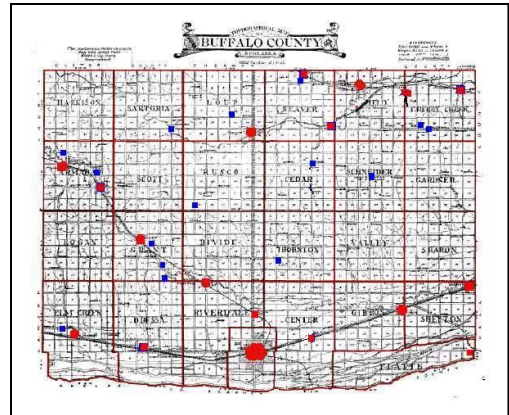


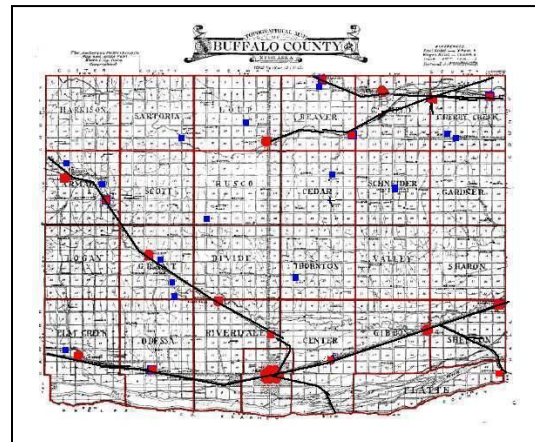
Towns in Buffalo County

- 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



Cities & Towns along Railroads

Union Pacific

1866 – Put in Gibbon Siding
 Depots at Kearney Station & Elm Creek

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.
 Went to Utah in 1861
 Jan. 20, 1870 – County of Buffalo organized at Dist. 1 school
 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 ¼ section

Later gave some of it to plat Shelton

Oct. 1872 – Post Office

Patrick Walsh as first post master

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

Village of Shelton incorporated 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

Front Street in Gibbon



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 as county seat briefly

Called Kearney Station – then Shelby (1876) – then Buda (1878)

Possibly named for Budepest



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, too close to Kearney



Elm Creek about 1906 before fire downtown

Elm Creek – A station on the UP in 1866

Named for red elms along creek

First located mile west of present site

Moved in 1883

Kearney & Black Hills Railroad

(square in lower right corner of map is Buffalo County)

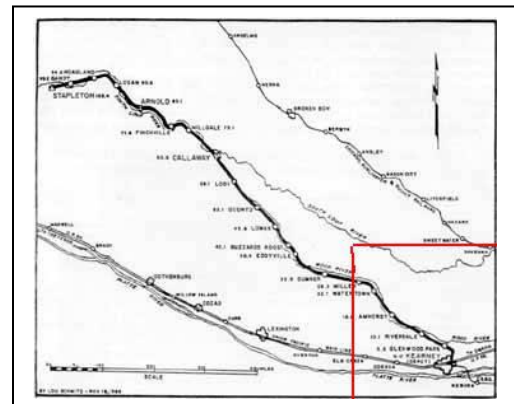
1886 – UP acquired land for a spur – nothing happened

1889 – Kearney gave up waiting,

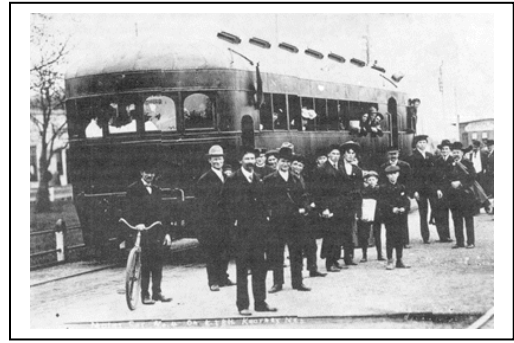
formed K & BH Railway Co.

1890 – Construction began

1898 – UP took ownership



1905 – Launched the McKean gas-powered motor car
 1912 – Extended from Calloway to Stapleton
 1955 – closed - Bug & Steam locomotive 481
 (Engine 481 now at Trails & Rails Museum)



Glenwood Park – Post Office 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
 Closed 1910 when land owner died

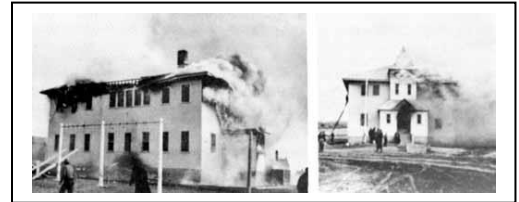
Riverdale – Riverdale school Dist. 15 organized in 1871

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

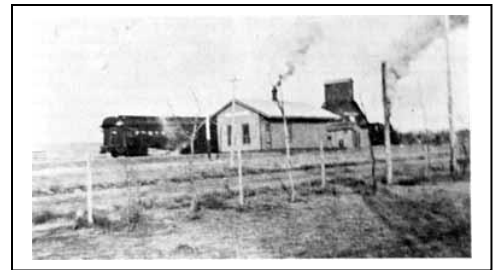
Moved to railroad
 Still Old Stanley Cemetery

Bank robbery
Saturday, March 17, 1928 – Amherst bank
 (see BT July, 1982)



Watertown – Estimate - 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 was plated one mile south,
 Armada moved 1890
 Miller first called Hancock



1886 - Two Contests

1. Which town would be the division point for the Burlington?

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

Early 1880's - Officials from the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad arrived to
decide where the division point of the railroad should be established.

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

Make Ravenna the division point of the new railroad.

2. The race Between Two Railroads

a. Grand Island and Wyoming Central – **Burlington** (1886)

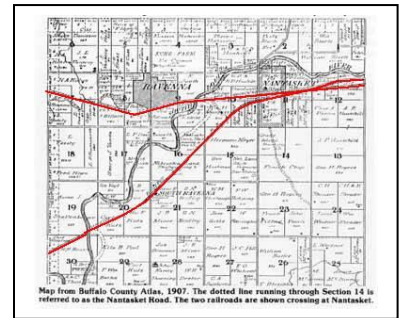
From Grand Island to Broken Bow and on northwest

Entered Buffalo County near St. Michael.

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

Crossed the river, entered Ravenna.

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 South Loup River.

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

Following these routes, the two tracks would have to cross each other two miles east of Ravenna at Nantasket. 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. The Burlington won the race.

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



Sweetwater – Originally on south bank of Beaver Creek
McGee’s ranch on Kearney-Loup City wagon & stagecoach route.

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



Towns on Union Pacific spur

Plan was to run it on up the South Loup from Nantasket, through Pleasanton, 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

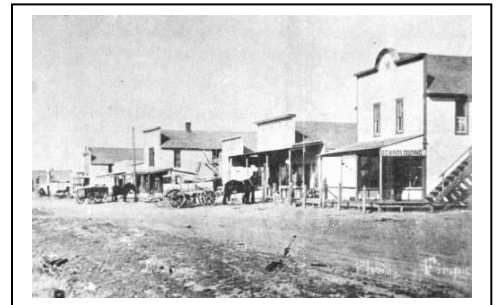


Official demise in 1959 – school sold last 12 lots for \$25 and then closed

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.
Siding was put in for shipping their cattle

Town incorporated in 1892 as Pool’s Siding
Later shortened to Pool

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



1900 town land sold as 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 – Began 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 & Post Office had previously had store in Pleasant Valley
 Possibly named Pleasanton after that.

Floods – 1912 (and Ravenna depot)

1924 flood



1947 – End of railroad service but not 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

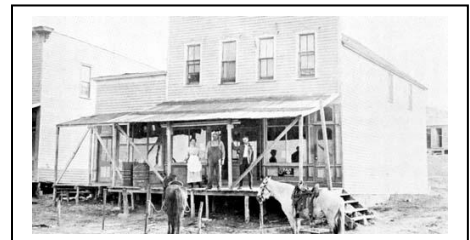
First depot was a box car with wheels removed.
 Section crews lived here until early 1930's.
 When they left, most of population left

Communities

Add Highways – Still only connecting railroad towns

Many local communities – centered around church, school, post office
 Never developed into a town without main transportation routes

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



Mahila – in Loup Township in Pleasant Valley

Post Office from 1882 – 1891

Railroad went through Pleasanton, Mahila did not develop

Wrightsville – Post Office one year, 1887, near Armada on Loup where trail crossed

Had a general store

Sodtown – 1905 Telephone co. organized

Still a community

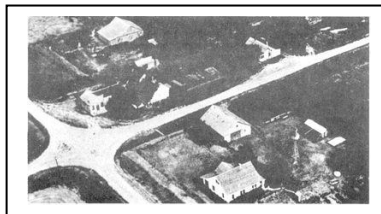
Not all the buildings were made of sod



Berg – Center of Schneider Township –

Saxon settlement - Post Office in 1873

Centennial – Post Office in 1876 – near Sweetwater



Luce – an intersection near Sodtown

Majors – Post Office in 1878 in Cedar Township

No name submitted with P O application, Majors assigned,

Community around post office, and church, no town developed

Peake – Post Office in 1884, church, school

Never developed into a town

Huntsville – 3 miles northwest of Riverdale

Had a post office & school in 1873

Post Office moved 2 miles west and became Stanley

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

Prairie Center – North of Kearney.

Post Office in 1874 – 1902 – 2 miles north of cemetery

Two churches –

St. Mary's Catholic

Haven's Chapel United Methodist