

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

MR. CALLIOPE AND MISS HAWARDEN MEET IN COURT

Chapter 10: By Mary Truesdell Johnson

Last week's article told us that Hawarden filed papers in Orange City asking for a divorce. Calliope residents did not understand why any businessman would throw away a splendid location and move into "the swamp at the mouth of Dry Creek," but many did. Nash and Lynn started a branch store in Hawarden and thereby lost trade in Calliope, so the Calliope store was closed. J.P. Lind also sold out to his partner as he had been coaxed by some men in Hawarden to move there and thereby drawing the Swedish trade from South Dakota. Mr. J.W. Dubs moved his clothing store to Hawarden because, as rumor had it, he was offered a years free rent in the Hawarden location.

The rumors of the discontent between Calliope and its nemesis Hawarden were soon circulating around the surrounding cities and area. In 1886 the Alton Democrat published this comment: **"The facts of the matter are that Hawarden and Calliope are two boss towns and we'd rather hold an olive branch between them, get a good old Methodist minister and a marriage license, witness their marriage and help truck them into a trundle bed of success, than have the best 640 acre farm in Sioux Co.! Mr. Calliope and Miss Hawarden the Democrat loves you and wishes you both happiness and prosperity, but bless your sweet souls, drop your quarrels and marry for keeps."**

In September of 1886 "Divorce Papers" were filed, and despite all of Calliope's warnings and dire predictions about the foolishness of such an action the date for the trial was set. The trial resembled a true divorce trial. Hawarden claimed that Calliope residents held all the offices of the city and they refused to spend any money on the Hawarden end of town for even the smallest improvements. Hawarden residents reasoned that for this reason they were entitled to a "divorce" by reason of cruel and inhuman treatment. The trial lasted three days, and much to the surprise and dismay of the Calliope "fathers", the jury decided in favor of Hawarden. Hawarden was an entity in its own right. Calliope had lost control.

In spite of the court's decision, the feud remained intense and it became no less bitter as the years progressed. In school the Calliope children were referred to as the Calliope Indians by the Hawarden children and the Calliopers referred to the Hawarden children as Hawarden Polywogs due to the insistence that Hawarden was a swamp. When it came time to build a larger school to hold the growing population in the two towns, the question was not where the best location for the school was, but which town would it be located in. Citizens of each town worried that the location of the school would determine the success of the town and the winner of the feud.

There were occasions when the two towns put down their "hatchets" and worked together, but those times were the exception, rather than the rule.

The December 1886 issue of THE INDEPENDENT had this statement: **"With this issue ceases the publication of The Independent in Calliope and henceforth will appear each week from Hawarden. We have decided to change, not from any ill-will to Calliope, the people or town, but to better our condition financially and because we can see brighter prospects for Hawarden than in the future for Calliope."**

Finally, early in 1887, some leading residents of Hawarden decided that it was time to incorporate their town. There were about four hundred people within its borders, so a referendum was held in February and at that time the voters approved incorporation by a count of 97 to 3. The incorporation of Hawarden was "hereby declared to be duly and legally established" on the 18th day of March 1887. (Hawarden Centennial Book, page 21). Out of a spiteful and lengthy "domestic" quarrel...and a public divorce in the courts of Sioux County, a new town named Hawarden was born.....HAPPY BIRTHDAY HAWARDEN !

IN HONOR OF THE INCORPORATION OF OUR HOMETOWN, HAWARDEN, IOWA ON MARCH 18, 1887, PLEASE JOIN EVERYONE ON SUNDAY, MARCH 18, 2012 AT THE HAWARDEN COMMUNITY CENTER FROM 2 – 4 pm FOR AN OLD FASHIONED BIRTHDAY PARTY TO CELEBRATE HAWARDEN'S 125TH BIRTHDAY. BRING YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS FOR BIRTHDAY CAKE, FUN AND FELLOWSHIP.

SEE YOU THERE.