



## Eastern Nebraska Genealogical Society Newsletter

P O BOX 541  
Fremont NE 68026-0541



August 2018

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**ENGs Meetings are held at 7 PM on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday  
of each month at the Louis E. May Museum  
1643 N Nye Ave, Fremont, NE**

**Aug 13: Come and share stories about a Black Sheep in your family. Bring any photos or documents that help tell your ancestor's story and show how you are related. We will also set aside time to examine any WWI artifacts that you would like to bring.**

**Note:** The newly organized library will be available for research at 6 PM - just before our meeting - on Aug 13. Please come down the stairs on the south side of the museum and turn right into the schoolroom.

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At our July 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, Judy Ekeler took us on a photo tour of World War I battle sites, museums, and cemeteries in France and shared details that her grandfather, Edgar Martin, of David City, had recorded in his daily log. Thank you Judy!

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### From *Andreas' History of the State of Nebraska* Continuing COLFAX County ...EARLY HISTORY...

James Jeffries owned and lived on the Hurford farm, three miles west of Schuyler. Bushnell, late of Butler County, lived on the adjoining place west; and next to this farm was the famous "Russell's Ranche," well known to everybody, owned and run by Joseph Russell, an eccentric old Englishman, who, notwithstanding his many eccentricities and bluff manners, was a good neighbor, and valuable citizen. I have known of more than one hundred emigrants to be comfortably entertained at Russell's during one night, old Californians; Colorado miners, Oregon farmers, ranchmen from off the plains and freighters to the mountains. Russell's House, in fact, became famous as a place of hospitality and fun. Nothing remains to-day to mark the spot that once was so full of life and animation, but a few locust and cottonwood trees set out by Mr. Russell, whose body is now encased beneath the sod somewhere in the State of Missouri. Directly south of Russell's Ranche the well-known Shinn's rope ferry crossed the Platte River." Moses Shinn, afterward one of the wealthiest citizens of Omaha, preached the gospel in those days to emigrants who passed through that city *en route* for the great West. When the Pike's Peak excitement was on the "rampage," he is said to have reaped many sly dollars by interspersing among his sermons well-turned advertisements, holding up the advantages of Shinn's ferry over the Columbus institution.

Previous to the building of the Union Pacific road, there were not, in fact, more than a dozen families, who could be called actual settlers in what is now Colfax County. There were the Albertsons, the Toncrays, Michael Erb, Jonas Welch, William Wetherer, Abram Beaman, Joseph Russell, Joseph Skinner, William Davis, Messrs. H. Bushnell, George Spaulding, S. H. Fowler, the Quinns, a Dunlap, and a few others along the line of the military road, from east to west. Soon after Buchanan was platted, however, Mr. Albertson was appointed Postmaster, who continued to be oppressed with this honor for some time. When the road was built the trains, at first, ran very irregularly. It happened, moreover, that they generally passed Buchanan at night, the mail bag being thrown at random, if the train was anywhere in the vicinity of the "post office." The Postmaster's duties, therefore, as an anxious office holder in continual search of his official documents, were quite arduous. Mr. Davis, the incumbent, at this time, felt that sufficient safeguards were not thrown around the sanctity of the United States mail, upon being informed, once upon a time, that a squad of Indians were coming up the track trying to sell the contents of the bag to all the section hands whom they passed. P. M. Davis therefore sent in his resignation, and Mr. Albertson again assumed the duties of his position. A petition was circulated for the appointment of Daniel Hashberger at "Shell Creek." It was granted by the Government, and the new appointee marched over to Buchanan; Mr. Albertson reached overhead and unfastening from the rafters a pine box, about three feet in length and two in width, passed the office and its honors over to Postmaster Hashberger, who took both with him to the future Schuyler.

### EARLY JUSTICE

Although there was no regular "claim club" near Schuyler it occasionally happened that a case seemed too urgent to be passed over to cool-headed legal justice, and the settlers took the law into their own hands. Witness the following incident told in the Schuyler *Sun*, by "One of the Regulators":

In 1863, one Wm. Gillson sold his farm to an old man named Truesdell--said farm being situated just south of where Schuyler now is, and is now known as Clarkson's Addition to South Schuyler. After the sale was made, the money paid and the deed delivered, the U. P. station was located, when Gillson became dissatisfied and one day asked the old man if he had had the deed recorded. Being told that he had not, Mr. Gillson suggested that as he (himself) was going to Columbus he would take the deed and leave it at the County Clerk's office. Some five or six weeks afterward Truesdell called on Gillson and told him he had not left it at the office as he so understood he would. Gillson told him then he could not have the deed as he wanted to trade back, but the old gent would not do it. Gillson ordered the old man to "git" and he went. As Gillson had not given possession, he thought he had the best end of it, but as he soon found out he had more than he wanted. Mr. Truesdell went down to Uncle D. Hashberger's and told him about it. Uncle Dan went to Russell's Ranche on the afternoon of Feb. 4, 1864; and had a long talk with Joseph Russell, Sr. That evening about 25 wood-choppers

and teamsters went to Uncle Hashberger's. It was about 7 o'clock when we arrived at Uncle Dan's, put up our teams and went in to warm and fortify ourselves against the evening with "old rye;" you may think that "old rye" is a weak fortification, but it was strong for us; then you know we needed something to keep our courage up, for there were only about forty of us to one. We organized and chose a captain--one John Ross. Just then the picket came in on a run and said he guessed Gillson had "smelled a mice" and was going to leave. The captain sent a guard of three to watch him, and if necessary to capture him; but upon the arrival of the guards all was quiet at the front. The guards went in and had a quiet chat with Gillson until the arrival of the main squad. Then things took a lively turn. The captain demanded the deed. At first Gillson denied having it, but on presenting him with a hemp collar he said he had lost the deed. He was told to write one. He said he could not--but that hemp collar persuaded him that he could, and in a hurry too. He wrote the deed, but it was of no account unless acknowledged by a proper official. We sent for Justice Corson, who came and acknowledged the document. The deed was duly signed by both Mr. and Mrs. Gillson, and John F. Eby, W. H. Penn as witnesses. Then we went for some more "old rye," and named our brave little band the "Regulators;" then went home to sleep the sleep of the just.

When we had all about forgotten this trivial incident, down came the Sheriff from Columbus and told us that we could consider ourselves under arrest and to appear at Columbus forthwith for trial. He caught all but Russell, who was in Omaha. We telegraphed him to come instanter and to bring with him a good lawyer. He came next day by coach and brought Nebraska's best criminal lawyer, the Hon. A. J. Poppleton. Just as soon as the coach stopped at the American Hotel, Russell was arrested. We were brought to trial before Justice Hudson, but Poppleton quashed the whole thing, and we were all set at liberty to roam and regulate as we had a mind to. Gillson thought that the neighbors showed partiality, so he moved to Oregon.

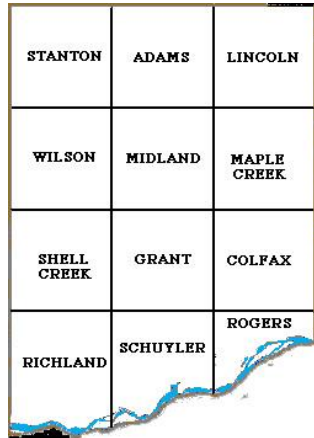
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**Colfax County resources:**

<http://usgenwebsites.org/NEColfax/>

Howells Congregational Church Historical Society, Inc.  
124 Marion Street  
Howells, NE 68641

Schuyler Historical Society and Museum  
309 E 11th Street  
Schuyler, NE 68661 Phone: (402) 352-3025

**Colfax County NE Townships**



**Colfax County books in the Library**

Cemeteries Vols I & II + index

Marriage Books 1, 2 &3  
Misc. births and deaths 1920s-1940s  
Misc. Newspaper Articles 1940-1970  
Mortuary Prayer Cards

Newspaper Clippings - Shoebox  
Norwegian Lutheran Cemetery

Pioneer Czechs  
Pioneer Families  
Pioneer Days 1887

Platt maps 1958, 67,85  
Plat Book 1983 Colfax, Cuming, Stanton  
Post Offices (1849-1970)

Nebraska State Gazetteer-Business Directory  
Nebraska State Gazetteer-Farmer List

Clarkson Diamond (x2) 1886-1961 Jubilee  
Clarkson 1886-1986  
Clarkson obits  
Czech national Cemetery Clarkson  
St. Cyril & Methodious Catholic Cemetery Clarkson

Howells Centennial 1887-1987  
Who's Who Howells Public Schools (x2) 1942  
St. John Nepomucene Cemetery Howells  
St. Peter & Paul Catholic Cemetery Howells

Oakland Centennial 1863-1963  
Olean Scared Heart History  
Olean Centennial 1874-1974  
Olean 125 years 1874-1999

Schuyler Births 1872-1905  
Schuyler Cemetery  
Schuyler Scrapbook

West Point Abstract

MINOR CIVIL DIVISION.	1920	1910	1900
Colfax County.....	11,624	11,610	11,211
Adams precinct, including Clarkson village.....	1,594	1,490	1,114
Colfax precinct.....	412	443	488
Grant precinct.....	521	559	587
Lincoln precinct, including Howell village.....	1,623	1,555	1,455
Maple Creek precinct.....	595	605	706
Midland precinct.....	613	676	753
Richland precinct, including Richland village..	561	629	529
Rogers precinct, including Rogers village.....	359	401	399
Schuyler precinct, including Schuyler city.....	2,925	2,698	2,650
Shell Creek precinct.....	550	619	604
Stanton precinct, including Leigh village.....	1,245	1,252	1,178
Wilson precinct.....	626	683	742