

Douglas County was split on February 7, 1857. The southern portion became a separate county and was named Sarpy County in honor of Peter Sarpy who had operated a trading post in Bellevue since the 1820s.

In the 1850s, Sarpy County sprouted numerous towns. Many existed only for a short time and some were never more than a name on a map. Hazelton, Sauntee, Platteford, Triaqua, Platona, Larimer, Forest City, and Fairview were some of the towns that were born; within a few years most were nearly forgotten.

Transportation was a major problem in those early days. The Missouri River was the main artery of transport between Sarpy County and the outside world. Railroads did not yet exist. Roads consisted of narrow, rutted paths that ran between the towns.

Employment consisted of agricultural pursuits for the vast majority of residents.

There were a number of blacksmiths but many of them were farmers who did something on the side. There were a few scattered merchants and others who found non-agricultural work. The Dyson Hollow Lime Kiln employed a rather large number of workers who quarried limestone from the bluffs along the Platte River.

Educational opportunities were rather scarce. Several school districts were set up in the late 1850s but were quite scattered and teachers were difficult to find. A school term often consisted of a few months of teaching the 3 R's in the winter when the youngsters were not needed to help on the farm.

Religious activities were likewise limited. A few churches had established their own facilities, but very often, traveling clergymen provided the only opportunities to fulfill their spiritual needs.

It may seem that this was still a wilderness, but the pioneers who moved into the new territory were well aware that there wouldn't be much of what was considered civilization when they arrived here. The only way to achieve that was to settle down and work. Eventually churches, schools, comfortable homes, well-stocked stores, and the other signs of progress would be the rewards for all of their labor.