

Phelps Helps



Volume 16, Issue 2

Summer 2008

Meetings held at the
Nebraska Prairie
Museum
on the first Monday of the
month at 2:00 PM.

The public is welcome!

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We Celebrate Holdrege's 125th Anniversary Remembering Some Of Holdrege's Early History

From Holdrege Newspaper
October 2, 1913

First house moved here thirty years tomorrow was the beginning of Holdrege. Houses at rate of three a day followed from the town of Phelps Center.

Some of First Business Men Still Here. Old Timers Remember Some of the Very Interesting Facts:

Tomorrow Holdrege will be thirty years old ~ October 2, 1883, the first house was moved from Phelps Center onto the site where the city of Holdrege is now situated. Mr. Voris, who owned the building, placed it on the lot just east of the present Deishler and Kronquest Implement house. He made his residence there for a number of years and the building now stands as when moved here thirty years ago.

Close behind this house came a train of others, at the rate of about three a day for some time, much to the displeasure of those who remained at Phelps Center. Businessmen from Phelps Center also came with their wares and within only a few weeks there was a hustling

little village where only the vacant rolling prairie had been before.

The reason for this move was when the Burlington railroad built what was known as the Kenesaw cut off and a town was laid out upon the ground, where the present city of Holdrege is situated. The building of this line precluded the prospect of any immediate road being built to Phelps Center so the South Platte Land Company, as it was known then, owners of the town site, went to the citizens of Phelps Center and offered the people lots in Holdrege without cost to them if they would come to Holdrege and pick them out and put up buildings on them or move the buildings over from Phelps Center which they already occupied. Many of them did this and the two first lots chosen are the ones on West Avenue, one



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occupied by L. Brown's Store and the other by Ayer's bowling alleys. S. A. Dravo chose the L. Brown lot and A. P. Erickson the other and there was a dispute as to which made the first choice.

Along with the first buildings came the kitchen section of the Arlington Hotel that stands today. The hotel was begun at once. The building was owned by T. M. Hopwood, who managed the hotel. E. W. Roberts, who had the contract for constructing the hotel, was the first carpenter here. G. O. Lindvall, who was in his employ, built the first residence in the city after work in the evenings. The house is standing today where it was built just opposite the stock yards. After following the carpenter trade for year, Mr. Lindvall was employed by J. A. Fredricks with whom he remained for twenty-eight years or until a year after Mr. Frederick's death.

In addition to managing the hotel T. M. Hopwood also edited the first newspaper in Holdrege, "The Nugget." The office of the paper was situated at the first door south of the hotel. Above the primitery, there was a sleeping room containing seven beds in which the first comers to Holdrege slept. The room was so crowded that in order to move around it was necessary to walk over the beds. Snow fell the first month in the history of Holdrege and it drifted through the cracks onto the sleepers, adding to their discomfort.

The first store in Holdrege was housed in the little barn about 12x12 situated back of the present Phelps County Bank with the exception of the stove the pipe of which protruded from one of the walls, no attempt was made to improve the building. There was no floor and the stalls and managers were undisturbed. The main wares were groceries and tobacco.

The first hardware in the city followed close behind the grocery store and situated were the present Uhlig Hardware store now stands. It was contained in a little 5x8 box and was arranged after the manner of a carnival stall or booth. The customers not entering the structure,

which have barely room enough for Mr. Killip, the proprietor and his small stock of nails and other necessities in that line.

The present bowling alley was the first substantial store building constructed in Holdrege. It was built by A. P. Erickson soon after the town started. He sold groceries. About the same time, W. P. Norris and a Mr. Wells moved their drug store from Phelps Center, locating just north of the building now occupied by the W. J. Moore second hand store.

In the spring of 1884, about six months after Holdrege came into being, two dry goods store were located here. F. Johnson opened business in the building now occupied by the J. N. Standt Bakery and a Mr. Kramer of Kearney located a similar store on the same Street. Mr. Kramer's store was managed by John P. Nelson and P. G. Nelson.

The Hampton Hotel or the part that is now used as a kitchen, was moved here from Phelps Center the same spring and another grocery store opened by Mr. Fredericks and P. G. Engstrom in a building which stood just south of the present G. H. Rugg plumbing establishment. Some houses were also moved this spring from old Sacramento. The Crandall house south of the tracks was moved all the way from Oneida, Illinois on a flat car. This was a two story structure of some size.

All the lumber used in the early history of Holdrege was hauled from Kearney, Minden and Alma. The first train run into Holdrege, which stopped the necessity of hauling, came in the month of January 1884.

Those who made their home here during the first few months had considerable difficulty in securing water. The town had only one well. This was situated south of the present Fourth Avenue, near Burlington St. As the railroad company at that time had a number of men and horses working on grading the new road, it required the use of the well continuously during the day and it was not until after eight o'clock at night that the citizens of

(125th Continued on page 4)

Newspaper Microfilm Available In Library

Early South Central newspapers can be researched in our library.

The Holdrege Area Genealogy Club has the following newspapers on microfilm in their library for researching. They are housed in the Nebraska Prairie Museum in Holdrege, Phelps County, Nebraska. They not only contain Phelps County towns but include adjoining towns in Buffalo, Furnas, Gosper, Harlan and Kearney Counties. We are planning to keep adding more microfilm as funds are available. Following is a list of towns and dates that we have.

Phelps County

- * Bertrand Herald 3 Rolls from Dec 3, 1892 to Jan 6, 1911
- * Bertrand Times 1 Roll from Oct 18, 1895 to May 1, 1896
- * Bertrand Leader 1 Roll from Sept 19, 1896 to Mar 31, 1898
- * The Nebraska Nugget 3 Rolls from Feb 7, 1883 to June 14, 1887
- * Holdrege Daily Citizen 6 Rolls from Dec 2, 1887 to May 29, 1903
- * Holdrege Progress 14 Rolls from Oct 11, 1895 to Apr 22, 1920

Buffalo County

- * Elm Creek Beacon 4 Rolls from June 10, 1898 to Mar 28, 1919

Furnas County

- * Oxford Standard 4 Rolls from June 23, 1892 to May 25, 1933

Gosper County

- * Elwood Bulletin 5 Rolls from Aug 13, 1896 to Dec 29, 1932
- * Smithfield Enterprise 1 Roll from May 8, 1908 to Jul 17, 1913

Harlan County

- * Harlan County Journal 7 Rolls from Aug 27,

1897 to Jan 13, 1928 (Alma)

- * Harlan County Ranger 1 Roll from June 20, 1902 to Aug, 11, 1905 (Rep. City)
- * Harlan County Democrat 1 Roll from July 13, 1895 to June 13, 1902 (Rep. City)
- * Orleans Chronicles 8 Rolls from June 9, 1892 to June 19, 1930
- * Ragan Weekly News 2 Rolls from Sept 27, 1895 to Sept 19, 1902
- * Republican City 1 Roll from June 20, 1902 to Aug 11, 1905
- * Republican Ranger 2 Rolls from Aug 18, 1905 to June 21, 1912
- * Stamford Star 2 Rolls from Dec 25, 1914 to April 24, 1930

Kearney County

- * Axtell Times 3 Rolls from May 22, 1896 to 28, 1937
- * Wilcox Herald 6 Rolls from Apr 5, 1895 to Mar 17, 1932
- * Wilcox Post 1 Roll from Jan. 5, 1893 to Dec 28, 1894
- * Wilcox Winner 1 Roll from July 7, 1927 to Dec 21, 1928

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Holdrege were allowed to draw their water. In order to secure the precious fluid, it was necessary to draw it in a bucket 180 feet. And added to this, it had to be carried

as much as half a mile to the homes.

The county clerk at that time was P. O. Hedlund, a brother of the present Clerk. P. Peterson was county treasurer and Charles

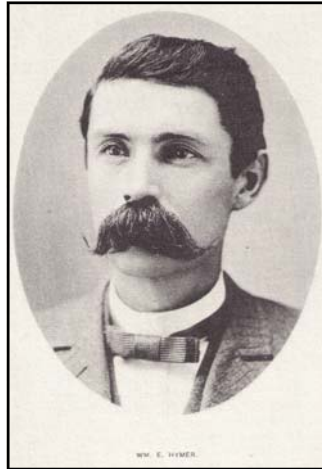
Backman, Judge. S. A. Dravo was the first attorney in Holdrege.

William E. Hymer

This story is from the Biographical Souvenir of Buffalo, Kearney & Phelps, Nebraska written in 1890.

William E. Hymer, cashier of Holdrege National Bank of Holdrege, Phelps County, was born in Rushville, Schuyler County, Ill., November 11, 1853. He is the son of John B. and Mary A. (Newberry) Hymer, both now residents of Holdrege, Nebraska. Mr. Hymer was reared in his native county and grew up on his father's farm, passing his earlier years like most country lads in the alternate pursuits of his duties as a farm hand and attending the district schools. He followed farming in Schuyler County until 1878 when, having married and seeing a young family start up around him, he decided to move to the more fruitful prairies beyond the Mississippi.

He came to Nebraska that year and settled at Sacramento, Phelps County, embarking in the mercantile business at that place. It is needless to say that even as late and 1878 was an early day for Phelps County. There was that



time only two post offices in the county, and they were kept at farm houses; one of these was 18 miles from where Mr. Hymer settled and the other 24 miles away. In 1880 he put up a hardware store at Phelps Center that place starting in the mean time, conducting his Sacramento and Phelps Center store until the fall of 1883. He then moved his building at Phelps Center to where Holdrege now stands, that town having been projected on the line of the Burlington and Missouri railroad upon its completion into Phelps County. At this time, however, there was no town there.

Mr. Hymer was the first merchant in the place. He saw the town staked off, attended the first sale

of lots and witnessed the beginning of what has since become the proud and prosperous town of Holdrege. He continued in the mercantile business till 1886, when he closed out all his interests of this nature and began to handle real estate. From the brokerage business he glided easily into the loaning business and a year later opened in Holdrege a private bank, called the Bank of Holdrege, which he conducted a year, organizing at that date the Holdrege National Bank, with which he has been actively connected since.

There have been some changes in the working force of the bank since its organization, but it has remained under the same general management. A. Yeazel is its president, F. Hallgren, vice-president, and Wm. E. Hymer, cashier. It has a paid up capital of fifty thousand dollars and a surplus of six thousand dollars. It has added 4 percent to its surplus every six months since its organization and has declared a dividend of 5 percent every six months. Its stock sells at one dollar and thirty-

(Hymer Continued on page 6)

The Sentinel Enters 21 Years

November 20, 1930 ~ J. L. Flickinger, Editor

Story of Founding and Early History Interesting

On November 18, 1910, J. L. Flickinger published the first number of the newspaper that has carried the home news to this community for 20 years ---- The Loomis Sentinel.

Before moving his plant to Loomis, Mr. Flickinger operated it in Atlanta, publishing the Atlanta Record. The venture did not prove successful there so Loomis was selected as the future location of journalistic endeavor. It was J. E. Hammon, grandfather of the present editor of the Sentinel, who moved the plant by wagon to Loomis in the fall in 1910. Rooms were rented in the hotel owned by S. R. McElheney, and the equipment was housed there to remain for many years or until after the death of the McElheney, who purchased the plant from Mr. Flickinger. It was Mr. Hammon also who was instrumental in naming the paper. Since the trip from Atlanta to Loomis and return could not be made in one day in those days, the moving party remained that night in the hotel. Sometime in the evening, according to Mr. Hammon, Mr. Flickinger remarked, "I don't know what to name the paper now since I have moved it." The group sat thinking for a time and finally Mr. Hammond spoke, "why not call it

the Loomis Sentinel?" "That's it," said Mr. Flickinger, slapping his knee, "I believe I will."

It has been the Loomis Sentinel ever since through a half dozen different managements,

Loomis merchants have always been good advertisers. The first issue of the Sentinel contains advertisements for the first National Bank, W. H. Swartz, cashier; The Farmers State Bank; G. A. Hanson, implement dealer; Chas. E. Ericson, druggist; Dahlstrom and Carlson, dry goods and groceries; Anderzen's General Store; H. H. Peterson & Co., hardware; Carlson Bros. meat market; Dr. Stokas, and Gust F. Carlson, harness dealer.

Excerpts from these ads are interesting. Chas. E. Ericson says in his ad., "We expect to be here in business a good many years. The only way we can do it is to treat everybody right. That's our policy."

The New Store, Dahlstorm & Carlson advertises, "Our fresh and canned goods are the very best and our dry goods are up to date. Now is the time to buy underwear; give a call and we will try and please you.

The Farmers State Bank states, "We have no ad prepared for this week but will try to have one for

the next week but will try and have one for the following fifty-two weeks. In the meantime we are doing business as usual at the old stand."

"Now is the time to repair your shed," says in Loomis Lumber Co., "We furnish the right materials at the right price."

H. H. Peterson says: "If there is anything in the implement line that you need now, just remember we don't "keep" but sell the best in the market."

The Loomis Meat Market, Carlson Bros., says, "Turkeys wanted for Thanksgiving."

"Capital, surplus, and undivided profits \$41,500. We solicit your banking business," says the First National Bank.

Gust F. Carlson advertised Storm King Horse blankets and advises, "Bring in your harness early for repairing and oiling."

Andersen prices sheep-lined fur collar corduroy for \$5.00; Men's buckle overshoes at \$2.50; men underwear at 50 cents per pair, and coffee at 23 cents per pound.

SALUTATORY, Loomis Sentinel, Nev. 18, 1910---In launching the Loomis Sentinel upon the public, we hope in so doing to be a

(Sentinel Continued on page 6)

(Sentinel Continued from page 5)

benefit to the village of Loomis and surrounding community. As a progressive town or city is of great benefit to the surrounding country and as all progressive towns or cities have newspapers, but all such enterprises must have sup-

port of the citizens of both town and vicinity in order to be successful and all good citizens are interested in the growth of their friends and neighbors.

Therefore, if you will subscribe for the Sentinel, in return we will try to give you one of the best

newspapers in this part of the country.

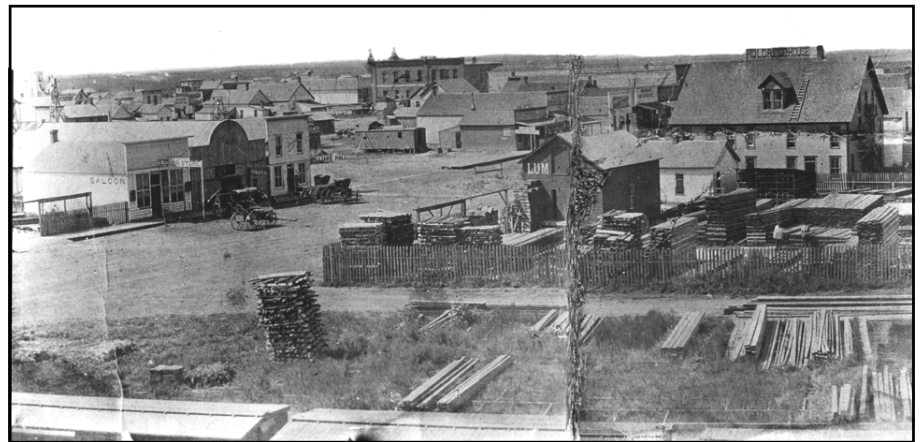
As we are a firm believer in this Golden Rule, we wish to treat all alike as far as possible. Politically the Sentinel will be an independent newspaper.

J. L. Flickinger, Editor

(Hymer Continued from page 4)

three cents. It is recognized as one of the solid financial institutions of the town of Holdrege and Phelps County, established upon a firm financial basis and doing a safe conservative, banking business. Its board of directors is composed of men of established reputations as financiers and men of impeccable integrity. With its affairs Mr. Hymer has been actively identified since its organization and it owes much of its success to the wise and judicious management.

In addition to his banking interest, Mr. Hymer is also largely interested in real estate in and around Holdrege and has taken a leading part in the building up and improvement of the town. He has erected a number of business and residence buildings, and is continually buying and building and selling. His present place of business occupies one of the handsomest brick blocks in the town of Holdrege and stands in striking contrast with the primitive one story frame building in which he



Earliest known photo of Holdrege.

entered on his business career in Phelps County twelve years ago, his old store building still standing in Holdrege not far from its more pretentious successor, being kept by Mr. Hymer as a souvenir of his earlier years.

Mr. Hymer has never aspired to public life. He has bound his chief employment and his chief pleasures in the pursuit of his own affairs, having been a delegate from his county to every state convention for the last 10 years. He is a republican in politics, an able exponent of the principles of his party and an efficient worker at the polls. He is a man who is warm in his nature and steadfast in

his friendships. He is highly regarded as a man of business and respected and esteemed as a citizen.

He married April 1, 1875, the lady whom he selected to share his fortunes being Miss Mary E. Dunlavy, of Schuyler County, Ill. This union has been blessed with five children---Otis, Katie, Clarence, Alpha and Bertie. Mr. Hymer and his wife are both zealous members of the Methodist Episcopal Church and generous contributors to all charitable purposes.

New Additions To The Library

Purchased by Holdrege Area Genealogy Club:

Franklin, Nebraska 1879-2002, the Best of the Good Life

Book Project of Holdrege Area Genealogy Club

Surname Index of The Former Residents of the Christian Homes and the Christian Children's Home of Phelps County, Nebraska 1889-1954, Editors Kenneth Freeman Mosman, Sandra Marie Slater, Beverly Ruth Frerichs

Donated by Bruce Batie:

Sanborn Insurance map of Holdrege, NE 1929 showing business building and home

Donated by Stephen M. Anderson:

Irrigation pioneers; A History of the Tri-County Project to 1935

Donated by Dick Baugher:

1854-Nebraska-1957 Army and Air National Guard of the United

States State of Nebraska. Also other miscellaneous articles

Donated by Edna Slater:

2000 and 2002 Church Directories First United Methodist Church, Holdrege, NE

Donor unknown:

Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies of the War of the Rebellion,

Series 1 Vol. 25; Naval Forces on Western Waters, May 18, 1863 to February 29, 1864.

The Nations at War by Willis John Abbot and Staff.

Donated by Harry Dahlstrom:

Treasury of Early American Automobiles 1877-1925

Harley-Davidson, A historical Snapshot

Donated by the Treasurers Office at the Phelps County Court House:

1983 Plat Map Phelps County,

Nebraska

1894 Map Phelps County, Nebraska

Donated by Ken Mosman:

Printed Sources

A Guide to Published Genealogical Records by Kory L. Meyerink

The Scotch-Irish, a Social History by James G. Leyburn

Ohio Divorces: The Early Years by Carol Willsey Bell

The Writers Guide to every Day Life in Colonial America from 1607-1783 by Dale Taylor

The Writers Guild to every Day Life in the 1800s by Mark McCutcheon

The Last Days of the Sioux Nation by Robert M. Utby

New Members

Belle Meyers

2154 S. Cherrywood Circle

Mesa, AZ 85209-1314

Email bellendave@msn.com

Phone 480-354-2019

I am searching these surnames in Phelps and Harlan Counties: JOHNSON; MANLEY; KEALEY

Ethel Basile

1010 S. 25th St.

Omaha, NE 68105-2309

Would like to correspond with any one who is researching Azariah (1838-1906) and Elizabeth (Crompton) (1839- 1914) Silver family. Their children were Marinda, Ella, Arthur, Ebert, Emery, Norman, Nellie and Maude.

Holdrege Business Roster of 1887 continued...

(This is the final section of the 1887 Business Roster that came from the Souvenir Historical Edition in the Holdrege Daily Citizen in June 1958)

J. M. Olmstead, pioneer grocer, opened a store here in December of 1883. Held sold this place of business and in 1887 was proprietor of the Eureka baker in connection with which he operated a lunch and oyster parlor.

Ed Haven, Joe Eastman, Mr. Mullinex and Mr. Cole were Holdrege barbers. Each operated their won shop.

W. C. Rittenhouse, loan broker, moved to Holdrege from Phelps Center where he located in 1882.

Wm. P. Rumer, "Knight of the brush." Was Holdrege's painter and paper-hanger.

Frank McLaughlin was another Holdrege man "rapidly coming to the front as a house painter."

H. G. Petty operated the Jewelry store on Hayden Street, nest to the post office.

J. A. McKillip, coal dealer, was one of the city's first settlers. He was serving his third term as a justice of the peace.

Austin and Smith, contractors and builders, had built hundreds of residences and business houses in Holdrege in 1887.

William Wilkenson and Son were among the earliest carpenters in the new town of Holdrege.

Crabb Brothers opened a blacksmith shop here in the fallof 1885.

Ed Hoskins, blacksmith, came to Holdrege from Colorado in 1884. James Rugg established a restaurant and Oyster parlor here in 1883, one of the first businesses in the new town.

Hamilton & Larson opened a furniture store in 1887 at the old stand of A. F. Gerham Son on East Avenue.

Ernest Kiplinger was the Natural artist of Holdrege, "a boy of 17 summers." Although he had never taken any lesson in art, his work with the crayon or brush was so professional in nature that "the most critical of over servers pronounced it as perfect."

R. E. Plunkett operated three dray wagons in the city.

K. B. Covey operated two drays in Holdrege.

L. Banta located in Holdrege, in October of 1883. He erected the city hall, which was later the Farmer's House, and in 1884 put up a substantial livery barn. He also operated a large blacksmith shop and manufactured buggies and wagons.

B. F. Gaskill, harness maker, located in Holdrege, in December of 1883. He came to Holdrege from Riverton.

C. E. Clark photographer came to Holdrege in 1886 and fixed up a fine gallery in the Garland block. He was from Iowa.

C. V. Pope was the post office jeweler. He settled in Holdrege in 1885 and later purchased the jewelry store.

Mrs. M. A. McKillip, was proprietor of the Little Cash Store on West Avenue. She established her millinery and dry good store when the town was first laid out.

Johnson and Son, loan agents, was managed by L. L. Johnson. It was a branch of the New Paris Insurance. firm. Mr. Johnson located in Holdrege in 1884.

L. K. Morris was one of the leading wholesale and retail lumber dealers in western Nebraska. He had branch yards at Republican City, Oberlin Kansas, Naponee, Wilcox and Bertrand, with 20 men in his employ, Hugh Carroll and F. Kinley were employees of the Holdrege yard.

E. T. Louzee was manager of the local yard of the Goodman, Bogue and Sherwood Lumber Co. Their yard here covered nine city lots. Mr. Louzee was a member of the

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(Roster Continued from page 8)

city council in 1887.

L. D. Vanderhoff, real estate dealer, was one of Holdrege's first settlers, at which time he was a member of the drug firm of Vanderhoff and Duff.

W. H. Pratt operated one of Holdrege's leading grocery stores. He came here in 1886, and was located in the brick block first door north of the Commercial State bank. He was from Whitewater, Wisconsin.

The Martin and Johnson Co. brick yard was one of the largest industries in this part of the state. The firm manufactured over 2 million brick in 1886, and had 700,000 on hand for spring deliv-

ery in 1887. Mr. Johnson settled on a piece of land near Sacramento in 1879.

J. L. Meyers came to Holdrege in January of 1886, and established his boot making and boot repair business on West Avenue north of the Arlington Hotel. He came from Pennsylvania where he learned the trade as a boy.

Lininger and Metcalf located in Holdrege in 1886 and built up a large trade in the farm machinery business. Henry Keefer was manager of the firm.

W. H. H. Richardson came to Holdrege with the laying out of the new town and established his harness business. He was the youngest man in the city but had built up an extensive trade.

C. O. Charlston owned a farm in the northern part of the county. Since settling here he had a term in the legislature. In 1887 he was engaged in the real estate business with head quarters in Holdrege.

H. C. Winquest left a good business in Fairfield Iowa, to cast his lot in Holdrege in the spring of 1886. He had built two dwellings and a large two-story business building. He was a practical tailor by trade and carried a good stock of foreign and domestic piece goods. Orders from neighboring towns in addition to his home trade, kept several hands constantly employed.

~end~

Thoughtful Speeches Mark Graduation

1967 Centennial Issue of Holdrege Daily Citizen

High school commencement in 1891 was similar to what it's like today.

In May of 1891 came the second ever graduation for Holdrege High School. It was held at a packed opera House where "The stage was tastefully decorated with choice flowers and plants and made a pleasing effect.

The ceremony featured a "pleasing instrumental duet by

Eva Lindball and Julia Necker...an oration by Elvin Price on "What shall I do, 'that was thoughtful and well written and showed that the speaker had been thinking about the future that opens before a young man when he leaves school..' There were other speeches and addresses including an essay, "Each for all" by Miss Jennie B. Corbin, which was apparently excellent.

"We did not hear it owing to the noise in the gallery at that time.' The Citizen reported, "But we hear it very highly praised by

those who were fortunate enough to hear it."

After this I. E. Austin president of the Board of Education presented the diplomas with some remarks appropriate to the occasion, "urging the class not to be satisfied with present achievements."

Children's Home Books Have Arrived!

New Phelps County Publication:

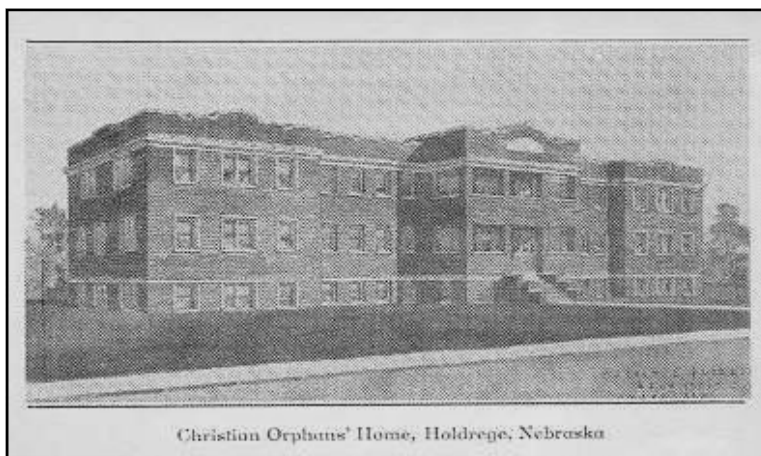
CHILDREN'S ORPHAN / CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME OF PHELPS COUNTY, NEBRASKA 1889-1954

- * All profit from this book will be donated to the Don O. Lindgren Library addition.
- * Over 1,200 children listed who resided in the home during the years of 1889-1954.
- * Included is genealogical information from Public Records.
- * Hard bound book is published on acid free paper.

- * 38 photographs.
- * Color photograph of praying child picture.
- * Purchase Price is \$30 + \$4 Postage and Handling.
- * Special price for former residents of the Children's

Home is \$20 plus \$4 shipping and handling.

- * Orders may be sent to Holdrege Area Genealogy Club, Box 164, Holdrege, NE 68949 or can be purchased at Nebraska Prairie Museum.



Christian Orphans' Home, Holdrege, Nebraska



Holdrege Area Genealogy Club
PO Box 164
Holdrege, NE 68949