


1976

## District #1 - Ashland

Office of the County Superintendent, Saunders County

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Education in Ashland, at the time of its inception, was sporadic. Miss Emma Barnhill was the teacher of the first school in Ashland, then in Cass County, conducted on the subscription plan. After a three months' term, Miss Barnhill married Henry Reasoner and retired. In 1864 the first school in Saunders County was taught by Miss Cecelia Throckmorton, later the wife of John Aughe. This school, maintained by the efforts of the settlers was held in the Throckmorton home. The following summer Miss Emma Throckmorton taught a three months' school in a deserted log house. During the winter, E. B. Campner taught a third term of school for three months in the same building.

During the winter of 1865-66 District #1 was organized in Ashland with Alexander Hinkley, chairman; John Palmerton, secretary; and W. P. Snell, treasurer. That winter John Bliss taught school in a log building 14' x 16' on the bank of Salt Creek on what was then Dean Street. Records show the completion of a brick schoolhouse on Main Street in 1867 with the Rev. C. A. Miller and Mrs. Gertrude Clark as teachers. This building was abandoned after three months because of claims arising to the lot on which it stood. Hearsay whispers that the lower floor of the school house was occupied by a saloon. Classes were then held in the Baptist Church on the corner of 14th and Ash. Wooden planks were used in lieu of desks in this improvised classroom.

In 1867 A. B. Fuller was appointed the first Superintendent of Schools in the County by the County Commissioners. He was followed in 1869 by A. C. Pancoast. Teachers' salaries ranged all the way from \$37.50 per month to men, to \$15.00 per month, the lowest scale, for women. At this time there were nine districts in the entire county. They received the first state apportionment of \$762.91.

The year 1875 saw the first Teachers' Institute with C. M. Whitney, acting chairman; H. N. Rogers, treasurer; and Miss Hattie Pickett, secretary. W. P. Snell was elected first school director; S. H. Nichols was the second director, with Albert Nichols and Miss Nancy Tower as teachers.

The square brick building was built on the present site in 1870. An annex was added later to accommodate the increasing number of pupils. In 1880 classes were offered only to the eighth grade, and it was stated, "The schools are rapidly assuming a state nearing perfection in system and discipline." Wages for teachers increased to \$75.00 monthly for men and \$45.00 for women; the lowest wages being \$22.50 and \$20.00.

In 1884 the ninth grade was added, followed by the tenth in 1885 and the eleventh in 1886. In 1887 the first twelfth-year graduation was held and several who had finished all the courses offered came back and graduated again.

About the turn of the century a Mrs. Woodbury conducted a nursery school or pre-kindergarten, in her home at 15th and Clay Street.

In the fall of 1919, shortly after the plans were laid out for the new schoolhouse, the old building burned. For two years all the vacant buildings in town - the auditorium, Sears Opera House and the church basements - were utilized as classrooms until the new building was ready for occupancy.

In 1890 the school district bought a tract of land from Israel Beetison and built an elementary school in east Ashland. This east ward school had two floors, one classroom on each floor. Miss Robinson was the first teacher. The scope of the school varied between five and six grades. When the new Ashland school opened in 1921, the east ward school was discontinued. Eli Keiser tore the building down for the lumber.

Again in 1955 the increased roll necessitated more classrooms and the new Vocational Agriculture Building was approved by the voters. It was in use early in 1956. The merger of Greenwood with Ashland was completed in 1957, to take effect in the fall. This, coupled with our ever-increasing population, makes the demand for larger and better school facilities imminent.

During the years from 1877 until 1957, Ashland has produced well over 2300 graduates in classes ranging in size from five in 1889 to 64 in 1934, adequate proof that your tax dollar spent for education is "money well spent."

### Memorial Stadium

Ground was broken for the Memorial Stadium at the Ashland High School on June 15, 1947. Frank Thompson and the late Don Tadlock, Burlington bridge foreman, surveyed and staked out the land, and dirt was removed by Noble Newsham, Glen Thiessen and Ralph Raikes. Charles Kennedy, Carl Ziegenbein, Claude Wollen and Alvin Holmes cut out and laid the forms. The concrete mixer was lent by the Burlington Railroad and Linoma Beach and manned by Jack Pierce. Sand and gravel were

furnished by Mel Thomas. Pouring of the concrete began on June 20. Much time and labor were furnished by Gade Brothers and Raikes Implement.

The work, independent of the board of education, was done mostly in the evenings and on Sundays and holidays. Very few farmers or business men missed helping at least once. The public was kept well-informed as to progress and to help needed by a running commentary published by the Gazette each week, written by Dr. O. H. Ziegenbein, without whose untiring efforts the stadium would not have been possible. A complete record was kept of workers each evening. Sometimes as many as 58 men and women were on hand to help. Rain stopped work only one day.

The bleacher construction consists of eleven 12" x 32" steel reinforced stringers to support steps which are 8" x 30" steel reinforced and a concrete block 12" x 6" cast to steel pegs to hold the plank seats. The planks have a 1/4" slope for drainage. The bleachers have two 3' center aisles, with a 5' front walk. The front and back walls are 5' and are tied into stringers which hold the steps.

The stadium measures 1500' x 150', and has a seating capacity of about 2000. It contains six carloads of concrete and six tons of steel. The work was completed on November 7, 1947 and dedication ceremonies held at the Ashland-Wahoo game on November 9. Ashland beat Wahoo 58 to 0.

The press building and Pep Club stand were built from left-over lumber. In 1948 the 40 x 22 shower rooms were built. These were more technical because of sewers, water, gas and under-ground light lines. Much credit was due Claude Lutton, Sr., and John Walsh for wiring and plumbing.

The stadium was built in memory of the veterans of the First and Second World Wars. Fine cooperation from our community, the school board, American Legion and neighboring towns made the project possible. The late Ernest Harnsberger designed the Memorial Stadium.

Through the flawless efforts of Miss Mildred Folsom, Alumni Secretary, many members of the alumni helped financially with the work.

The Stadium valued at \$39,000 was built for \$4,000 and is clear of all debt . The annual income from games averages about \$2500 which is used for football and basketball equipment, transportation and upkeep of the football field.

During construction of the Stadium Forrest Raikes took a color film and made sound records of many of the workers.

The only mar in all the work was the loss of the old concrete mixer which was stolen just as the work was almost completed. Nothing else was disturbed or lost. The first stake was driven, many spades, shovels, a worn-out flash-light, electric saw, etc. were saved. Buried in the sand beneath the concrete are many worn-out shoes, gloves, hammers and other articles used in the construction of our beautiful Memorial Stadium, a much needed gift of the community to the Ashland High School.