



Eastern Nebraska Genealogical Society Newsletter

P O BOX 541
Fremont NE 68026-0541



March 2018

Mares Meeting room: 1722 E 19th street

Meeting: March 12, 2018 - 7 P.M.

Topic: DNA surprises

Browse Nite: March 26, 2018

**Meeting : April 9 - Former Nebraska Communities
by Judi Cook, Nancy Eckles, and Mike George**

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**Check your name and member number on the envelope. If  
you have renewed for 2018, your number will end in +18. If  
you see +17, we hope that you do plan to renew by May 1.**  
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**The Feb 12 meeting brought out interesting stories of
ancestors including an early female lobbyist/journalist, a
farmer, a missionary, almost a Titanic passenger, a colonial
governor, and a WWII engineer extraordinaire.**

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**Continuing with our closest eastern NE counties:**

**From Andreas' History of the State of Nebraska  
Published 1882 - Saunders County**

## **FIRST SETTLERS AND EARLY HISTORY.**

"Prior to 1856, the territory now included within the boundaries of Saunders County had not been visited for the purpose of settlement by the white man. In the early history of Ashland begins the history of the county. The old Government trail from Plattsmouth and Nebraska City via Fort Kearney, Fort Laramie and Fort Bridger, passed through the present site of Ashland, crossing the Salt Creek at this point, in those days called Saline Ford, which enjoyed the fame of being the only rock-bottom ford of the creek, and the only available point at which heavy freight teams could cross. Many emigrants had crossed Saline Ford, and, for some years previous, it was an ordinary sight to see the canvas-covered wagons of freighters and emigrants as their trains slowly plodded their weary way over the ridge that hems in the present village of Ashland. Some speculators, realizing the natural advantages the ford presented for the future city, had made claims, staked out a town site, and erected a frame building on either side of the creek at the ford, but they were abandoned in 1856, and never reclaimed.

On the 10th of June, 1856, Mr. Reubin Warbritton left Williamsport, Warren Co., Ind., to find a home in Nebraska. He was accompanied by Mrs. Warbritton, and, in the latter days of August, crossed the Missouri at Plattsmouth, intending to push on to Saline Ford; but, owing to the late frosts of that year, he remained at Cedar Island to winter. The trip required about twenty-three days to make it, they camping out on the way and driving their stock.

About the middle of August, 1856, Mr. Joseph Stambaugh, in company with Mrs. Stambaugh and their three little children, with all their earthly possessions in a farm wagon drawn by a single pair of horses, set out to find a home in the great Northwest; but,

after journeying about one hundred miles into Iowa, and meeting some friends, they were persuaded to turn their steps to Nebraska. In eighteen days they reached the Missouri, crossing at Plattsmouth. A few miles away from the river, and all traces of the settlers had disappeared, only a broad expanse of rolling, billowy prairie as far as the eye could reach. They continued up the trail, reaching Saline Ford on the evening of September 6. The next morning they crossed the ford and camped in the deserted building erected by the speculators. They remained but one month, and Mr. Stambaugh explored the country, and selected a favorable spot to locate, and started for Plattsmouth October 8.

In March, 1857, Mr. Warbritton, in company with Joseph Stambaugh and his hired man, Mr. John Aughe, left Plattsmouth and came to the ford. Mr. Warbritton took up a claim on Section 34, Town 13, Range 9; Mr. Stambaugh on Section 35. Mr. Aughe made a similar claim upon Section 35. During this time, Messrs. Warbritton and Aughe broke the first ground in Saunders County, with which to build them a sod house. They also aided Mr. Stambaugh to build a like home. These pioneer dwellings were all located upon Section 35. The dimensions of Messrs. Warbritton and Aughe's were 10x12 feet; that of Mr. Stambaugh's seventeen feet square.

In June, 1857, Mr. Harrison Ramsey settled at a point about one mile above Mr. Warbritton's, on Section 28. In 1858, Samuel Hahn settled upon Section 1, Township 12, Range 10, but remained only two years, when his health failed and he went to Cedar Island, and died a short time after. He was a man universally loved and respected, and his loss was bitterly felt by the settlers. Thomas K. Chamberlin came from Vermont, and settled on a section, at the junction of the Mosquito Creek with the Wahoo. A Mr. Bryan settled in Township 13, just north of Ashland, on Section 26. This list, we believe, includes all the early settlers of the county.

Mr. Warbritton reached his location about May 1, and is justly entitled to the honor of being the first settler of Saunders County, and is the first white man who took up his abode with his family, and has since continued his residence. Mr. Stambaugh followed Mr. Warbritton in two weeks, and is the second settler of the county. All honor is due them for their courage and perseverance, and even the peace and happiness that has come to their declining years is an insufficient reward for the privations and hardships that they endured the first few years.

The marauding and thieving Pawnees were a constant source of annoyance to them, and their homes and families were subject to any of the red men's desperate deeds. Not a store or even a blacksmith nearer than Plattsmouth, a distance of thirty miles, with numerous unbridged streams, requiring days to make the trip, and no certainty of finding home or little ones on their return. The loneliness and hardships of their lives cannot be imagined by the uninitiated. But their efforts have been crowned with success.

Those sod houses first expanded into a good, comfortable log house, and then a large, handsome farm house, which stands as

a monument to their untiring energy. On one occasion, Mrs. Warbritton, provoked beyond endurance by the thefts and insolence of a Pawnee brave, seized a good goad and thrashed him into obedience, to the pleasure and delight of his companions. The lady at once became a heroine in their eyes, and was considered by them as a "much brave squaw." In 1857, Archibald Wiggin settled at Saline Ford, and threw up a brush dam across the creek. He remained but a short time, and his claim and interest fell into the hands of Dennis Dean, who came to Ashland in the fall of 1863, and built his well-known mill the following summer. During the years of 1858-59, Ashland became quite well known; but, for some cause, the influx of settlers was stayed; for, with the exception of one or two, none came to Saunders County. In this interval of time, great quantities of freight were shipped by the Government contractors, Messrs. Majors, Russell & Waddle, which included the supplies to Col. Sidney Johnston's command, engaged in the Mormon war. Ashland began to be looked upon as a depot of supplies for the freighters and emigrants, and the stock and produce of the settlers found a ready market, and commanded the highest of prices, and Saline Ford was famous until the Union Pacific Railroad superseded this pioneer way of moving freight.

This one fact began to give life to the new settlement, and furnished it with an impetus it has ever felt, and its effect is still seen at the present time. It laid the foundation to many of Ashland's best business interests. In 1860, Austin Smith, Henry Howe, Stephen Brown and Solomon Henry settled upon the tableland north of R. L. Warbritton. Perry Tarpenning came in 1861,

locating between Warbritton's and Smith's. In 1862, Hon. A. B. Fuller, Myron Moe, William Warbritton and Dr. William McClung.

Joseph Humes, M. K. Hall and Giles Fruman located within the corporate limits. Messrs. Fuller & Moe opened a store for general merchandise, which is the first business enterprise of Ashland. Dr. McClung commenced the practice of his profession. Humes & Warbritton put a sawmill in operation. Howe opened a wagon

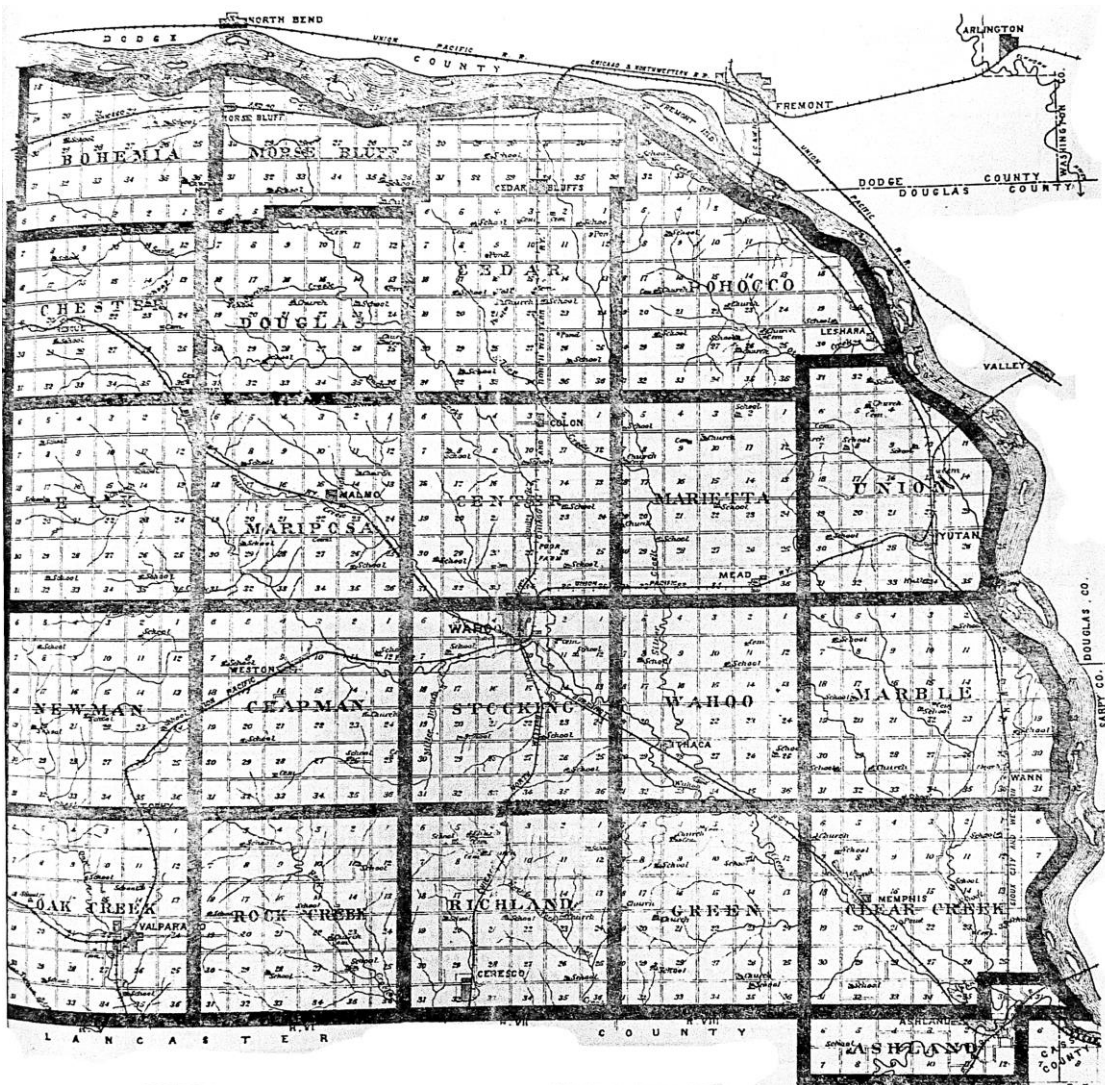
shop; M. K. Hall a blacksmith shop; Mr. Smith still resides upon his farm, and has been successful; John Smith died in Butler

County nine years since; Mr. Aldrich was suffocated in a well of Mr. Tarpenning's, in the fall of 1861, and his death is believed to be the first that occurred at the new settlement. In 1861, Charles Richart settled on the Platte bottom, Town 17, Range 6, and in the fall of the same year John Garrett and a Mr. Anderson settled near him. In 1863, W. H. McCowan and Doctor Wood located upon the tableland, just above the Pohocco Headland, and Perry Reed on the Headland Bluff, in 1865.

This noted headland merits a brief notice in his place, having, in a former geological period, occupied the position of an island in the midst of a lake of considerable magnitude that covered portions of Saunders and adjoining counties. It now stands a bold headland against which the waters of the Platte impinge with violence fully 150 feet below its crest. Across its smooth bosom the fierce red man laid his trail, and from its summit, a gentle knoll, stood and gazed over the beautiful landscape beneath the rushing, turbid waters of the Platte. Around as far as the eye could reach, a sea of verdure; in the distance, the valleys of the Elkhorn and Maple Creeks, on either hand the immense Platte bottom stretching away into indistinctness, presented a scene of softened loveliness seldom surpassed.

Near the close of 1856, this spot was selected by a party of speculators, residing at Nebraska City, Plattsmouth and Glenwood, Iowa, as the site of the town which was to become the city of the Territory and capital of the future State. Neopolis was laid off with imposing and magnificent proportions. Broad avenues and spacious streets crossed each other at right angles. Public squares and parks were numerous. A saw mill was purchased, sent up and set to work to cut lumber for the future capital of Nebraska. But alas! All these visions of future greatness came to naught. The great city was never built. The capital would not at that time emigrate from Omaha, and the operators, after losing some money, abandoned the enterprise. The war of the rebellion virtually stopped immigration, and very few settlers came to Saunders County until 1865. "

1907 map of Saunders County



**Saunders County population by Township**

|                 | <b>1910</b> | <b>1900</b> | <b>1890</b> |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Saunders</b> | 21179       | 22,035      | 21,577      |
| Ashland         | 1608        | 1780        | 1822        |
| Bohemia         | 488         | 516         | 597         |
| Cedar           | 1424        | 1342        | 1195        |
| Center          | 858         | 866         | 910         |
| Chapman         | 1040        | 1159        | 1146        |
| Chester         | 1018        | 962         | 801         |
| Clear Creek     | 902         | 859         | 817         |
| Douglas         | 537         | 572         | 1208        |
| Elk             | 763         | 816         | 888         |
| Greene          | 670         | 729         | 753         |
| Leshara         | 384         |             |             |
| Marble          | 766         | 802         | 814         |
| Marietta        | 848         | 937         | 921         |
| Mariposa        | 951         | 1002        | 918         |
| Morse Bluffs    | 504         | 543         |             |
| Newman          | 587         | 649         | 668         |
| Oak Creek       | 1161        | 1292        | 1016        |
| Pohocco         | 539         | 877         | 899         |
| Richland        | 1076        | 1156        | 1111        |
| Rock Creek      | 617         | 748         | 692         |
| Stocking        | 2827        | 2874        | 2884        |
| Union           | 790         | 845         | 779         |
| Wahoo           | 821         | 709         | 738         |