

## PAGE COUNTY, IOWA

Page County is situated very near the southwest corner of the state. The general surface of this county is well provided with a complete natural drainage by numerous streams which seem to be distributed as to leave no marches or swamp land. The prairie in its natural state was covered with a very deep growth of grass, but has since been divided into well-cultivated farms. The soil is also very fertile. In the east half of the county, good well water is obtained by digging from 20 to 28 feet. The Nodaway supplies water power for machinery for most of the year. Few counties in Iowa have streams of water more regularly distributed to all parts than this, and all affording abundance for the needs of stock at all times. There was no scarcity of stone for building purposes. Three miles from Clarinda there is an abundant amount. This stone is for walls and foundations, but was unfit for quicklime. Good brick was manufactured near Clarinda, Amity, Hawleyville, and other places.

George "Wesley" FARRENS was the first white man to settle in Page County in 1840. Later, his brothers, Henry and David FARRENS, came from Jackson County, Missouri, and were all single men at that time. They built a cabin in Buchanan Township, in the southeast corner of the county. It was known in the earlier days as the "Three Forks Settlement."

In 1841, George and David BROCK settled here, also, and in 1842 Burkit JOHNSON, Thomas JOHNSON, William CAMPBELL, and Robert WILSON brought their families to this new settlement. WILSON pitched his tent near the place now known as Braddyville, on the Nodaway. During this year, his brother, Pleasant WILSON, also settled here, where he died in 1844, being the first white man to die in the county. Those who were to settle here later on were:

- Isaac Davison,
- Joseph Thompson,
- Moses Thompson,
- Larkin Thompson,
- Jesse Majors,
- Charles Gaston.

The first death of an adult resident of the county was that of Mrs. Elizabeth Stafford, wife of Maj. Robert V. Stafford. She died November 9, 1844, and was buried in the first graveyard. In the summer of 1846, S. F. Snider settled near the center of the county, on Snake Creek, just about its junction with the East Tarkio. He was elected county judge in 1854. Sum others were settled in the county before 1852 were:

- Alexander Dike,
- Dr. Wm. Graves,
- Thomas P. Nixon,
- Samuel Nixon,
- John Nixon,
- Wm. Loy,
- B. Herrill,
- Isaiah Huribut,
- Antram Redman,
- Hadden,
- Doren Hunt and brothers.

A prominent early settler was Claibourn McBee. The first election ever held within the limits of Page County was in 1850, Wm. L. Burge as the sheriff who officiated. It took place at Boulwar's Mill, which was the county seat at the time. Dr. Alexander H. Farrens was the first county clerk, and Robert W. Stafford the first elected sheriff. Wm. L.

Burge was the first elected county judge and was succeeded by Judge S. F. Snider. During the term of John Wilson, a courthouse was erected - in 1856. In 1858, Judge Snider was again elected.

The first district court in Page County met at the house of Phillip Boulwar, September 22, 1851 with:

- James Sloan as judge and A. H. Farrens was Clerk;
- R. W. Stafford, Sheriff;
- Jacob Dawson, Prosecuting Attorney, by appointment.
- Other attorneys there were: Geo. P. Stiles and A. C. Ford.

Wm. Robbins, whose name was on the panel of first grand jurors, was one of the early sheriffs. He had a peculiarity in his method of electioneering which was somewhat amusing. He always went with a pair of saddlebags, in one end of which he carried a jug of whisky and in the other tobacco. When asked why he did this, he said: "I never want to leave a man worse than I find him; he has to throw his chew away to drink with me, and of course for the accommodation I must give him a chew of tobacco to make him whole." He was quite a successful canvasser and made quite a few friends.

Clarinda became the county seat in 1854. The first drug store was opened in 1856 by S. H. Kridelbaugh, M. C., who was also the first doctor in the town. Among the first settlers of Clarinda were: Thomas McKinnon and his three sons, S. Addison, Jefferson and Robert McKinnon.

The first marriage on record after the county was organized was that of Henry Davidson and Rebecca Sebastian, on November 17, 1852.

The first orchard planted in the county was on the farm of Geo. W. Farrens, in the spring of 1842. The trees were brought from Jackson County, Missouri. Another early orchard was on a farm in Buchanan Township and planted by Birkit Johnson in 1843.

Page County received a banner for largest amount of supplies, in proportion to population, furnished to the families of soldiers.

The newspapers published at this time were:

- The Clarinda Herald,
- Page County Democrat,
- The Shenandoah Reporter.

County officials in 1875 were:

- Wm. M. Alexander, Auditor;
- Henry Loran, Treasurer;
- Isaac Damewood, Sheriff;
- Joseph E. Hill, Clerk of Courts;
- James L. Brown, Recorder;
- Hugh Woten, Supt. Common Schools;
- John X. Griffith, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors.

The churches of Clarinda are: Methodist, Baptist, Universalist, Presbyterian, and United Presbyterian.

The public school building was built at a cost of over \$10,000 and would accommodate 500 students. It was situated south of the town.

The town had some important manufacturing plants, such as: a woolen mill, plow factory, carriage and wagon shops, flouring and saw mills.

The other post offices in the county at this time were:

- Bradlyville Center,
- Franklin Grove,
- Page City,
- Snow Hill,
- Tarkio,
- Union Grove, and
- Willsburg. Page County, in the past years since 1875, has advanced in every field along with the nation. It has survived the trials of every county and still seems to improve as the years go on. [3.]

### **SOME EARLY COMMERCIALISM (of Clarinda)**

- 1853 - First to settle on the town plat, in April was Rev. Samuel Farlow and family The second person was Judge Snyder.
- 1853 - First Doctor, was J.C. HOLMNES, M.D. came 1853 from Monroe Co., NY. [2.] (See First Doctor 1855)
- 1853 - First sermon preached in Clarinda was in June, 1853, by Rev. Samuel Farlow. [3.]
- 1853 - First school was taught in the preacher's house by Mrs. Isabella Farlow, wife of the (Rev. Samuel) minister. [3.]
- 1854 - First Goods were sold by Camp & Conn. [1.]
- 1854 - First General Store, was opened by Conn & Camp. [3.]
- 1854 - First school house in Clarinda. [3.]
- 1854 - First School was taught by Elijah MILLER in the "old cottonwood" [1.] (See First School taught 1853)
- 1854 - First Blacksmith shop was opened in 1854 or 1855 by Ray HARDESTY, who located on the west side of the public square. He was an expert and the glow of his forge was to be seen by day and by night. It was here that his brawny arms forged from iron freighted from St. Joseph, Missouri, the first "breaking plow" in Page county, which was good for anything. It was a fifteen inch rod, plow and could be drawn by three horses. The plow was designed and partly made by its owner, Isaac VAN ARSDOL. This was a new departure from the old-ox breakers and soon the "rod breakr" became popular. [1.]
- 1854 - First Wagon Repair was John ALLEN, who came about 1854 or 1855. [1.]
- 1854 - First Schoolhouse was built of logs. [1.]
- 1855 - First Doctor, was J. L. BARRETT, M.D. who came in June, 1855 [1.] (See First Doctor 1853)
- 1855 - First Doctor, was Dr. J. L. Barrett and was noted for his wit and cheerfulness in talking and smiling away the "blues" and all sorts of despondency. [3.]
- 1855 - First Doctor, was S.H. KRDELBAUG, from Clearmont Co., OH. [2.]
- 1855 - First Drug Store was opened in the Spring by Dr. CONINE. [1.]
- 1855 - First General Mdse. J.S. CATHCART, from St. Joseph, MO. [2.]
- 1855 - First Hotel, by George RIBBLE, from Montgomery, PA. was the combined log and frame house known as the "Clarinda Hotel" It was run for hotel purposes. [1.]

- 1855 - First Hotel, by Geo. Rible was one of the most active men in Clarinda and built the first hotel. [3.]
- 1855 - First Shoe Maker, who understood the trade was Columbus BRIDGES. [1.]
- 1856 - First Church built was the Methodist Episcopal. [1.]
- 1856 - First Death on the plat was Milton GUTHRIE of fever.[1.] (Infants had been buried on the plat prior to 1856 (but had lived off the plat.)
- 1856 - First Editor & Publisher, was N.C. RIDENOUR, from Campbell Co., TN. [2.] (Clarinda Democate)
- 1856 - First Grain & Stock Dealer, Jacob BUTLER, from Wayne Co., IN. [2.]
- 1858 - 2nd Doctor, was N.L. Van SANDT, from Brown Co., OH. [2.]
- 1858 - First church in Clarinda was built. [3.]
- 1859 - First Pottery was burned by Kridelbaugh Brothers. [1.]
- 1860 - First Harness Maker, was Alexander SCOTT. [1.]
- 1863 - First Agricultural Implements sold in a regular way by William BUTLER, who freighted "Manny's" combined reaper and mower from Des Moines, and sold, many of them at \$280. [1.]
- 1864 - First Banker, was J.I. McINTVRE, from Niggara Co., NY.
- 1865 - First Carriage Maker, J.B. CHAMBERLA, from Warren Co., OH. [2.]
- 1865 - First to deal in a regular Millinery Stock were the SMITH sisters. [1.]
- 1866 - First brick block erected in Clarinda, was the one built by Butler, Thompson & Compant and was part of the block now (1909) used by Graff's clothing house. [1.]
- 1866 - First Author & Journalist, was George H. POWERS, from Medina Co., OH. [2.]
- 1867 - 2nd Editor & Publisher, was Ralph ROBINSON, from Washington Co., PA. [2.] (Clarinda Herald)
- 1868 - 2nd Blacksmith, by James KEENER, from Indiana Co., PA. [2.]
- 1870 - First to deal in lumber (soft wood) was Osgood & Kimball. [1.]
- 1870 - First exclusive Boot and Shoe store was run by Beeman & Caldwell.
- 1871 - First Railroad train rolled into Clarinda from Villisca in Nov. [1.]
- 1871 - First Grain Warehouse was erected, by BUTLER & CROOKS. [1.]
- 18?? - First Sermon Preached, there seems to be a difference of opinion. Some claim Rev. Samuel FARLOW, Methodist, while others claim "Uncle Jimmy" STOCKTON, a Cumberland Presbyterian clergyman, to have been the first. [1.]
- 18?? - First Attorney, (regular) was J. J BARWICK. [1.]
- 18?? - First Photographer was a young man who, was reared here, named OWENS. Traveling artists preceded him. [1.]
- 18?? - First to engage in the Livery business was Lem DAVISON.
- 18?? - First exclusive Clothing House was, that of Val GRAFF. [1.]
- 18??- First exclusiye Hardware Stock was owned by Al. COLLINS, in the days of the Rebellion. [1.]
- 18?? - First Dentist, was probably Dr. SANBORN, at the close of the War. [1.]

### **Source and Reference Notes!**

- [1.] History of Page Co., IA. 1909, by W.L. Kershaw, (Pg 224-6)
- [2.] Patrons of Page Co., Andreas Plat Book, 1875

- [3.] Atlas Fremont & Page Counties Iowa - 1966, by Midwest Atlas Co., Box 771, Fremont, NE. (They Reference "Compiled from the information given in the Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa, 1875.")