

Biography of O. E. Thorn  
--Irving Thorn

June 2, 1926

Mr. O. E. Thorn was born July 31, 1853, on a farm in Wisconsin close to Amherst. He lived there until 1879 when he married Martha Tronson. They decided to make their home in North Dakota because they had heard how easy it was to get land and get started farming in North Dakota. So he and his brother, Alex Thorn, and baby started for North Dakota in a covered wagon. They had a team of horses and a few supplies. After a few weeks of hardships they arrived in Barnes County and settled on a farm six miles north of Valley City. There were already so many people there that he could not get more than a quarter section of land, and he wasn't satisfied with that so he sold out after he had stayed there two years.

He had heard about the railroad line that was coming up this way, so he moved on the farm one mile west of Jessie where he is now. He got the homestead and bought 1280 acres of land paying from \$1.50 to \$30 an acre for it. A little after the railroad was completed, the land was worth very much more. Before the railroad was completed, he had to haul his grain to Valley City and also get his supplies there. These trips took up very much of their time because they took three or four days a trip. They had little grain and what they did have wasn't worth very much.

Some of his neighbors were--Wm. McCulloh, Frank Pheifer, Mae Nertröst, Trond Rogney, Eldef Olson, James Bothwell, and Detwiller, but their farms were very far apart so they had little to do with each other.

He had two horses, six oxen, but they seldom used the oxen because they were so slow. They had very little machinery and their binder was one that would not tie automatically, so one man had to stand on the side and wind wire around the grain as it was cut.

Mr. O. E. Thorn is still living but his wife died last summer.