

The Omaha & Southern Interurban Railroad ran from South Omaha to Fort Crook. It served Bellevue people who worked or shopped in Omaha, students at the old Bellevue College, and soldiers and their families at Fort Crook. This electric railroad operated until 1931 when buses became a more practical form of transportation.

The 1900s witnessed a number of natural and not so natural disasters. In March 1903, a disastrous fire occurred in Springfield. The whole south side of the Main Street business district went up in flames. Wetting down the buildings on the north side of the street with canvas and blankets saved that part of town. The rebuilding of the block was done by Peter Kiewit and was one of his first major construction projects. The wooden buildings that had burned were replaced by brick buildings.

A few months later, Springfield Creek was visited by the most extensive flood in the history of Springfield. It was too late to put out the March fire. Also in 1903, Papillion Creek went on one of its frequent rampages and did extensive damage in the town of Papillion.

On May 12, 1908, a tornado hit Sarpy County. It crossed the Platte River at Louisville and entered Sarpy County. The storm moved northeast and touched down near Richfield, killing a young boy and injuring a man who later died from those injuries. Moving on east, it touched down again at the T. R. Daniell farm causing some minor damage. The next touchdown was in the town of Fort Crook, which suffered extensively. Crossing the road, it hit Fort Crook itself. The hospital and several other buildings lost their roofs and various other damage was inflicted. Fortunately, the soldiers in the hospital had been moved down to the basement before the storm hit. Bellevue College and the Village of Bellevue were next on the list of victims of the storm.

City populations per 1900 census: Bellevue 527, Papillion 594, Springfield 400 and Gretna 466.

Meanwhile, back at the Fort . . . In 1900, the Nebraska National Guard figured in a report from Major Duggan. "I have the honor to report that . . . the farmers are reploughing and cultivating the fields north of the target range . . . and that I am informed that a horse . . . was struck by a bullet on the 20th instant. I therefore deem it inadvisable to authorize the use of the range by the companies of the Nebraska National Guard."