

The population of Sarpy County grew just over 2% between the 1900 and 1910 censuses. It increased from 9,080 in 1900 to 9,274 in 1910. The 1910 census showed Bellevue with 596 citizens, Papillion 624, Springfield 463 and Gretna 484.

The early teens in Sarpy County were rather quiet. One of the few developments of that period was the county's second interurban railroad from South Omaha to Papillion, which joined the one already operating in Bellevue.

The Sarpy County Fair ended in 1903. Springfield merchants continued a local celebration similar to a county fair which reached its peak in the teens. This county-wide celebration continued in one form or another until the late 1930s when the Sarpy County Fair was revived in Springfield.

By the mid teens, the desire of some people to prohibit the sale of alcoholic beverages led to a major statewide battle between the "drys" (those wanting to prohibit alcoholic beverages) and the "wets" (those opposed). Prohibition in Nebraska was voted in by a margin of about 55% to 45% and took effect May 1, 1917. Sarpy County, however, was in the minority and voted against it by a similar margin. National Prohibition was voted in the next year. Prohibition was a massive failure, but it took another 15 years before its repeal.

World War I had its effect locally as it did everywhere in the country. Young men were sent off to fight the "Huns." Most returned to start a new life after the war, but some died and never returned.

A large percentage of Sarpy County residents were of German extraction. The war with Germany caused a great many changes—Church services would now be conducted in English instead of German and many organizations were affected by the sudden unpopularity of that language. A number of anti-German laws passed by the Nebraska legislature at that time were later declared unconstitutional.

Meanwhile, back at the Fort . . . During the mid teens, the fort had been practically deserted. But with war in the air, the word of the day was balloons. In 1918, Fort Crook became a subpost of Fort Omaha for balloon training. After World War I, advances in airplane technology virtually put an end to the military usefulness of balloons.