

We Salute Auburn, N. Dak. . .

"Sweet Auburn! Loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheered the laboring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid
And parting summer's lingering bloom delayed;"

Whether the founders of Auburn, gifted with keen prophetic vision, had in mind Oliver Goldsmith's "The Deserted Village" remains a dark, deep, mystery. Suffice it to say that in the course of events they did found a village. The name Auburn was given to it by Mrs. Malcolm McKenzie who had come to this territory from Auburn, New York.

Like Goldsmith's village, it too lost out. For with the coming of the railroad in 1882 Grafton assumed the leading role and Auburn dwindled to its present, comparatively small, proportions. Located on U. S. Highway No. 81 its present population is 30.

The early history of Auburn must necessarily be briefly told. Only three score years ago the site where it now stands lay undisturbed. To Hiram Kingsbury belongs the honor of being the first settler to locate on the present site of Auburn. Coming from eastern Canada in search of a place to establish a home he decided upon that particular spot. Others followed, and the few remaining "old timers" recall such names as: Andrew Torreson, Tom Lemmon, Mr. Paulson, Hans Lykken, Matt Archer, Ole Larson, Mr. Courthart, George Archer, Malcolm McKenzie, Jos. A. Johnson taking up land adjoining the present site.

When it came to stake out the site and definitely locate Auburn it appears that two factions arose. There was the one group headed by J. H. Watts who favored its location near the Pembina County line. The other group, headed by Matt Archer, had agreed on the present site. Mr. Archer rode many miles on horseback to procure signers to a petition favoring the present site.

Auburn grew to a size and proportions which today are not in evidence. There was a large general merchandise store owned and operated by Wm. "Bill" McKenzie. He also operated the "Arlington", Auburn's leading hotel. There was a hardware store with which the name of Dan Hostetter is associated, a livery stable, seven saloons, a tin shop, two grocery stores, two hotels, seven elevators with Billy Herriot, Joe Cronin, Mr. McLean, Mr. Wells, Dan McLaughlin, J. H. Watts, named as some early managers and grain buyers. Matt Archer is recorded as the first postmaster, Ed Duval was the village harness-maker, Mr. Naswela and Pat Kieley were two among the seven saloon keepers; Sandy Parks was the druggist. The Robertson Lumber Company had a branch lumber yard in Auburn with an elderly man in charge whose name no one can recall. Mrs. Hans Lykken, then Clara Johnson, taught the first term of school with about twenty-five pupils enrolled. Some of the families represented at attendance in the school were: Irish, Moore, Weselosky, Penell, McKenzie, Ole Gilman, Johnny Weston, and Bill Rogers were among the young men who were the life of the village.

Auburn was destroyed by fire in the winter of 1888-89. The entire west side of main street was burned to the ground. The source of the fire was in the Arlington Hotel. The only business place erected on that

side of the street after the fire was a store built by Arthur Branston.

"Whiskey John," John Weselosky, was an interesting individual. To all he was always known by his nickname which was his by virtue of the fact that he was a dispenser of liquors. He also had a hog farm on the place now occupied by Henry Fisher.

Businesses were abandoned; many changed hands; buildings were moved away, until today Auburn has but two elevators, a Lutheran Church, a school, a store, a post-office, a community hall, a depot, and eight residences.

Stuart Bell manages the elevators; the church is nearly fifty years old and is served by the present minister of the Lutheran Church of Grafton. Miss Annette Roff of Fairdale taught the recent term of school with about 18 pupils attending. Luther Lykken, son of the pioneer Hans Lykken, owns and operates both store and post office. Jos. Bostik is the present agent of the Great Northern.

Almost 100 percent of Auburn's people are happily and gratefully enjoying the benefits of rural electrification. They are a part of the "A" Section of the NODAK Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Two incidents in the course of the history of the village merit mentioning. In one of the saloons of early Auburn days several of the then "young bloods" were imbibing. Each had bought a round of drinks in turn and the next treat, according to rule and custom was to be "on the house." The proprietor was not inclined to "set them up". He refused; whereupon the guests completely demolished the saloon. One old timer recalled how he, as a final gesture of sympathy, reached up and pulled down a large hanging lamp and crashed it into the debris. The proprietor moved to another town. The other item is the story of the village fiddler, by name Newell Case. He furnished the musical inspiration for all village dances. One time after a long hard day at breaking sod he walked to what is now Osabrock to see his girl and play for a dance there.

"But times are altered
And now the sounds of population fail
No bustling murmurs fluctuate the gale
No busy steps the grass grown pathway tread
But all the flush and rush of life is fled."

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—REA—

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