

Basically Kilgore and Elm islands between channels of the Platte because the south border of Buffalo County is the south shore of the Platte. Gibbon and Shelton townships are bounded on the south by the north channel of the river. Platte Township occupies the space between.

Two roads run the length of the township, Kilgore Road and Elm Road. Neither runs in a straight line but goes northeast to southwest

Platte Township

Elm Island: School Districts 41 and 68

(no publication date, probably shortly after the ending poem about sandhill cranes was written in 1988-donated to Archives in August, 1993)

Traces ownership of most of the farmsteads here using their abstracts as the sources.

Thomas Peck – purchased land from US Land office in 1860. Built a 2 room house. Enlarged in 1901 with 2 more rooms and a porch on the north and a 2nd floor with 2 bedrooms over the original 2 rooms. Remodeled in 1943. 1965 torn down and a new one built, ready for occupation in Feb. 1966

Eldon Reeder House - House first located in east Lowell. Sold in 1905 to Washington Pulver and moved to Pulver Ranch. Moved to Denman and purchased by elevator for help to live in. Bill Reeder, elevator manager 1918-1935, lived there. Son Eldon bought 2 lots in Denman in 1951, bought a house and moved it from rural Kenesaw. Added a room in 1953 and 2 rooms in 1964. Bought a 2-car garage and moved it in

Frank Eddy-Kenneth Blue – Moved 4-room house in from Hayland, NE., 1938. Moved to Grand Island in 1949. Still there when this book was written.

Ice – 1920's Frank Wiese started a store. Needed ice. Harvested ice from a pond nearby, stored in building across the street. Did this for some 10 years in the 1930's until Denman got electricity. Ice house was moved across the bridge north for use as a garage.

Mike Anderson – village blacksmith, saw mill operator, thrasher, etc. No children but loved them. "He was a lover of fishing and enjoyed every moment of it."

Train wreck between the Platte River Bridge and Denman – Fall 1926

Denman – Land donated by Albert Denman's father, Frank Wiese came to town in 1921 and operated a grocery-general merchandise store until retiring in 1961. At its peak the town had the store, a hotel an implement dealer, auto dealer, lumber yard, beet dump, UP section crew of 12. Planned for north side of tracks but Hall Co. refused to build bridge on county line. Moved south and Shelton built bridge 1 mile in.

Biographical Souvenir of Buffalo, Kearney, & Phelps County,

1890

p. 153-4 - **WILLIAM H. KILLGORE** came from Bradford county, Pa., to Buffalo county, Nebr., in February, 1872, locating in section 12 township 9, range 15, remaining here about four years. In 1876, going into the stock raising business, he went to what is now Custer county, helping to organize that county and serving as commissioner several terms. In 1880 he pre-empted a quarter section, and in 1883 he came to Kearney City, feeding cattle for one year. He then went to the territories of Utah, Idaho and Montana. He remained in Montana a short time only, although he had intended to make it his home, and left for Iowa and Minnesota; not liking these states, he again returned to Kearney, and bought some land on Drover Island, directly opposite old Fort Kearney, in Platte river. He there owns five quarter-sections of the finest hay and grazing lands in the state, and on Farm Island four quarter-sections, one hundred and fifty acres of which are under cultivation, producing corn and oats. He also raises a quantity of stock. When he came West, he had \$3,000; he now owns fifteen hundred acres of land and a number of town lots, together with improvements, which he rents out at Kearney. He has upwards of two hundred head of cattle, seventy horses and a large number of hogs. Mr. Killgore was born in Bradford county, Pa., in August, 1839, on a farm. His father, John Killgore, a native of New Jersey, went to Pennsylvania, where he engaged in the tailoring business; but, leaving this, he engaged in farming. He is still residing in Pennsylvania at the ripe age of eighty-one years. His wife, Lydia W. Haynes, was a native of New York. To this union were born eleven children, William being the fourth. At the age of thirteen he ran away from home, going to a lumber camp; remaining at this a short time, he went into the butchering business, remaining in this several years; then, returning home, he worked at carpentering. The war breaking out in 1861, he enlisted in April with Battery E, First Pennsylvania light artillery, serving the first two years as quartermaster's sergeant. He was then promoted to a second, and shortly after to a first, lieutenant, serving in all four years and three months. His battery was the first to go into Richmond. He sustained a rupture during one of the numerous battles in which he was engaged, for which he is now drawing a pension. After being mustered out at Philadelphia, he returned home and started a saw-mill. In 1867 he married Miss Sophie Dilts, a daughter of Philip Dilts, of New Jersey. Her father died in 1876; her mother is still living in Pennsylvania. This union has not been blessed by any children. In politics Mr. Killgore is an ardent republican, and is also a member of the Loyal Legion of the United States. As a citizen he is highly respected.

Coe Kilgore

Federal Census – 1860 – Manitou Township, Cooper County, Missouri

Killgore, Coe – 23, farmer, born in Penn

Lydea J. – 21, keeping house, born in Penn.

Etta – 1, daughter, born in Penn.

Federal Census – 1870 – Troy Borough, Pennsylvania

Killgore, Coe – 33, farmer, born in Penn

L. J. – 31, keeping house, born in New York.

Ellie – 11, daughter, born in Penn.

Ellen – 7, daughter, born in Penn.

Federal Census – 1880 – Precinct 1, Custer County

Kilgore, Coe – 43, stockman, born in Pennsylvania, parents born in NJ

L. J. – 40, keeping house, born in NY, parents born in NY

Etta – 18, at home, born in Penn.

Federal Census – 1910 – Kearney, Buffalo County, Nebraska

Killgore, Coe – 73, own income, married 20 years, second marriage, born in New Jersey

Anna- 51, wife, 1st marriage, married 20 years, no children, born in Utah

Federal Census – 1920 – Kearney, Buffalo County, Nebraska

Killgore, Coe – 83, boarder living with Theadore Sillstrop family, born in Pennsylvania, parents born in NJ

Kearney Cemetery

Kilgore (Killgore), Coe – buried 5-18-1925, age 89, died of gangrene, buried in lot 682 East, space 4

Kilgore, Anna – died 3-18-1919, age 69, buried in lot 682 East, space 3

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nebuffal/schools/precinct.htm>

**SCHOOL DISTRICTS -
PRECINCT / TOWNSHIP**

Precinct	Section and Location therein	District No.	Nickname(s), if any
Platte	8 (West)	40	Kilgore Island - Evergreen
Platte	2 (east) NW 1/4	41	Denman
Platte	6 (east)	42	
Platte	7 (east)	72	Elm Island

Bassett, Vol I

p. 111 [filings before 1878 included with Gibbon & Shelton township filings]

PLATTE TOWNSHIP--TOWN NO. 8, RANGES 13 AND 14

1878—

Jacob Miller,
Nelson Jaco,
C. E. Darling,
F. C. Goodwin,
Edward Broderick,

A. Smith,
H. S. Towers,
R. H. Pember,
John Stutz,
Fred Donner,
Henrich Brenkman,
W. H. Wallace,
John Nash,
Wm. Moreland,
Wm. J. Willars,
John Hartwell,
John Pember,
E. Slatie,
L. Morrow,
Thomas Carson,
Sarepta Patterson,
A. Johnson,
G. W. Rishel,
N. Platt,
M. Martin,
F. A. Morgan,
J A. Combs,
Sophia Holbrook,
P. McBride,
Silas Troop,
A. A. Robinson,
T. L. Graffius,
H. Wilcox,
Samuel Boyer,
Charles Ernst.

1879-

John Vanwey,
George Stearley,
J. W. Weaver,
M. O. Kessler,
John W. Shahan,
John T. Gilliland,
T. Swenier,
I. A. Matlick,
W. H. Fulton,
J. Kent.

THOMAS J. PECK. One of the oldest settlers of Platte township, Buffalo county, as well as one of the most prosperous citizens of the community where he lives, is Thomas J. Peck, the subject of this biographical notice. Mr. Peck has been a resident of the locality where he now resides for about seventeen years, coming to Nebraska in December, 1873, and settling first in Hall county, where he remained three years, moving thence across the line into Buffalo county, living there since. He came from Iowa to Nebraska, but is a native of Pennsylvania. He was born in Chester county, near the city of Philadelphia, and comes of old Pennsylvania ancestry, his parents and his grandparents being residents from time immemorial of the "Key stone State." His father, John Peck, was born, reared and passed his entire life in Chester county, being a farmer and following the peaceful pursuits of agriculture up to the close of an industrious, well spent life, dying in 1864 at the age of forty-five. His mother, Margaret Taylor, who was a native also of Chester county, passed all her years near the place of her nativity, dying in July, 1886, well advanced in years. Only two children were born to John and Margaret (Taylor) Peck, both boys, they being now residents of Platte township, Buffalo county, this state, the elder, Thomas J., the subject of this sketch, and the younger Samuel E. T.

Thomas J. was born in July, 1843, and reared near his birth-place, not far from Philadelphia. He grew up as most farm boys do, receiving a fair common-school education and being trained to the habits of industry and usefulness common to farm life. In June, 1861, not yet having attained his eighteenth year, he entered the Union army, enlisting in Company K, fourth Pennsylvania reserves, and, his regiment being assigned to the Army of the Potomac, he served in that command for twenty-two months. Enlisting under age, his mother had him taken out of the service at the end of that time under habeas corpus proceedings, and he was kept at home until 1864, when, in February of that year, he again entered the army, enlisting in Company K, Eighth Pennsylvania cavalry, and served till after the surrender, being mustered out and discharged at Richmond, Va., August 11, 1865. During his term of service the last time, he was under Gen. P. H. Sheridan and was in the saddle continuously from the time he entered the service till the close of the war.

Returning to Pennsylvania he remained there a short time and then filled with a growing desire to see the great West and find some suitable location, where he could settle down and grow up with his surroundings, he emigrated to Iowa in 1866, where he settled, married and resided till 1873, coming thence in December of that year as above noted, to Hall county, this state. He settled in Hall county, near the corners of the four counties of Hall, Adams, Kearney and Buffalo, taking a soldier's homestead. Three years later he bought a relinquishment on the southeast quarter of section 36, just across the line in Buffalo county, on which he filed a pre-emption claim, settled, and has since resided there. Taking this claim when it was almost all raw land, he has, by great industry and unremitting attention to all the details of the farm, made of it one of the best improved and most pleasant places in his township, having one hundred acres of it under plow, handsome groves and large and comfortable buildings, residence and barn. The secret of his success has been in his hard, persistent labor, his strict economy and his judicious management. He is regarded as one of the best farmers of his locality and as a business man of sound sense and discriminating judgment.

Mr. Peck married June 10, 1867 - the lady whom he selected to share his life's fortunes being Miss Mary E. Elter, then of Iowa, but a native of Pennsylvania. Mrs. Peck's father, Nicholas Elter, was a native of France and was reared in his native country to the age of eighteen, coming thence to America and settling in Pennsylvania, where he married, and after a residence there of some years moved to Iowa, and there died in August, 1887, at the age of sixty-five. Mrs. Peck's mother, Julia Elter, was born in Tioga county, Penn., and is still living, being a resident of Iowa. Of the eleven children in the family to which Mrs. Peck belonged, six are now living, being married and settled off in life. The eldest, John B., was killed in the late war at the battle of Peach Orchard, Va., he being a member of the Eighth

Pennsylvania cavalry; Charles died young, and the others are - Sarah, William, Charlotte (deceased), Emma, Minerva, Hattie, George and Susan. Mrs. Peck is the third of the family and the eldest girl.

In politics Mr. Peck is a democrat and comes of a line of ancestors who drew their political faith from the teachings of Jefferson and Jackson, and is a staunch supporter of the doctrines and methods of his party. And he is withal an intelligent, hospitable, pleasant gentleman.

NELSON JACO is a representative farmer of Platte township, Buffalo county. He is not an old settler, speaking of the county in general but he is, nevertheless, one of the, first settlers in the locality where he lives. He came from West Virginia, moved into the county in November, 1878, and settled on the northeast quarter of section 7, township 8, range 13 west, filing a homestead claim thereon. His farm is located on part of the old Fort Kearney military reservation, which, it will be remembered, was opened to settlement about the above date. He has one hundred and forty-five acres in this tract, eighty acres of which are under cultivation. He has improved his place, having a very good class of farm buildings on it, besides orchard, groves and other conveniences. Lying between the channels of the Platte river, his place is admirably adapted to farming purposes and yields well, producing an abundance of Nebraska's sovereign products - corn and hay. Mr. Jaco is a practical farmer, having followed the business all his life, and having met with reasonably good success. He began on limited means when he opened his present farm, twelve years ago, and the first few years of his residence in the county were not marked for any astounding amount of progress. With him the case was very much like it was with numbers of others, and was mostly a matter of bread and butter. But Mr. Jaco came West to make a home, and he was prepared to endure a reasonable amount of hardships, but a detailed account of his earlier struggles in the county need not be given here. It will be sufficient to say that he met the obstacles as they arose, and successfully dealt with them, and that whatever praise the general public is prepared to award the old settlers for their pluck, energy and endurance, a fair share of it must be given him, for he faithfully performed his duties in the general undertaking of opening the country to settlement. He has resided on his farm continuously since locating there, with the exception of four years he was back East - from 1882 to 1886.

Mr. Jaco was born in Preston county, (now West) Virginia, June, 1848, and was reared there, growing up as a farm boy, to the age of sixteen. Then came an event in his life which has been duly chronicled in the lives of hundreds of others, and yet an event that should never cease to be told. It occurred in those eventful years when patriotism flashed through the land like an electric thrill; when the canker of gold and the dust of cotton dropped from the manhood of the nation, and men went forth to battle for their country; when men surrendered the search for wealth, dropped the plow in its furrow, the hammer at the forge, the pen at the desk, and marched forth cheerily to wounds and death. Mr. Jaco enlisted in defense of the Union in January, 1864, entering Company K, Fifteenth West Virginia infantry, and serving in Thoburn's division, eighth army corps, but most of the time he was under Sheridan and served as a private from the date of his enlistment to the surrender---a boy soldier---carrying a musket in defense of his country at sixteen. The facts need no comments. They speak abundantly for themselves. Freedom - prosperity - equal rights - the dignity of labor - the glories of the republic - these were won by the citizen-soldiers of 1861-5 ---stalwart actors they, though many were young in years.

Mr. Jaco comes of old Virginia parentage, his father and mother both being natives of Preston county. His father, Job Jaco, was a farmer in earlier years, but during the war gave up farming and embarked in merchandising, in which he was moderately successful. He led a quiet, unpretentious life, dying in the fall of 1883, at the age of sixty-five. Mr. Jaco's mother bore the maiden name of Sarah Gandy. She died

in the fall of 1884 at the age of sixty- three. These were the parents of eleven children, of whom the subject of this sketch is the ninth. The others are: Allen, Dorcas, Mahala, Jesse, William, Amos, Mary, Jane, Susan and Wesley.

Mr. Jaco married, November 26, 1868, Miss Sarah Jenkins of Evansville, Preston county, West Virginia. Mrs. Jaco was born and reared in Evansville and is a daughter of Joseph and Parmelia Jenkins of that place. She is one of eleven children born to her parents. Mr. and Mrs. Jaco have had born to them a family of six children, four of whom are living and two dead. The full list is as follows - Minnie (deceased), Ollie, Donie, Nettie (deceased), Pearl and Hazel.

While Mr. Jaco has never aspired to any public position, he has nevertheless been called on to fill some offices of responsibility in connection with the administration of local and township affairs. He has served as director of his school district; has been township clerk and is now serving as township assessor. He and all his family are members of the Methodist church and he is a liberal contributor to charitable purposes. He is a republican in politics and a zealous member of the Masonic fraternity and the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. As a citizen he is progressive, enterprising and public spirited - liberal in his views and in his means as far as his ability will allow. He is kind and accommodating, a good neighbor, a valuable friend and an intelligent, pleasant gentleman.

JACOB MILLER is a representative farmer of Platte township, Buffalo county. He settled on his present homestead in March, 1878, his claim being part of the Fort Kearney military reservation, which was thrown open to settlement about that date. Mr. Miller came to Nebraska from Preston county, W. Va., but is a native of New York City. He is of French extraction, his parents both being natives of the town of Strausburg. His father, George Miller, came to America after his marriage and settled first in New York City and afterwards in Preston county, W. Va. He died in the latter place in 1852 in his fortieth year. He was an engineer, an industrious, hard working man, of studious habits and very strong domestic tastes. Mr. Miller's mother, whose maiden name was Margaret Long, survived her husband many years, dying also in Preston county, W. Va., in August, 1872, aged seventy-two. These were the parents of three children, all of whom reached maturity and are now living. The eldest of these, Margaret, now wife of John Nine, and the youngest, George, both live in Preston county, W. Va. The second is the subject of this sketch, who was born in New York, March 9, 1839, and was quite a lad when his parents moved to West Virginia. He was apprenticed to the shoemaker's trade, learned it, and followed it till the war came on. He enlisted in the Union army in May, 1861, entering Company D, Sixth West Virginia cavalry, which regiment first formed the Third West Virginia infantry and was afterwards mounted. His company was commanded by Capt. A. J. Squires and was mustered into service at Newburg, Va., June 28, 1861. His regiment served with the Army of the Potomac and took part in the following engagements: Shaw's ridge, battle of McDowell, Franklin, Cross Keys, Cedar mountain, Rappahannock station, Waterloo Bridge, Sulphur Springs, second Bull Run, Warm Springs, Rocky gap, Mill Point, Droop mountains and other smaller ones. He was captured near New Creek. W. Va, in September, 1863, and was released on parole in February, 1864. During part of this time he was held at "Libby." When the war was over he continued in the regular service for more than a year, being on the frontier in the Indian service, ranging the plains and Rocky mountains, mostly along the stage lines. He was mustered out May 22, 1866, at Ft. Leavenworth, and returned to his old home in West Virginia, where he lived till coming to Nebraska in 1878.

Mr. Miller has been twice married. He married first in December, 1868, his wife being Miss Mary Shaw, a daughter of Thomas A. Shaw, of Preston county, W. Va. To this union were born three children

-William W., Marshall McCurdy and Thomas Clark, the last now deceased. Mr. Miller married the second time December 24, 1876 - the lady on whom his choice fell being Miss Helen Louisa Parsons, a daughter of James William and Catherine Parsons of Tucker county, W. Va. Mrs. Miller is a native of Tucker county, as were also her parents. Her father is still living there; her mother died in 1856, aged forty eight. Mrs. Miller is one of a family of eight children who reached maturity, namely - Jane Rebecca, Samson Ellion, Hannah, Agnes, Ann Melissa, Helen Louisa (Mrs. Miller), Diana Elizabeth and Solomon John.

Being a public spirited citizen as well as a man of good business qualifications, Mr. Miller has naturally been called upon to fill some offices in connection with the administration of the public affairs of his township. He has been moderator of his school district, road supervisor, and is now serving as township supervisor. In politics he is a republican. He cast his first presidential vote for the Bell-Everett ticket, but soon afterwards, affiliating with the republican party, he has voted that ticket since. Mr. Miller is an intelligent, liberal-minded, progressive citizen, and well esteemed by his neighbors.