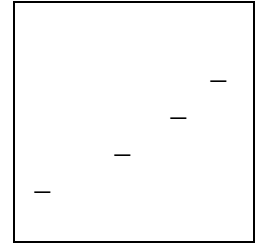


Gardner Township

Harrison – Sartoria – Loup – Beaver – Garfield – Cherry Creek
Armada – Scott – Rusco – Cedar – Schneider – Gardner

Location: Second tier,
Sixth from west, first on east
South of Nantasket & St Michael



Terrain: Rolling farm land

Watershed ridge runs northeast to southwest diagonally through the township from two miles south on eastern border to two miles north on western border

Streams in northeast half flow north

Cherry Creek flows north to empty into the South Loup

Other streams in southeast half of township flow southeast into Hall county, to Wood River.

Towns – none

Communities – Luce

Named for John Luce, first postmaster in 1885

Located at an intersection about 2 miles east & 2 miles north of the SW corner

At turn of century - Progressive spot - store, post office and 2 blacksmith shops,
Sodtown Telephone Co. had their switchboard here

John Luce –

1831 – born in Pennsylvania.

Mother died when he was 6 days old

Raised by grandparents

1847 – Apprenticed to a carpenter (age 16)

1851-2 – Had to quit after 4-5 years because of failing eyesight

Blind for 2 years but regained eyesight

1858 – married, had 6 children – 3 before wae, eldest survived

Civil War - served in Union Army

1866, Jan. – discharged, returned to Pennsylvania

1869-1877 – last three children born in Pennsylvania

1878 – Came to Gardner Twp, got soldier's homestead

5th of family to settle in Gardner ?

Other Luces in NE, one in Cedar twp – maybe females

Hardships – Paid \$2.50/acre to have 15 acres of sod broken = \$37.50

Worked at \$.60/day to pay for it = 62 ½ days (2 months)

Went to Loup River for fuel (prob. 5 miles)

Severe winter 1880-81 burned hay and cornstalks

Post office September 28, 1885

1924 - died

Churches & Cemeteries:

Evangelical Church

1879 – started in Schneider Township

First meetings were in a sod schoolhouse

1880 – small frame church was built

Later - new building 3 miles east and 1 mile north in Gardner Township

Present Zion Ravenna United Methodist Church.

Zion Evangelical Lutheran (Missouri Synod)

1885 – Organized

1890 – winter – built first church building in Sec. 3

(11 ½ miles north & 1 mile west of Shelton)

School started in winter of 1890 –

Taught in German in mornings & English in afternoons.

Small cemetery here – 8 burials

1897 – Church taken down and rebuilt on present 5 acre site in Sec. 22 –

A mile west and 2 ½ miles south of old location, near Luce which is mile south & mile west

(now church is 9 mi north, 2 west of Shelton)

Parochial school operated until 1945

1912 – Present building erected – typical country church with tall spire

Larger cemetery here – Still in use

Also known at various times as St. Michael Church, Luce Church, North Shelton Church

Mrs. Floyd Pope put together a history of the church

Custom in early years – girls in front, ladies behind on west side

Boys in front, men behind on east side

Settlement:

1874 – 7 filed

1875 – 2 filed - George Gardner

George Gardner – Township named for him

First settler [but 7 filed the year before he arrived]

1843 - Born in New York state

Moved with parents to Pennsylvania

1861 - Age 18 in enlisted & fought in Civil War – 42 battles, shot in lung

1864-1875 - Returned to Pennsylvania

1875 (age 32) - Went to Buffalo County in spring

2 terms on County Board of Supervisors

1883 - Married (age 40) – 5 daughters

1890 - Wife died

1895 (age 62) - Retired to Shelton

1915 - Remarried (age 72)

More settlement:

1876 – 2 filed – George Peck

1877 – 6 filed – Emma Peck – can't find them

1878 – 37 filed – (after drought and grasshoppers)

Elizabeth J. Aufderhide, - man, 60, either widowed or divorced in 1880

Joanna Dean – widow

2 sons, John & Albert, born in R I about 1858, 1859

She, husband James & 2 boys in Providence in 1860

1870 John in reform school in R I, nothing on rest of family

1878 came to Buffalo County. Why here?

Boys moved on to Tacoma, Washington

F. Rohrbach

John Luce

1879 – 19 filed - John A. Hogg,

Samuel Urwiller

4 Barrett – D, Wm, Luke, J. H. – not related to each other

Luke went to Shelton twp, joined by brother, Wm, not the above Wm.

5 Mulbach - H., JGA., F.A, W. F. & E.

One family of father and 2 sons

Don't know if the others are related

German

3 or 4 Urwiller, Saml, F & J, Samuel

Samuel Urwiller –

Born in Switzerland – 1844

1854 – Came to US to Rochester, New York with family (age 10)

1857 – Moved to Michigan, farmed (age 13)

Employed in farm labor

1867 – Began work as carpenter (age 23)

1868 – Married, had 5 children,

1878 – Came to Buffalo Co., homesteaded in Sec. 4, Gardner twp.

Relinquished it and went to Cherry Creek twp

Later bought 80 acres in Gardner twp.

1883 – father moved here from Michigan to be near his children

1883 – wife died

1884 – remarried (age 40), had 4 children

One son farmed in Gardner tp

One son farmed the home place

One daughter married a Gardner twp farmer

1908 – Retired to Ravenna

John Hogg

1844 – Born In Pennsylvania

1865 – came to Iowa, carpenter,

Married daughter of a carpenter (age 21), had 12 children, 9 survived

1872 – established grocery store in Mitchellville, Iowa (age 28)

1879 – lost it all, came to Nebr. With \$3 after freight costs

Worked in Shelton mill for \$1/day, advanced to millright @ 1.50/day

Traded gold watch for relinquishment on a homestead

Built sod house, no floor for a year

1893 – Served on County Board of Supervisors

1906 – Went to Oregon

Regain health

Visit son who raised prize winning hogs

1908 – returned to Nebr. and retired to Shelton

2 sons farm in Buffalo Co., 1 dau married a Nutter farming here

We move buildings but -----

In 1878 the Rohrbachs took a homestead in Gardner Township. When the surveyor informed them that their sod house was in the middle of the road, they built another in the center of their land.

When a prairie fire came through they threw water on the sod house and stayed inside until the danger was past.

Several years later they built a two-room frame house with an attic.

Dances were held there, with all the neighborhood invited, and a fiddler providing the music.

The Rohrbach's great grandson, Bruce Muhlbach, now owns the homestead.

[2005-Bruce Mulbach et al trust owns se ¼ 9-11-13 and sw ¼ 10-11-13]

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