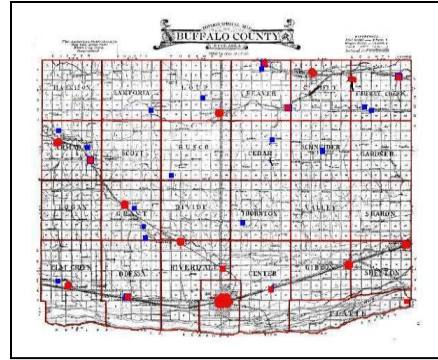


Towns in Buffalo County

- * Buffalo county has
 - 1st Class Cities)
 - 2nd Class Cities) Red
 - Villages) on map
 - Unincorporated towns)
 - Towns once, now gone)

 - Communities) Blue on map

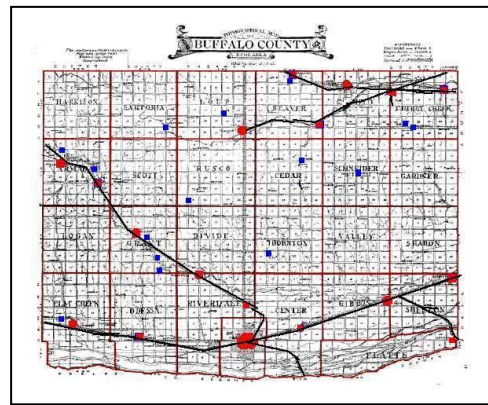


- * Add railroads to that map and you see a pattern

Towns along Railroads

Union Pacific

- 1866 – Put in Gibbon Siding
- Depots at Kearney Station & Elm Creek
- Other depots added as towns grew



- * Shelton – started as Wood River Center along the Mormon Trail.

– a road ranche

Perhaps established in 1848 when Ft. Kearny was opened

Joseph Johnson came in 1859 –

Blacksmith & repair shop, general store

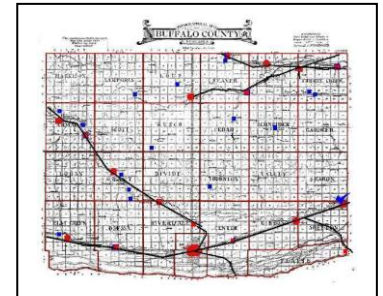
Garden, flowers, fruit trees.

Stayed 2 years; went to Utah in 1861

School built on west side (Dist. 1)

Jan. 20, 1870 – County of Buffalo organized at Dist. 1

Wood River Center was county seat



- * Patrick Walsh – father of Shelton

Irish, discharged at Ft. Kearny in 1865

Took over a squatter's claim on the Wood River

1869 - he filed a Soldier's Homestead claim

on a 1/4 section



Later gave some of it to be platted as a town
Oct. 1872 – Post Office established
Patrick Walsh was first post master

Confusion with neighboring town of Wood River
Feb. 3, 1873 letter from Walsh to Postmaster General –

“Dear Sir:

You are hereby notified that the name of this post office has been changed from Wood River Center to Shelton and you will govern yourself accordingly.”

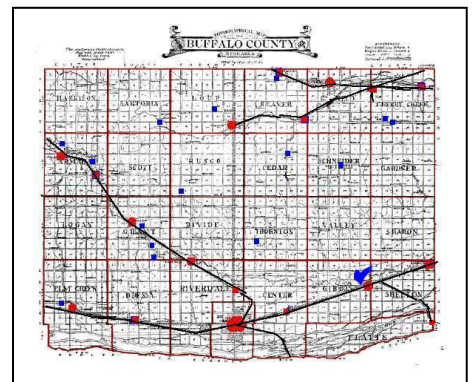
Named Shelton for N. Shelton, auditor for UP’s land development company

Village of Shelton incorporated under Nebraska law Jan. 6, 1882.

- * Gibbon – Siding on the UP – Gibbon Switch
Named for Gen. John Gibbon –
Mexican War & Indian frontier uprisings in 1861
- * Soldier’s Free Homestead Colony arrived April 7, 1871
Building began immediately



Front Street



Gibbon is located in a railroad section –

Owned by Union Pacific - except for Wilson’s squatter’s claim

Wilson squatted 1865 (before railroad)

Built house partially dugout, part logs

Went back to Dobytown for family – wife & children,

Ox team, covered wagon, mule

Crossed Platte in early June, bank full, current, quick sand holes

Boys drove wagon, father (drunk) on mule

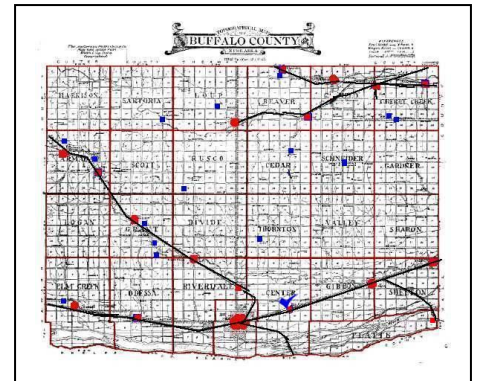
Wagon hit hole, difficulty in getting out but they made it

Looked back – no Mr. Wilson –

mule hit quicksand hole, drowned, Wilson caught in current.

- * Buda – First & for a while the only town within the county before Gibbon & Kearney were founded

On military reservation property
 Railroad supply depot for Fort Kearny 4 miles south
 Served briefly as county seat,
 county business conducted here as well as at
 Wood River Center before Gibbon was officially named the county seat
 Called Kearney Station – then Shelby (1876) – then Buda (1878)
 Possibly named for Budapest



- * D Wort's Elevator, gone now

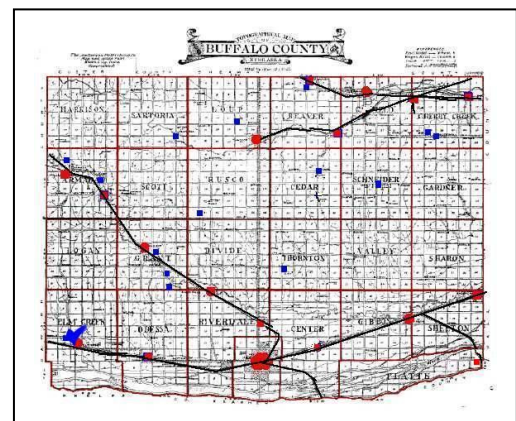
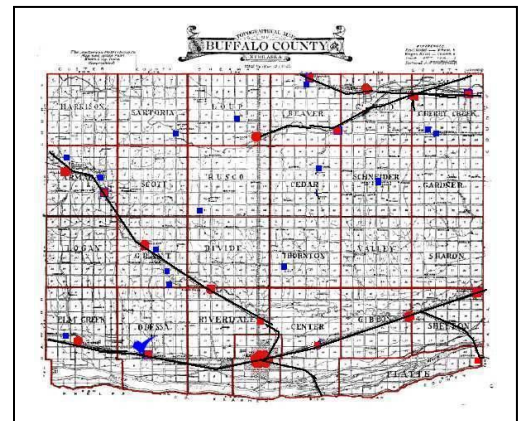


- * Odessa – Originally Crowellton (1872 post office est.)
 Name changed by 1876
 – Stevenson Siding (Alfalfa Center) near there
 Had a depot, a school & an elevator but never grew
 never incorporated

Attack on Odessa schoolgirl story

- * Elm Creek – The other depot on the UP in 1866
 No town laid out
 Named for red elms along creek
 Town developed mile east
 Depot moved in 1883

Davis - Eating House & saloon –
 20 minute stop
 Liquor caused trouble on emigrant trains
 Agreement between Davis & trainmen
 Results – broken jugs & bottles



- * Elm Creek about 1906 before fire downtown



1923 Kearney Hub

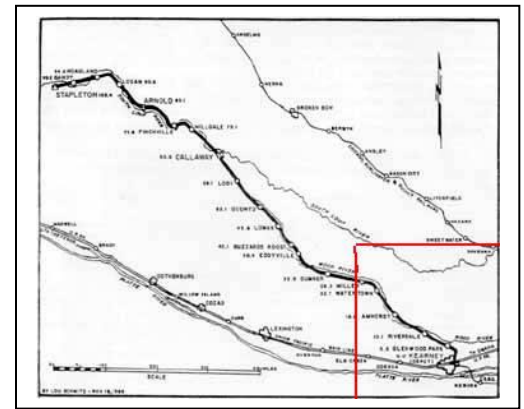
A good time was enjoyed by all at the Fairview basket dinner Thursday evening. Each lady took her name in a walnut shell, the walnut shell being sold instead of the baskets. A set of scales were handy, each lady being weighed. Their partners paid one cent per pound. This was a new way of buying suppers and it aroused great excitement.

[I'll bet! Was each supper paid for twice... once for the name and again by the weight of the lady who prepared it?]

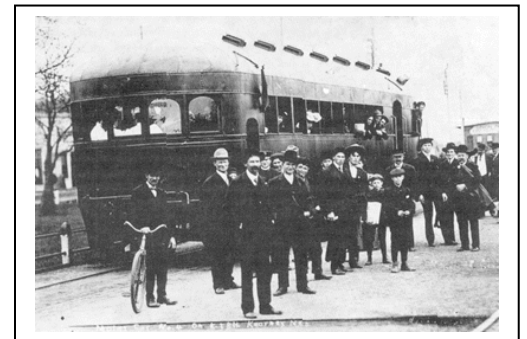
* **Kearney & Black Hills Railroad**

(square lower right is Buffalo County)

- 1886 – UP acquired land for a spur – nothing happened
- 1889 – Kearney gave up waiting, acquired UP rights, formed K & BH Railway Co.
- 1890 – Construction began, went to Calloway
- 1898 – UP took ownership



- * 1905 – Launched the McKean gas-powered motor car
Aka Bug, 'Tater Bug
- 1912 – Extended from Calloway to Stapleton
- 1955 – Closed - Bug & Steam locomotive 481
[Engine 481 now at Trails & Rails Museum]



* Glenwood Park – P O in 1892

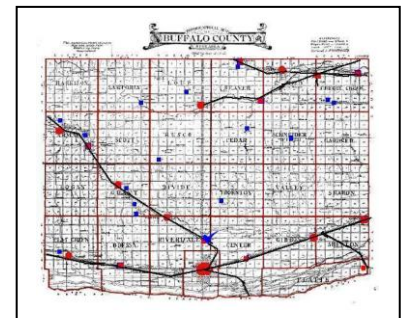
First depot out of Kearney on the K& BH RR

Blue Mills flour mill north of Kearney on the Wood.

1893-1920 when it burned.

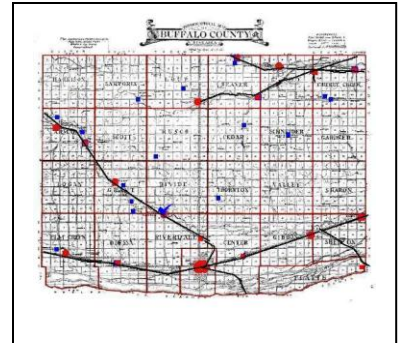
Earlier one burned in 1892 but was rebuilt with modern equipment

New owner in 1920, prices dropped, Halloween fire, owner convicted of arson

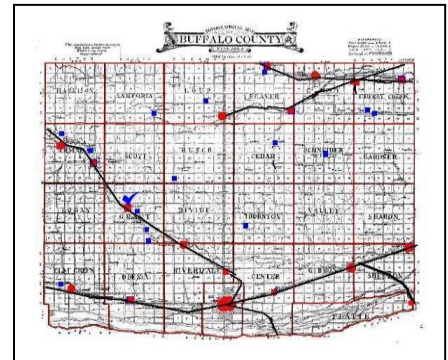


River widened above the dam, became a park for boating and picnics in 1880's & 1890's, even a baseball field.
Closed 1910 when land owner died

- * Riverdale – Riverdale school Dist. 15 organized in 1871
P O in 1883 – 1886
Then handled mail for the K & BH railroad
2 churches – Christian (Disciples of Christ) & Methodist



- * Amherst – Started as Stanley a 2 ½ miles east
Moved to railroad
Still Old Stanley Cemetery



Bank robbery
Saturday, March 17, 1928 – Amherst bank
(BT July, 1982)
Minor crime wave –

Friday robbers had broken into Walker's hardware in Gibbon and stolen 3 shotguns and shells.

Friday night a Buick was stolen from in front of World Theater in Kearney.

Early Saturday morning someone entered Hill Bros. Store in Riverdale & took overalls, sweaters, other clothing, food, and \$6.30.

3 p.m. boys saw

- 1) a mud covered Buick parked by the school
- 2) a door open at the school
- 3) a window broken.

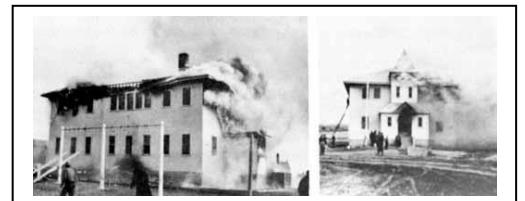
- * 3:30 p.m. fire alarm sounded

School was on fire.

Bank employees among the few who did not answer the call.

3:50 p.m. – Robbers entered bank

Got \$2,654.50.



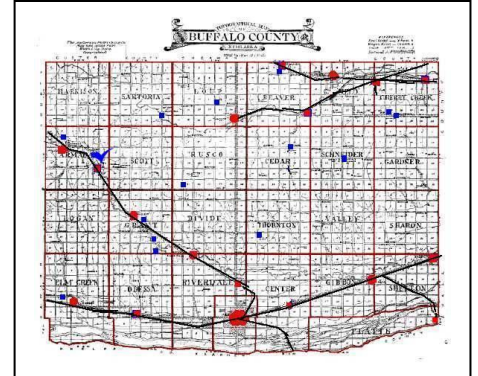
Escaped but recognized as local.
 3 of the 4 were arrested, tried and each sentenced to 22 years in the pen.
 President of bank was Norma Ahrendt's father.

- * Watertown – Est. founded in 1890, depot and water tank for train

On site of a country store built by J. S. Veal
 School 1 mile south
 Country cemetery 2 miles north

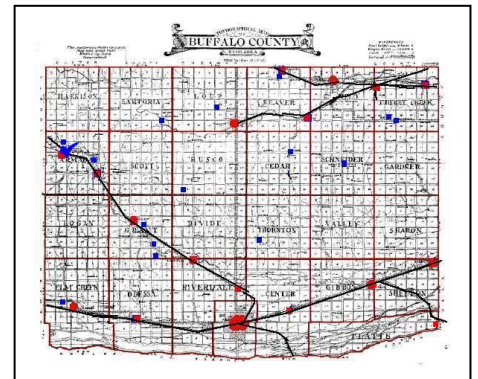
- * Elevator, stockyards – bring grain & livestock to ship out
 Post Office, cream testing station, general store, blacksmith, brickyard
 Flour mill on Wood River ran for a few years – closed 1915
 Limestone quarry 1 ½ miles away

Ended about 1920 – store burned
 Everything gone by 1930
 1967 population 3



- * Miller – Started as Armada in 1870's
 On Kearney & Black Hills stage route
 Kearney & Black Hills Railroad platted one mile south
 Bridge built over Wood River
 Armada moved 1890
 Miller first called Hancock

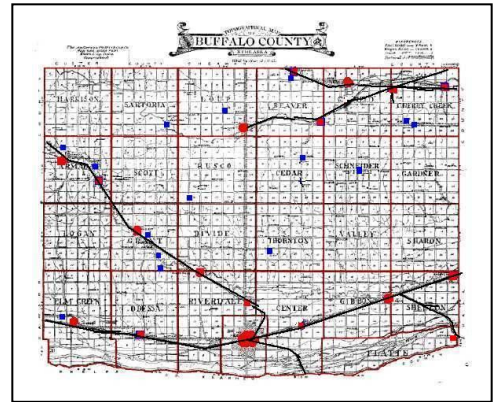
- * Houston, newspaper editor,
 Not going to move!
Armada Watchman one week
Miller Forum next week



1886 - Two Contests

* 1. Which town would be the division point for the Burlington – Nantasket or Beaver Creek?

Erastus Smith, the promoter of Beaver Creek
(now called Ravenna),
Dr. McKinney promoter of Nantasket



Began when railroad officials from the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad (C.B.&Q.) came in the early 1880's to decide where the division point of the railroad should be laid.

The story goes that Dr. McKinney was called away to Kearney on false pretenses, C.B.&Q. officials met with Erastus Smith
Decided to change Beaver Creek's name to Ravenna
Decided to make Ravenna the division point of the new railroad.

Name chosen by pin in map

* 2. The race Between Two Railroads –

a. Grand Island and Wyoming Central – **Burlington** (1886)
From Grand Island to Broken Bow and on northwest

Entered Buffalo County near St. Michael.

Followed the South Loup River to Nantasket (on south side of river)
Crossed the river

Entered Ravenna. (Ravenna is on north side of river)

Followed Beaver Creek to Sweetwater and on into Sherman and Custer Counties
to Broken Bow and on northwest.

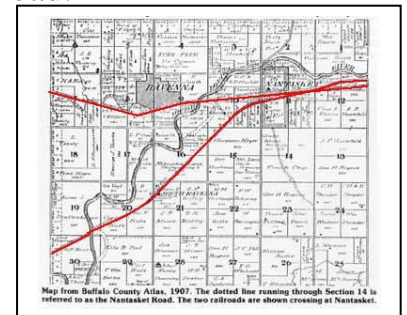
b. Omaha & Republican Valley RR – **Union Pacific** (1886)

From Grand Island north to St. Paul.

One branch to Ord, other to Loup City via Boelus.

Branch from Boelus (Howard City) west into Buffalo County at St. Michel
Through Nantasket and southwest along Loup

Cross the South Loup River, through Poole to River View (Pleasanton).



Two tracks would have to cross each other two miles east of Ravenna at Nantasket

Apparently the rule was that the company that laid the track across the crossing first would get the right of way and would lay tracks on the ground, other on had to build an overpass

One bitterly cold night the Burlington won the race by:

"lining the stomachs of the guards posted by the Union Pacific line with an ample supply of liquor; so ample, in fact, that the guards were unwilling, or unable to do anything when the Burlington crews laid their track through and beyond the crossing, thus earning the right of way."

Towns on the Burlington Route

St Michael – P O 1887, never much of a town

Shipping point for livestock, alfalfa, & grain

Kyne brothers, raised sheep, lived there

Michael Kyne agreed to sell part of his land for platting a town if it was named St. Michael

- * Ravenna – Founded by Erastis Smith
Early settler – floor gave out in Kearney
Stayed at McGee Ranch at Sweetwater



- * Sweetwater – First located on south bank of Beaver Creek
McGee's ranch on Beaver Creek at crossing
Loup City wagon & stagecoach route
Named for sweet water in Beaver Creek
Now called Muddy Creek

Burlington & Wyoming RR went on north side
Sweetwater moved to north side, right on Sherman Co. line



Henry Beyer and his wife came to Sweetwater and took over the mercantile business. Beyer built a new store with living quarters on the second floor.

Some time later a friend and family stopped while passing through. A blanket was hung across the upstairs living quarters to provide privacy for each family. The next morning the two men drove to Kearney to get supplies for the store. It was late at night by the time they got back. They put up the horses and, exhausted, fell into bed. There followed a great commotion by wives and children. The men were in the wrong beds.

Towns on the Union Pacific spur

Plan was to run it on up the South Loup through Sartoria, Pilot, Cumro, & Georgetown in Custer County to Callaway but that never happened.

Stopped at Pleasanton, operated until flood in 1947 washed out Loup River railroad bridge

* Nantasket – Area originally settled by Czechs
Town first called Trocnov (pronounced Trots'-nof)

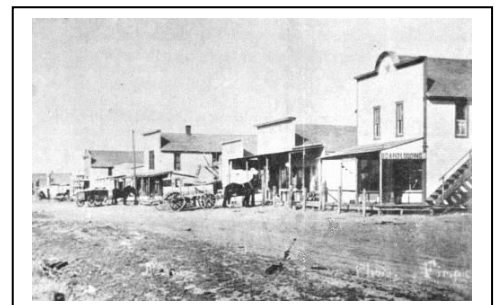
Platted in 1886 – 3 times larger than Ravenna
(UP wanted to make Nantasket big & important)
Named for a New York or Massachusetts town



Known as "Bottle Town" for its "unsavory reputation" it earned from the four or five saloons it boasted and through the "exuberance of the patrons" of a large dance hall and bar.

Official demise in 1959 – school sold last 12 lots for \$25 and then closed

* Poole – Established in 1889 as Pool's Siding
Named for W. W. Pool who came in 1876 & started a ranch
He & others organized NE Land & Cattle Co.,
10,000 acres of land
3,500 cultivated acres, 6,500 range
Siding was put in for shipping their cattle
Town incorporated in 1892 as Pool's Siding
Later shortened to Poole



WW Pool (54) had financial reverses
March 21, 1898 - committed suicide on 2 children's graves
Wife, premature labor a week later, both died

1900 town sold – part of Pool's estate
Store owners moved buildings off their lots – they did not own their land.
Bank sold lots back to store owners so they moved their buildings back

Real town now, not spot on Pool's ranch

1920's high point – pop. 337

Presbyterian influence –

Banned Turkey Trot & Bunny Hop, no baseball on Sunday afternoons

Down hill in 1930's – bank moved to Ravenna, store owner died

Flood in 1947 closed railroad, ended town

1972 incorporation dissolved

* Pleasanton – Started as bridge across Loup for traffic going north

Post Office on north side of river – Riverview

Railroad line planned, platted a town here 1890

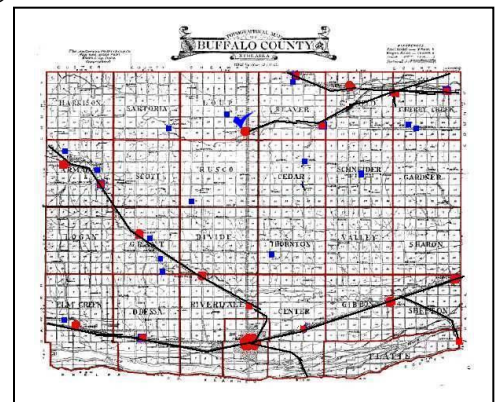
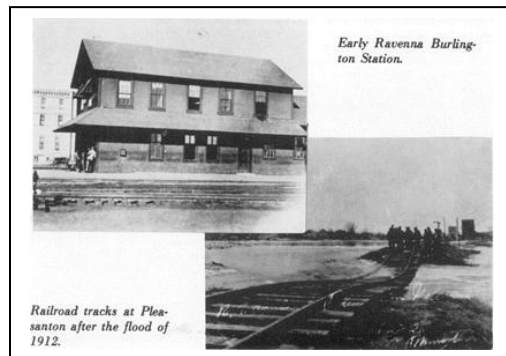
Man who had store & P O had previously had store in

Pleasant Valley –

Possibly named Pleasanton after that.

* Floods –

1912 (and Ravenna depot)



* 1924 flood



1947 – End of railroad service

Flood did not mark end of Pleasanton because of highway

*** Hastings & Northwestern Railroad (Gibbon Cutoff)**

Built about 1912

Denman – Southeast corner of county, on island in Platte
Can walk in a couple of minutes into Hall, Adams or
Kearney county

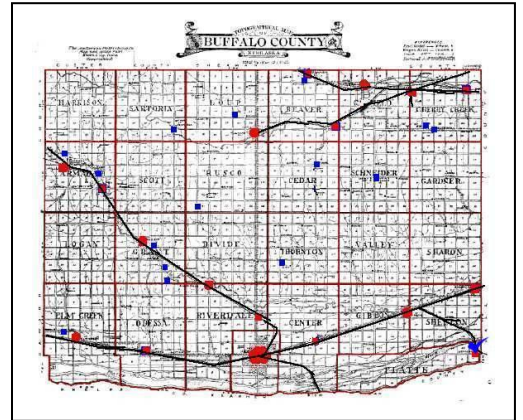
Platted May 1913

Named for Francis Denman who owned the land
Last Post Office opened in county – July 1914

First depot was a box car with wheels removed.

Set up on -10° day

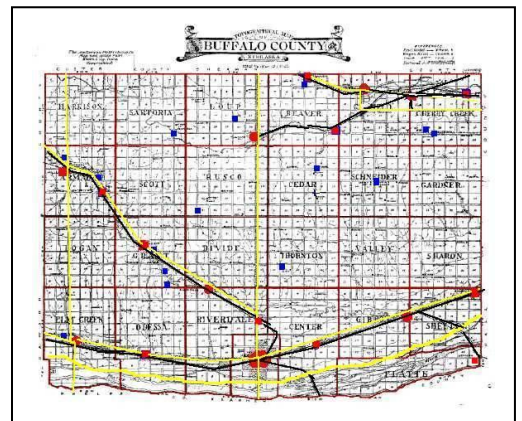
Section crews lived in Denman until early 1930's.
When they left, most of population left



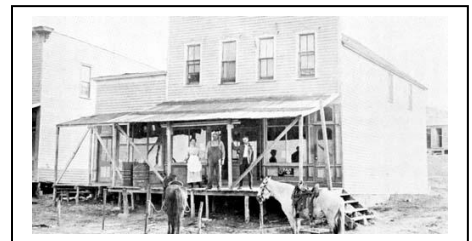
*** Communities**

Add Highways – Still connecting railroad towns

Many local communities –
centered around church, school, post office
Never developed into a town

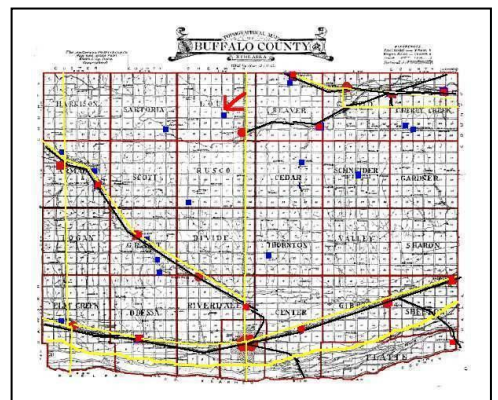


- * Sartoria – On north side of Loup River under a bluff
Horse races up on bluff
John Swenson – opened Post Office in Dec. 1879
Peak population 40
Swenson died 1923, town dissolved



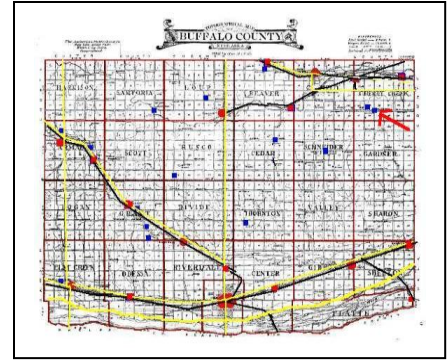
- * Mahila – in Loup Township in Pleasant Valley
 - P O in 1882 – 1891
 - Railroad went through Pleasanton, Mahila did not develop

Wrightsville – P O one year, 1887, near Armada
On Loup where trail crossed
General store



* Sodtown – 1905 Telephone co. organized

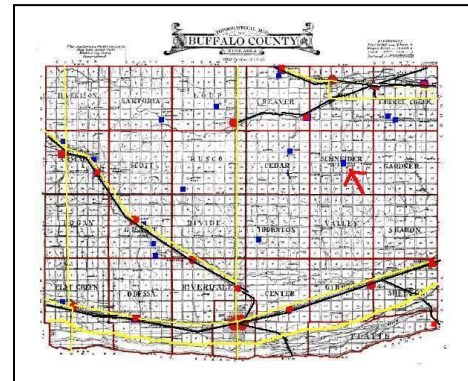
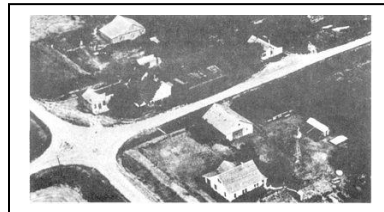
* Not all the buildings were made of sod



* Berg – Center of Schneider Township –
Saxon settlement - P O in 1873

Centennial – P O in 1876 – near Sweetwater, south

* Luce – near Sodtown

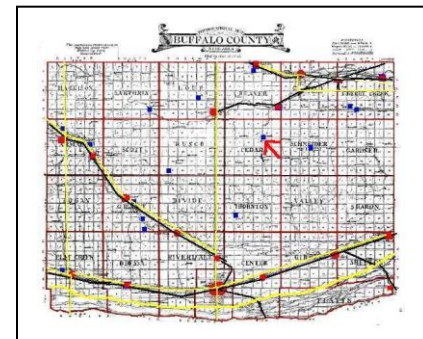


* Majors – P O in 1878

No name submitted

Name of Majors assigned,

Community around post office, no town developed



* Peake – P O in 1884, church, school

Never developed into a town

Huntsville – 3 miles northwest of Riverdale

Had a post office & school in 1873

P O moved 2 miles west and became Stanley

Green Dale – a few miles northeast of Huntsville on the Wood

