

THE COOPER GROUP
OF
THE YANKEES IN GRIGGS CO.

Rollin C. Cooper and his brother, Thomas J. Cooper bought (in 1830) railroad land (in Griggs Co.) secured some soldiers' scrip for cows, took pre-emptions, homesteads and tree claims for themselves and their friends. They controlled two townships of land which was known as the Cooper Bros.' land. Influenced by letters written by the Cooper Bros. about the splendid opportunities offered in Dakota Territory, about seventy friends and acquaintances from St. Clair, Michigan came in 1881 and 1882 and formed the Cooper settlement which later became the town of Cooperstown. Of these settlers, besides the Coopers, were the families of Will H. Garrison, Anton Inger, Herbert K. Smart, Millard Washburn, Dr. S. F. Kerr, Dr. C. Newell, D. B. Brown, Julius Stevens, Edward Blair, Maynard Crane, the Houghton Brothers, Wm. Glass, Fred Williams, and Thompson, G. W. Bethie, S. B. Langford, W. C. Barnard. This group brought their Yankee customs as slicing the bread at the table, etc. with them. This eastern (Michigan) group had money, education and refinement. Among them were professional men. The greater share of the business places at Cooperstown were founded by this group. They were the only originally American group in Griggs Co. They were socially bound up in church activities as sociable singing societies and young folks' meetings. Their amusements were taffy pulls, pop-corn parties, sleighride parties. About 40 years ago they had their select dancing clubs, reading clubs, literary societies, etc.

Through the Cooper Bros' they secured work. This group established society; had lovely homes with comforts of life; brought eastern ideas and habits; had progressive and advanced ideas; were

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aggressive in a correct way; and were people of good principles. Dr. T. J. Kerr, of the group, was the first Co. Supt. of schools in the County. The Cooper Bros. were instrumental in organizing the Sanborn-Cooperstown and Turtle Mt. R.R. which later was purchased by the N. P. Railroad. It was through Coopers influence that the county seat was changed from Hope to Cooperstown. The founders of Cooperstown were prominently associated with every venture in the history of Griggs Co.

Wherever there was any public enterprise on foot, the question was "what does Cooper say about it?" or "what will Cooper give?" The Griggs County Court House was built in and stands today as a monument, to the foresightedness of Cooper Bros. and the early settlers.

The Cooper group are permanent settlers in Griggs County. Dr. Kerr was the first Co. Supt. in Griggs; Edward Stair is publisher of The Detroit (Mich. *Free Press, one of world's outstanding newspapers.* Will H. Carleton is Judge of Griggs County.

Bibliography :

W.H. Carleton
Cooperstown, N.D.

John Hogenson, pioneer
Cooperstown, N.D.

Mrs. Myrtle Porterville, M.A.
Cooperstown, N.D.

Claus Jackson, pioneer
Hannaford, N.D.