

ROOTS OF BUFFALO COUNTY: THE IRISH - Part II

by Margaret Stines Nielsen

The Anthony Kyne family were charter members of the first Catholic Church established in Ravenna; there being none in St. Michael. The Kyne home on the west edge of the village was operated as a hotel for a time.

Mary Elizabeth Kyne O'Connor, sister of Michael and Anthony, came to the area in 1884 with her husband, Michael O'Connor, and six children. They located south of the Anthony Kyne farm, one mile from the village when it was established. Through pre-emption, a homestead, a tree claim and purchase, O'Connor came to own much of the pasture land south of the village. Michael O'Connor became St. Michael's first postmaster and also served as mayor for many years.

Sheep raising was the largest industry in the area at the time. The meadow lands along the South Platte River were ideal for this activity and were much like the home land of the Kynes and O'Connors. Later, cattle raising was predominant. The village of St. Michael was a shipping point on the railroad for livestock, alfalfa hay and grain over the years.