

William Glass

William Glass, dealer in real estate and loans, and Justice of the Peace, was born in St. Clair, Mich, in 1853, and educated in the public schools of the native town, and the high school in Springfield, Ohio. He studied law in Cleveland, Ohio, and subsequently became a sailor on the lakes. He came to Dakota and settled on the site of Griggs in November, 1882. He opened a real estate and loan office soon afterward. He also has two brothers, A. J. and J. N. Glass, each the owner of a fine farm near the town of Cooperstown. Mr. Glass is a self-made young man, and does a good business in real estate. He came to Dakota in March 1881.

Bibliog: Atlas of Dakota, 1884, p 242

Big Timber, Montana

March 14, 1937.

Claire Jackson,
Griggs County Field Writer,
Hannaford, North Dakota.

Dear Mrs. Jackson:

I received your letter asking me to write something concerning early days in Griggs County. I fear I shall come far short of your expectations in complying with your request. To begin with, I will state that I never was a Commissioner for Griggs County. The first board was composed of R. C. Cooper, Allen Breed and a man from the Hope locality, I believe, but I cannot remember his name.

Allen Breed died quite early in the years following the dividing of Griggs County and the creation of Steele. He did not die ~~and~~ at his farm near Cooperstown, and I do not know where it was. After his death his widow continued to reside on the farm for a short time. The farm was all of section 1, T. 146, R. 59, lying about 3 miles north of Cooperstown. I always understood that it belonged to his mother-in-law, Mrs. Stewart. Mr. W. H. Carleton looked after renting the place for her, and can no doubt tell where Mrs. Stewart lived. I suggest that the early files of the newspaper might have an account of Mr. Breed's death.

The granary that was used for a County office immediately following the November 1882 election, was the only building on the townsite and stood just about opposite the entrance to the present court house block. It was built to store the grain that grew on the townsite in 1882. I think it must have been at least 70 feet long and about 16 wide. It was constructed of heavy dimension lumber in order to carry the weight of the grain when filled. It was sheeted on the inside of the studding with shiplap but there was no covering on the outside. It had a gable roof and was shingled. It was built

16 feet at the east end of the granary, putting in a small window, and a door made with inch boards and fastened with a 25 cent lock. It was the plan to occupy it only a few weeks while they were constructing a new and commodious building two or three hundred feet to the north, which was later known as the Dakota House. The last I remember about it it was owned by Taylor Johnson as a residence and shop.

When the records were brought from Hope, I~~w~~ was made deputy register of deeds and placed in charge of them John Houghton and Allan Pinkerton, carpenters, who were constructing the new building, slept in my "office", because they had no other place on the townsite to occupy, and besides, they were counted on to assist me in holding the records in case an attempt~~d~~ should be made to steal them. Because certain people who resided between Cooperstown and Hope visited in my "office" in the daytime, but appeared to have no business there, I became satisfied that they were looking the situation over with a view of recovering the records. I communicated my suspicions to the Commissioners and asked that they bring a couple of loads of plank and board in the "office" so that in case~~d~~ a raid was made in the night time they could not get in without waking us up. I stated that the door and window were no protection whatever, and particularly that we all slept at night. I was told that my fears were groundless; that in just a few days time we would be moved into the new building, and all would be well. Still, I argued that I thought I was in a better position to judge than the Commissioners were because I had an opportunity to talk with these visitors and observe their actions. There was nothing done. It was cold and we all slept on the floor under loads of blankets.

When they came we were asleep. They went thru that door with one little push and were right on top of us in a second. They lit our lamp and I saw that every one of that dozen raiders had a gun in his hand, while ours were hanging on the walls. They soon had the records carried to their sleighs and then ordered us to dress and

be delayed in sounding an alarm. We all refused to dress and go. They tried force but after the stove and table had been overturned and the place thoroughly wrecked, they left, taking our guns with them.

One day when I was the only person on the new townsite of Cooperstown, goodhearted genial old Knud Thompson came and stayed all night and the next day, without seeing anyone but myself. In later years he often remarked that he had seen the population of Cooperstown double in one day- I was there alone and he came.

As for my biography, there is not much to write. My life has been quite un-eventful. I was born on a farm near Port Huron, Michigan, July 11th, 1854. Have lived in Port Huron, St. Clair, Detroit, and Ypsilanti, Michigan, where I attended the public schools and then followed steamboat transportation on the Great Lakes until in March, 1881 I arrived in what is now Griggs County, North Dakota, located a homestead on land adjoining the present city of Cooperstown before the townsite was selected and platted. When the town was started I was among the first to erect a real estate office and move into the new town. I continued in business there until 1908 when I removed to Big Timber, Montana, and opened a real estate office which I have conducted up to the present time. I hold membership in Northern Light Lodge at Cooperstown, and in the Scottish Rite bodies in Fargo, North Dakota. Am unmarried.

If I have not covered the ground you desire, I will be glad to answer any questions you may wish to ask later.

Very truly yours,

William Glass.