

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

SCHOOLS – ANOTHER FIRST FOR SIOUX COUNTY

Chapter 18:

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A consistent thread that runs through all of the Hawarden and Calliope history is the fact that from the very beginning, the settlers and townspeople were always on the cutting edge of Sioux County's progression. Education was part of that early progression, and building the first school in Sioux County was certainly proof of the communities desire to offer the best advancements possible for everyone to take advantage of.

When William West came to Calliope in 1869 he found ten residents, three log houses and a frame building. He immediately decided to build the first school house in the county. The lumber for this school house was hauled by Mr. West from Sioux City. Not a small task in the 1800's. The building still stands and is the home of the Pocklington's at 1717 Avenue D. This building was used for a school for twelve years until increased enrollment called for a larger building.

In 1883 a two story school was built on the west side of 18th and Central Avenue, at the cost of \$1350.00. Within a couple of years, this school had also become too crowded and in 1885 a vote by the residents gave permission to issue bonds for \$11,000.00 for another new school to be built east of the previous building.

As was mentioned in previous articles, this was the time when Calliope and Hawarden were in the middle of a growing rivalry between the two towns. As a result of this unrest, an injunction was incurred to halt the sale of bonds for the new school. People in Hawarden felt that the location of the proposed school would influence the result of the conflict between the neighboring towns. Hawarden residents even established their own school in the Baptist Church building at this time.

The legal proceedings to stop the sale of bonds was heard by the Sioux County Court and the call for an injunction was sustained, making the residents of Hawarden very happy. As usual Calliope was not about to be denied and an appeal was made by The Calliope Independent School District to the Iowa Supreme Court. On December 9, 1886 the Iowa Supreme Court reversed the decision of the lower court and Hawarden was forced to acknowledge the Calliope Independent School District and the proposed new building. This school was constructed next to the existing building and was known as the North School. The building was later sold and made into a Nursing Home, first owned by Panska's and later Mapes. It was torn down after it was no longer used to care for the elderly.

Of course Hawarden was now unhappy and would not conform with the ruling. As a result The Hawarden School District was formed and a school was erected on "Gladstone Hill" on the site of 1122 Ninth, the location of Ken Ludwig's residence. The Hawarden School contained three study rooms and two recitation rooms. It was destroyed by fire in 1894.

An election to consolidate the two school districts was held in March of 1893 with only 3 nay votes. Another battle was won by the residents of Hawarden.

In 1895 a bond issue for \$14000.00 for a new school passed with only two dissenting votes. This election marked the first time women were allowed to vote in Hawarden.

The new Central School was constructed of "Hawarden pressed and common brick with Kasota stone trimmings." It was completed in 1895 and stood just east of the present West Sioux Elementary building.

**Hawarden Central School
Built 1895 - Bond Issue \$14,000.**



The new Central School was a massive structure consisting of a partially exposed lower level and two upper levels for classrooms. Its outstanding feature was the bell tower which stood high above the school and made it easy to identify from a long distance. The original school had an initial teaching staff of eleven. The Primary departments remained in the previous North School until the 1940's.

The Central School contained a newly organized high school department and it was described as the "Woodbine Normal" type of school. Many prospective teachers from Iowa and South Dakota were drawn to this school and it was responsible for a large number of the first trained teachers in the area.

Mr. May became superintendent in 1901 and remained in Hawarden for eight years. He is credited with bringing the Hawarden Schools into prominence. He extended the high school courses from three to four years and in 1905 the school was placed on the accredited list of the University of Iowa.

The early 1900's showed steady growth in the school system. In 1900 there were only 3 students graduating from high school, and by 1925 36 graduates received their diplomas. The total enrollment increased from 472 to 695 students. The greatest increase was in the high school department showing a healthy interest in higher education

During the years between 1918 and 1925 it took four bond issues and the use of two temporary buildings to hold excess students before the voters agreed to build a new high school at the cost of over \$90,000.00. The formal opening of the new building was January 21, 1926. This building is still an important part of the Hawarden Community. Located at 1150 Central Avenue, and completely remodeled in 2005, it now is the location of the Hawarden City Government, Police Department and Hawarden's new, Community Center. It is a showcase for our community, highlighting the historical and incorporating the current trends. It is a piece of our history that stands today to preserve our past and enhance and improve our communities' quality of life for years to come.

Watch for more school stories in the weeks to come.