW! Phelps Helps Web Page location:

<http://users.atcjet.net/psdesigns>



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First Phelps County Attorney still makes Holdrege Home October 9, 1933

Judge Gus Norberg, who still lives in Holdrege and practices law and is referee in bankruptcy for the Hastings district, was the first county attorney in Phelps county.

Gus Norberg, then a struggling young attorney, flung out his shingle in Phelps Center. He and S. A. Dravo, who still is a resident of Holdrege, were the opposing attorneys in all county law suits.

Mr. Norberg, and Mr. Dravo moved to Holdrege soon after the "Magic City" was platted. As Norberg was one of the active participants in the moving of the county seat from Phelps Center to Holdrege, his reward was the election to the high office of County Attorney, soon after the creation of the new law.

Phelps County Courthouse

Was just a packing box to Little Johnnie Edlund October 9, 1933—Holdrege Citizen Newspaper

"What you got there." shouted a barefoot pioneer lad, carrying a plowshare across the dusty prairie to the Pearson blacksmith shop near Moses Hill, as a sled passed him on the slippery grass, loaded with what looked like a old packing box.

"There?" yelled the driver, a man named Stonefelt, prodding his team on, "That's the courthouse." And he disappeared in the direction of the few stragglng houses that marked Phelps Center.

The lad was little Johnnie Edlund, today, one of Holdrege's pioneers, whose most interesting story is the tale of the earliest courthouse move from Williamsburg to Phelps Center.

That later move, when the county seat was brought to Holdrege is a much more familiar tale, but belongs to the later day.

The first county proceedings printed elsewhere show that the first courthouse was located in section 14, township 8, north of range 19, west of the sixth p.m. and it was there that the little "packing box: stood.

Mr. Edlund says it was just big enough for a man to get inside, sit down and check his books, while the first taxes were paid in through the window. It was five or six years later that without formality of an election several of the settlers ordered stonefelt to bring it down to the little Phelps County settlement.

The Year 1904

Maybe this will boggle your mind. The year is 1904 . one hundred years ago. What a difference a century makes!

Here are some of the U.S. statistics for 1904:

The average life expectancy in the U.S. was 47 years.

Only 14 percent of the homes in the U.S. had a bathtub.

Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone.

A three-minute call from Denver to New York City cost eleven dollars.

There were only 8,000 cars in the U.S., and only 144 miles of paved roads.

The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph.

Alabama, Mississippi, Iowa, and Tennessee were each more heavily populated than California.

With a mere 1.4 million residents, California was only the 21st most populous state in the Union.

The tallest structure in the world was the Eiffel Tower! .

The average wage in the U.S. was 22 cents an hour.

The average U.S. worker made between \$200 and \$400 per year.

A competent accountant

could expect to earn \$2000 per year,

A dentist \$2,500 per year,

A veterinarian between \$1,500 and \$4,000 per year, and a mechanical engineer about \$5,000 per year.

More than 95 percent of all births in the U.S. took place at home.

Ninety percent of all U.S. physicians had no college education.

Instead, they attended medical schools, many of which were condemned in the press and by the government as "substandard."

Sugar cost four cents a pound.

Eggs were fourteen cents a dozen.

Coffee was fifteen cents a pound.

Most women only washed their hair once a month, and used borax or egg yolks for shampoo.

Canada passed a law prohibiting poor people from entering the country for any reason.

The five leading causes of death in the U.S. were:

Pneumonia and influenza
Tuberculosis
Diarrhea
Heart disease
Stroke

The American flag had 45 stars.

Arizona, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Hawaii, and Alaska hadn't been admitted to the Union yet.

The population of Las Vegas, Nevada, was 30!!!

Crossword puzzles, canned beer, and iced tea hadn't been invented. There was no Mother's Day or Father's Day.

Two of 10 U.S. adults couldn't read or write.

Only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated high school.

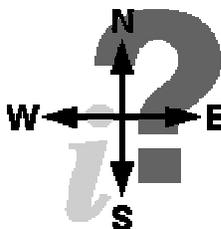
Marijuana, heroin, and morphine were all available over the counter at corner drugstores.

According to one pharmacist, "Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, regulates the stomach and bowels, and is, in fact, a perfect guardian of health." (Shocking!)

Eighteen percent of households in the U.S. had at least one full-time servant or domestic.

There were only about 230 reported murders in the entire U.S.

And I forwarded this from someone else without having to type it myself in a matter of seconds! Try to imagine what it may be like in another 100 years . It staggers the mind.



Harlan County, Nebraska

CARTER, NEBRASKA

A copy of this story of Carter, Harlan County was brought in by Sally Massey. The writer is unknown. It was probably written in the 1960s. The Carter School building was moved into Kearney County beside the old Salem Church. The building was used for a church school run by the Fletcher family for many years. Now both of these building are on the historical register.

This is a story of Carter, Nebraska, 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. The town of Carter was built near this place. A grain elevator was erected in 1906 and soon afterwards a lumber yard 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 Johnsons made their home in three 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. Previous to the 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 stock yards 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

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.

south of the river to trade in Carter.

Around 1912 the farmers began to buy automobiles. Fords, Overlands, Hupmobiles, Studebakers and Maxwells were some of the car makes. They could not 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, both of which were the life blood 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 to a dollar. Nels Peterson was moderator, Peter Berquist, director and John Gahley, Treasurer. A sod schoolhouse was erected 7 miles northwest of Orleans near the creek which was then named School Creek.

Fifteen pupils 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 the six month 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 \$5.50 in the middle of the section and a frame building was erected for \$633. In 1910 a two-room school was built in Carter with the intention of having two teachers, one for the grades and one for 9th and 10 grades but re-

(Harlan County Continued on page 8)

New Members & Their Queries



1. Nancy Evans
25 South Walnut Grove
Emporia, KS 66801
Looking for information on Lars and Anna Sherdeen who came to a Phelps County in the late 1800s. Their children were William and Ella Nora Sherdeen. Ella died in 1936 and is buried at Moses Hill Cemetery, Phelps County, Nebraska. This family lived in Center township about 7 miles north of Holdrege, NE
2. Sarah Firehammer
17108 Mayfair Ct.
Granger, IN 46530-7488
Would like to share information with anyone researching these Phelps and Harlan County, Nebraska families: SKOOG, BERGSTROM, MCNEIL, LENEY, POWELL, LINDSTROM, MAGNUSON AND HAINEY. Looking for descendants of John August JOHNSON (1834 Sweden - 1915 Nebraska) married first. ?. Son Carl Alfred JOHNSON. Married 2nd 1880 in Nebraska, Sophia ABRAHAM; DAU Adla. Adla's half brother was Emil NELSON. Associated Surnames: BORG, MCNEIL, LENEY.
3. Gloria Marshall Borgrink
41180 Bridges Farm Lane
Leesburg, VA 20175
I am interested in the family of my great grandparents, Richard and Nancy Matilda Marshall and the family of their daughter Eliza Marshall Phillips and her husband Joseph Albert (Bert") Phillips. The Marshalls lived in Phelps County with their daughter and family in the 1900s. I would be interested in corresponding with anyone who is researching this family, especially descendants of Eliza and Bert Phillips.
4. Barbara Liedike
5369 Country Heights Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80917
Barbaraliedtke@yahoo.com
Researching KNAGGS, SYDENHAM, KNISPEL, MOTT, KOPF, MUSGROVE OR MUSGRAVE
5. Trevor Cobeldick
P. O. Box 13320
Johnsonville
Wellington, New Zealand
Trevor Cobelick has given the library a short history of the Jabez COBELDICK family that once resided in Phelps County, Nebraska. If any one has information on the Cobeldick family, please contact him.

Microfilmed Newspapers Available

In the Don O. Lindgren Library at the Nebraska Prairie Museum located just north of Holdrege, Nebraska

Holdrege Area Genealogy Club has purchased seven rolls of early newspapers of Holdrege, Nebraska and the surrounding area. A microfilm reader is available. Below is a complete list of available newspapers on microfilm.

Harlan County Journal August 27 1897 to January 13, 1928 (7 rolls)
Orleans Chronicle June 9, 1892 to May 9th, 1913 (4 rolls)
Wilcox Herald April 5th, 1895 to February 10 1921 (4 rolls)
Elm Creek Beacon June 10th 1898 to March 28th, 1919 (3 rolls)
Harlan County Democrat, July 13th, 1895 to June 13th 1902 (4 rolls)
Republican City Ranger, August 18th, 1905 to June 21, 1912 (2 rolls)

The Ragan Weekly News, September 27, 1895 to September 19, 1902
Wilcox Post, January 5th 1893 to December 28, 1894 (1 roll)
The Phelps County Historical Society has the original newspapers of the Holdrege Progress and the Holdrege Daily Citizen. They also have these Holdrege newspapers on microfilm.
The Nebraska Nugget February 7th, 1883 to June 14th 1887 (3 rolls)
The Holdrege Progress September 3, 1897 to May 5th 1900 (1 roll)
Holdrege Progress January 32, 1909 to August 11, 1910 (1 roll)
Holdrege Citizen, December 2nd, 1887 to August 31, 1900
The Nebraska Nugget February 7, 1883 to June 14, 1887

Civil War Veteran Celebrates Birth

Popular Holdrege Physician Who Is Eighty-one, Talks Of The Early Days

Holdrege newspaper 15 April 1926

On Friday, April 16th, Dr. S. F. Sanders will celebrate his eighty-first birthday. The doctor has been under the weather more or less all winter but is feeling much better at this time.

In conversation with a representative of the paper recently, Dr. Sanders recalled his first visit to Holdrege, in 1884. About that time the Prohibition Party was quite active and in Goodhope, Illinois, where the doctor practiced medicine for twenty years, the Sanders home was the stopping place of Prohibition speakers. Upon the initial visit he came across a man whom he had heard speak and entertained in his home. They renewed acquaintance, the man borrowed a dollar, and when they met again a few hours later the man had become gloriously drunk on the doctors dollar.

Dr. Sanders received his medical training in Illinois. He spent three years as an apprentice in the doctor's office prior to taking up the work in the medical college. In 1868 he began to practice of his profession, coming of Holdrege, in 1888.

He has always kept abreast of the times traveled extensively, attending conventions whenever he felt that by doing so he would be better qualified to his

practice. The first convention he ever attended was held in Louisville, Kentucky in 1865.

Dr. Sanders took his first airplane ride some time last summer and is now quite a fan. He has been looking forward to making a flying trip to Lincoln ever since.

The doctor served with company I 37th Illinois regiment, was captured August 21, 1864 and taken to Cohoba prison in Alabama, where he remained until the close of the war. He subsisted each day during the eight months to prison on a pint of ground corn.

Dr. Sanders is a charter member and one of the organizers of Mt. Ellias Comman-dry, Knight, Templar. He was elected its first prelate, which position he has held continuously since. He was among the first members taken into the Presbyterian Church by letter and has always been one of its most faithful members and for many years one of its most efficient officers.

In May 1924, Dr. Sanders was elected Department Commander of the Nebraska G.A.R. and the jewel presented him at the end of the term of office of one of his most cherished possessions.

Dr. Sanders enjoys a wide circle of acquaintances who join us in extending congratulations and wishing him many more happy birthdays.

New at the Library

Rainforth-Gooden Genealogy & related families

Furnas-Gosper-Harlan-Phelps County Wide Directory for 2004

Purchased by Holdrege Area Genealogy Club:

Farnam, Nebraska-From those Beginnings We Grew 1883-1981

Donated by Mary Payton

Tales of buffalo County, Nebraska from Vol. 1, 2. & 3

Cars I Have Owned, by Glenn Thomson

CDs Purchased by Holdrege Area Genealogy Club:

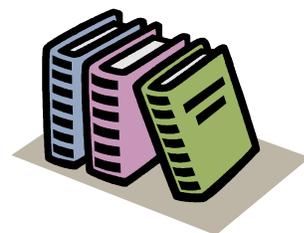
Indiana Vital Records: Selected Counties and Years

Iowa Viral Records: Marriage, Selected Counties and Years

Arkansas Vital Records, Marriage, and Deaths, Selected years

Connecticut Vital Records: Marriages and Deaths, Selected Years

Illinois Vital Records, Marriages 1791-1900



Before Holdrege Club was Formed

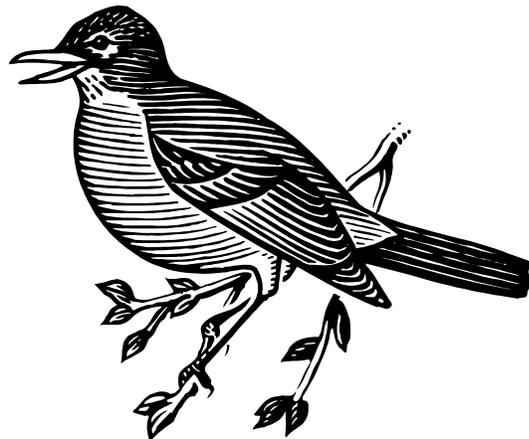
From the Holdrege Citizen October 9, 1933

Holdrege is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary and taking an eager part in plans. There are over a hundred, members of the "Before Holdrege" Club, men and women who came here before the organization of the city, and are still interested in its activities.

Starting in 1876, eight of Holdrege's present residents arrived here. There is a constantly increasing list of our pioneers, members of the "Before Holdrege Club."

The following list, compiled by G. O. Lindvall, organizer of the club.

- | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mrs. Emma Nelson 1875 | Harold Pearson 1878 | R. P. Rasmussen 1882 |
| Mrs. Joe O. Johnson 1876 | John Edlund 1878 | W. L. Hanson 1882 |
| Mrs. August Oberg 1876 | Henry Swedell 1878 | Mrs. Fred Hanson 1882 |
| Robert C. Johnson 1876 | H. W. Ekberg 1879 | Mrs. Harry Johnson 1882 |
| Mrs. Gust J. Johnson 1876 | C. O. Olson 1873 | Frank Erickson 1882 |
| | Mrs. Gust Young 1879 | Emil Dahlgren 1882 |
| Mrs. H. E. Lundberg 1876 | Mrs. August Johnson 1879 | Walfred Norberg 1882 |
| E. E. Dahlstrom 1876 | C. J. Backman 1879 | Dick Hedlund 1882 |
| Oscar Carlson 1876 | Mrs. Fred Cobb 1879 | Mrs. E. L. Gorham 1883 |
| F. A. Johnson 1876 | Mrs. Christina Brunzell 1879 | Harold Hjelmfelt 1883 |
| Nels Lindquist 1876 | F. L. Rundquist 1879 | Harold Hjelmfelt 1883 |
| Andrew Samuelson 1877 | Mrs. August Johnson 1879 | Mrs. Amelia Hopkins 1883 |
| C. W. Johnson 1877 | V. Freeburg 1879 | Mrs. S. P. Carlson 1883 |
| Mrs. Emil Dahlgren 1877 | Harris Johnson 1879 | Mrs. C. L. Granlund 1883 |
| S. F. Thorell 1877 | C. H. Carlson 1879 | Mrs. Ida Sandstedt 1883 |
| San E. Anderson 1877 | Albert Carlson 1879 | C. A. Anderson 1883 |
| Ernest Lundberg 1877 | E. Billeter 1879 | |
| L. J. Lundberg 1878 | G. R. Charleston 1879 | J. Lind 1883 |
| Henry Lundberg 1878 | Mrs. J. H. Fuqua 1879 | Mrs. Andrew Smith 1883 |
| G. D. Rowland 1878 | Mrs. C. Staberg 1879 | Fred Sand 1883 |
| Emil Burgeson 1878 | Fred Hanson 1879 | Louise Glandon 1883 |
| C. A. Lund 1878 | L. Peterson 1879 | Alfred Anderson 1883 |
| C. Johnson 1878 | Mrs. Charlotte Charleston 1879 | G. A. Anderson 1883 |
| Mrs. Peter Wiser 1878 | John Urbom 1879 | Dave G. Anderson 1883 |
| Mrs. Augusta Hanson 1878 | J. A. Dunlavy 1879 | Mrs. O. T. Anderson 1883 |
| J. Vaughn 1878 | Mrs. Gus Norberg 1879 | O. P. Trioll 1883 |
| Mrs. Mary Nelson 1878 | August Larson 1880 | P. Erickson 1883 |
| Mrs. M. L. Burgeson 1878 | S. A. Dravo 1880 | Frank Parson 1883 |
| | Peter Winther 1880 | G. O. Lindvall 1883 |
| | Mrs. Henry Swedell 1880 | John Waller 1883 |
| | Victor C. Carlson 1880 | Mrs. John Waller 1883 |
| | C. N. Hyatt 1880 | C. O. Olson 1883 |
| | Mrs. Fred Younquist 1880 | V. C. Wilson 1883 |
| | Mrs. Luther Younquist 1880 | O. T. Anderson 1883 |
| | S. H. Benson 1880 | D. W. Hilsabeck 1884 |
| | Eureka Larson 1880 | |
| | John A. Anderson 1881 | |
| | J. H. Nelson 1881 | |
| | Oscar Swanson 1881 | |
| | F. D. Swanson 1881 | |
| | C. O. Ahlstrom 1881 | |
| | E. S. Fulmer 1881 | |
| | Esther Lundberg 1881 | |
| | August Bergman 1882 | |
| | Alfred Nelson 1882 | |
| | Mrs. Andrew Samuelson 1882 | |
| | Mrs. J. M. Morrison 1882 | |
| | John Forsberg 1882 | |



Holdrege Born on a Cold Windy Day in October

A WRITER IN THE Citizen of November 10, 1887 described the cold windy day (Oct. 10, 1883) in this way: "On that day on the unnamed spot that is now Holdrege...were gathered together in little squads about 150 men, showing a business air. I arrived on the scene in a buggy with another land seeker and a land agent. All about the site were other land seekers and land agents...rocking the cradle in advance of the birth of a new town, as it were ... It was a cold windy day, and I had had nothing to eat since morning...but I was to stay hungry for a while...a lady at the only home in site, told me in not uncertain terms that she had fed her last hungry man she was gong to feed today...:

The writer of the above remembered: Only eight years ago I had chased a large

herd of antelope over the present site of Holdrege, little thinking that in less than a decade that lonely prairie where antelope, deer, wolves, and jack-rabbits sported undisturbed, was destined to soon have all the accessories and requirements of a city...where the new schoolhouse stands today (1887) five years ago the thistle nodded in the wind and the fox dug his hole unscared.:

Between the cold, windy day of October 1883 and November of 1887, Holdrege had grown from one loan house to a city of 2,800 inhabitants, with churches, schools, magnificent brick blocks, a main line railway and a roundhouse. Switches, sidetracks, and a two story "elegant" eating house with an 82 foot length fronting the railroad tracks.

(Harlan County Continued from page 3)

quirements could not be met for the higher grades. Daisy Olson was hired to teach the 20 pupils in the eight 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 on 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 others traveling through. Rev. Stromberg was called to the ministry in the 1880s and served many years. Someone bought an organ each Sunday and his daughter Augusta, later Mrs. Justus Johnson played it.

Rev. A. E. Lane was minister from 1905 to 1922 when he retired from the farm and moved to Alma to become the 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 reorganized 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 twenty Swedes were also moved to the Bloom land east of School Creek and near to the new location of the church.

The New Town in Phelps County

Nebraska Nugget October 3, 1883

Captain Phillips, the town site man of the B & M railroad company, was in town on Wednesday night, and called a meeting of the citizens of Phelps to make them a proposition. The Capt. read a letter from Supt. Holdrege, to the effect that the contract was let to a point 10 ½ miles west of the Kearney County line and 7 miles south-east of Phelps and that the road be built to that point by the 31 of December 1883; and knowing the disadvantage at which it placed the town he desired to make up the loss, in part by donating a lot in the new town for each building removed thereto. To those who owned businesses houses he would give a business lot and to those who owned residences he would give a residence lot.

Fifteen of those present pledged themselves to remove their buildings and others who do not own buildings signified a willingness to build and remove their business.

This stampede for the new railroad town was very much regretted, as our present town of Phelps is most beautifully located in the center of the county and should be the best town in the county, but our business men have so long hoped and looked for a railroad that they grew weak in faith and after considering the matter carefully they concluded that a certainly was more satisfactory than hope and they determined to go.



We have long felt the need of railroad facilities and our people have dragged through the sand to Kearney and over the breaks to the Republican Valley until every farmer in the county hails with delight the thought that within 90 days Phelps County will have a rail road and a home market.

We have worked hard to get the road to Phelps Center but we are out of the line the company sought for and Phelps is left.

Having hoped that Phelps Center would some day get a rail road we have invested considerable in it, and deplore the fact as much as any one can that the business must be transferred to another point. We have decided to make the best of it, and our future action shall be governed accordingly.

The propositions made by Capt. Phillips were simply stated in a business way and were so adopted and after a night's reflection over the matter many others have made their minds and have made their selection of lots and arranged to move or build thereon. Twenty-five building are now pledged to be moved and about 40 locations made. We feel assured that with the co-operation of the Railroad Company we shall be able to build up a town, at the new point of which Phelps County will be proud and of this co-operation we are fully assured.

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Holdrege Area Genealogy Club
PO Box 164
Holdrege, NE 68949