

The 1880s were a busy time for town building and incorporation.

Being located on a railroad was considered crucial in the early history of our county.

Roads were still rather primitive, so rail traffic was the most practical way for passenger travel and shipment of goods. Towns that were already in existence hoped that a new railroad being built would pick a route taking it through their community. Other communities were established on the railroads after they were built.

Papillion was already 13 years old and had been the county seat for eight years when it was incorporated 1883. Papillion is the oldest continuously incorporated city in Sarpy County

Bellevue had been incorporated in the 1850s, but after losing its quest to become the territorial capital, the town just sort of went to sleep. The loss of the election for county seat did not wake her up. They didn't even bother to hold elections for city offices, so the town became unincorporated. In November 1883, Bellevue was again incorporated.

Sarpy Center, a contestant for becoming the county seat in 1875, was bypassed by the Missouri Pacific Railroad. J. D. Spearman, the town's founder, decided that if the railroad wouldn't come to him, he would go to the railroad. He bought land about three miles southwest of Sarpy Center on the route of the new railroad and moved the buildings cross country to the new site. The new town was named Springfield and was incorporated January 4, 1884. Since many of the buildings were moved in from Sarpy Center, Springfield contains a number of buildings that are older than the town itself.

Just as the Missouri Pacific Railroad bypassed Sarpy Center, the Burlington Railroad bypassed Forest City. In order to secure a location on the railroad, a new town was created a couple of miles away. It was named Gretna and was incorporated July 10, 1889.

On July 23, 1888, Congress authorized the purchase of land for the site of a new U. S. Army fort to replace Fort Omaha, which was quickly becoming surrounded by the City of Omaha. The next year, the first land

for the new fort was purchased on the outskirts of the village of Bellevue.