

EARLY DAYS in GRIGGS COUNTY  
as related by Glen Dyson, Cooperstown.

In 1883 the train came to Cooperstown. The settlers then started to haul their grain to Cooperstown. Two teams were used; the grain was put into sacks, 25 sacks in each wagon. When they reached the river bluffs, one team was unhitched and hitched to the other wagon to pull over the hill as the load was so heavy. When they reached Cooperstown, there were 35 and 40 teams waiting to be unloaded.

A Mr. Kindred, who lived in Minnesota, owned quite a lot of land around the locality. In 1883 anyone could buy N.P.R.R.-land bonds for twenty-five cents on the dollar, trade these bonds for land and get par value for the bonds. In this way land could be bought for \$1.25 an acre. Mr. Kindred had come in before the surveyors and had picked out some of the best land for speculation. Later, he sold Sec. I, Sverdrup Tp. to Mr. Piatt and Sec. III to Mr. Newell.

In the early days in Riverside, we attended many dances in the homes. We went with the intention of staying all night. Each family would bring a lunch and have breakfast before starting for home.

Some of Glen Dyson's Scotch neighbors were: Andrew Park, Andrew Morgan, Angus Stewart, Lux Stone, George Stongsby, Charley Palfrey, three or four Saunders, and Atchisons. A Swede that lived north of his place was a Mr. Anderson. Mrs. Anderson was a great hand to read the Swedish dialect. The neighbors would often have her entertain them by reading off some Swedish dialect.

All the settlers went to the Sheyenne River to get their wood. Quite a few of them cut off of the government land. Mr. Kindred had a timber watchman so no one could steal the wood. The settlers got together on this and when the watchman went up the river, the men would get busy and haul the wood away. One man stood on guard to signal if the watchman appeared. When the settlers were asked where they got their wood they would say, "On Section 44 or on Section 45", meaning they picked it up along the Sheyenne River.

The winter of 1893 the snow was so deep a tunnel was made across the street at Cooperstown. Levite Norgard's place on Sec. 28, Washburn Tp. became snowed in that same winter. In order to get outside, Mr. Norgard had to crawl through the upstairs window.

July 4, 1883 was celebrated near Peddlers' Crossing.

[Dec, 9, 1954]

Dear Mrs Portenwell,

Florence sent me your letter with your questions, and I mislaid it and have been unable to find it but will try and answer as far as I remember, I have voted at about all the elections since 1888 and call quite a few things that happened during that time, my first experience on the election board was when we voted for the county seat of Steele county, there was 3 places printed on the ballot and you made a X after the place you preferred, Hope had been appointed county seat until an election could be called

Hope wanted to keep the county seat Sherburne being in the geographical center wanted it and Picket being on R. R. saway thought

they should have it, I do not remember the date. The polling in our district was in Mr Archer's house on his claim west of Timely. I started out early in order to catch a ride and arrived just as the election board was sworn in. Mr Oxtou, Mr Ross and Mr Buttar had been appointed judges and young Mr Oxtou and myself was appointed clerks. Along toward noon the crowd began to gather, there was loud talk outside, men from Hope Ricket and Shurbrook were handing out cigars and licker and the crowd was getting more noisy every once and a while a bunch would come in the room was small and the smoke would be getting thicker and the smell would be getting stronger. we finally got three votes counted and results told, when a drunken agitator crowed in followed by a big crowd

new milk out, spread a thing over with  
some salt, and a bunch of boys and girls  
and a crowd of people were  
yelling that went right we are going to  
take that box and count those ballots over  
and he crowded up to the table where the  
box stood then Mr Ross said hold on  
men there is law in this country  
any one touching that box is going  
to get in trouble. At that some of the  
more sober ceased their leader pulled  
him out doors, and there was a lot of  
loud talk out there, and I was told they  
finally busted the leader into a wagon  
hauled him home put him to bed and  
he didnt wake up all the next day.  
That was the only time I was where licker  
was used in excess, tho I was told of other  
places, cigars was often past out, in early  
days. After Dak became a stat in 1889, I think

there was quite a change, tho there were bootleggers and blind piggers, there was quite a change for the better, another change for the better was when the women were allowed to vote.

There hasint been much change in the ballot they have always been printed by the county and sent out to the different precincts and spaces left so you could write in names if you wished, the <sup>ship ballots</sup> town <sub>had</sub> had names of office and you could write in who you wished. Once a young lawyer came out to our precinct from Hope and stayed all day and worked for his candidate on being asked why he was there, he said farmers didnt know enough to vote for a man that was capable of managing the business of the county we didnt like it and I dont think his cigars got a single vote. the county seat question wasint settled till after the R.R. moved on to Aneta

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A bill was passed by the Legislature making it necessary to locate a county seat on a R.R. where it is possible, a petition was circulated to move the Co. seat Hope tried again but was too weak. Fairly got it and Sherbrook became a ghost city.

I do not know if I have answered your questions or not my memory is not as good as it use to be, seem I remember things that hapened a long time ago better then recent events, many changes has been made since we struck U.D. 71 years ago. The younger dont realize what we have past thru, the changes, the readjustment still going on. If I've written anything I hadent ought to scratch it out, throw it away, if any to help use it.

We are now approaching the holiday season  
I am sending out many cards nearly all  
my old friends have passed on and I don't  
belong to the modern class.

And now I wish to extend to you a  
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

And remember me to your brothers

Yours Truly  
Bill Dylon

Dec. 24, 1954

Dear Mrs Portinall,

I think I can answer your question in part just as they were told to me by a man that worked for Cooper at the time, and drove his team and halled voters to the poles in his precincts. Griggs Co. was organized in 81 and 82 as far as I know, and an election was held to locate Co seat and Co comishere. The town site contained only a grainery at that time. Hope wanted the Co seat so did Cope. The U. P. R. R. was <sup>being</sup> build- the R R from Sanburn to Cooperstown, there was suppose to be a law allowing rail riders to vote in a precinct where ever they hapened to be on election day. It hapened to be all the workers were working near Hanaford on that day, and Cooper had all his men and wagons out picking up men wher ever they



They were "all rail road workers, of course."  
Hope was mad, Cooper got the county seat  
and the books and records were kept in  
the grainery, <sup>on town site</sup> and 3 men slept there to look  
after them, a while after <sup>in</sup> winter 82 and 83 a  
gang was organized in Hope and one night  
came to a homesteaders place on the river  
and hired him to show them the way  
to the grainery where the books were kept.  
They broke in the door seized the records  
and carried them to Hope. The leaders were  
arrested but a settlement was made, by  
which Briggs Co. was to give two rows  
of townships of east side and take two rows  
Townships of west side of trail and make  
Steele Co. I think you will see how it happened  
there was more votes cast in a precinct than  
there were residence in the county. Maybe this  
will help you straighten out a piece of history.

Respectfully. L. W. Dyer

1158 Sherman Ave.  
Madison, Wis. 5

12-31-54

Well Myrtle I dont know if I can help you  
much. If I could see you and talk to you I might  
be able to answer questions you would suggest.  
As for Frost I knew him quite well. Having  
lived by the side of him for two years, his wife  
and 2 boys were very nice, but he was a big man  
and full of wind, he could tell you how and what  
to do, but didnt seem to do much himself, he  
came from somewhere back in Mich, couldnt  
stand the cold, it was better some place else.  
The last I heard of him he was down in  
Arkansas. The man that told me about  
halling the railroaders to the ranch to vote  
was Sam Langford, he came from the same  
place in Mich, as the Barnards, hired out  
to Cooper at Sanburn, when he was moving  
in and worked for Cooper for several years

Sam squinted on a claim 2 miles south of town and sent for his father, who came with his family on the same train with the Barnards. Mr Barnard told me he bought first class tickets for himself and family, and Langford bought second class tickets and they all read in the same coach, Sam's father filed on the same section with him. Now for the Barnards, I don't know if I can straighten that out or not. I worked for the Barnards in the fall of '86 and winter of '86 and '87. They were high ups then and spread it on pretty thick, they entertained 2 or 3 times a week, the high up would come out from <sup>town</sup> with horse and buggy, Mrs B - would run out all smiles, come right in my servants will put up your horse and mawry a nite she ordered me to stay up till her guest was ready to go so as to hitch up their horse for them, and often it was 11 or 12 o'clock, they had a governess to teach the kids

I was well acquainted with the man  
that guided the trading party. And the  
man that told me he drove the team  
that hauled the R. Roders from near  
Hanaford to Cooperstown, and the 3 men  
that were sleeping in the granary at  
the time of the raid

a hired girl, they ate in the dining room girl  
waited on table and ate in the kitchen, and  
set a table in the bunk house for the  
servants. I was ofle hard up in those days and  
had to take it "It was easy to see that Mr B.  
wanted to get rid of his girls, she had got  
rid of the two oldest Mary, C. had filed on a claim  
that cornered on the Barnard Sec. She married  
Smart and they lived there. (It was moved up  
town has also the Washburn house) Lena P. married  
a kind of land agent and clerk and built a house  
(that Christ Balkin sine oned) Smart moved to  
Jamestown. I dont know what become of the  
other fellow, I cant think of his name, the  
yougest girl at that time was about 18 or 20 at that  
time I wouldnt be sure tho we heard it pronounce  
ed many times must have been Minnie, I know

it wasnt Mary or Lena, I never knew what she did. I know she was around there quite a while after her folks moved away. I was told she went back to Mich. to live with some of her folks, I never heard of her teaching, if we knew the date the Barnard taught in Hope perhaps we could tell which one it was, your letter says she was the first teacher, I always understood the girl at home when I worked there was the youngest I maybe mistaken

You might talk with Maynard Langford he or one of his sisters might be able to enlighten you they might have heard thru some of his Aunts or grandpasence.

Wish You Success

Respectfully

Ed Dyer