

# **TOUR OF HIGHWAY 160 FROM ULYSSES TO STATE LINE**

Grant County & Stanton County

Written by Lucille DeSelms

*Consultant: Mr. Charles. E. VanMeter, of Johnson, Stanton County, Kansas*

*\* Additional information added about certain people mentioned in this story*

At present, the town of Ulysses is located close to the center of Grant County. Formerly it was a larger town and was located one mile east and one-half mile south of the present town site. The earlier town was called Old Ulysses and gradually faded and dwindled away. Today there is only the Ulysses Cemetery in that area. The new area used to be called New Ulysses, but today, the "new" has been dropped and the town is now called Ulysses. However, some maps still show it as New Ulysses.

The reason for the town being moved to the new site is very interesting. When Old Ulysses was in the booming age, an Eastern Bond Company heavily bonded it. The people were not happy and became rebellious to the idea of their land being bonded so heavily. To get away from the terrible problem, they moved their town to the present sight. The bond company only had bonds on the land, so they were left with their land and the people had their homes without the heavy bonds.

We do not know exactly when or how this town received its name, but it is rumored that Grant County was named after the Great Northern General of the Civil War, Ulysses S. Grant, and... the county seat, which is Ulysses, was named in his honor. Whether he had some connection with the building of the town or whether an admirer of the general named it in honor of him is not certain.

Some records give the date, 20 May 1873, as when Old Ulysses actually started. But some records say the date is not known. But, it is known to be one of the oldest towns in Western Kansas.

Ulysses consists of a nice hotel and coffee shop, two dry goods stores, two grocery stores, a legion hall used for dancing and other activities, three churches and several garages plus filling stations, cabin camps, and elevators. They have two school buildings; a grade school and a high school, which are used for the education of the Grant County youths. In 1936, Grant County completed an auditorium which was a great improvement and benefit to the town of Ulysses. The streets are not paved but are graveled.

New Ulysses is not a very large town but is known among the Western Kansans as a good place to shop and a good place to entertain. You enter Ulysses on Highway 160, but it does not go through the business district of the town but passes along the very

south edge of the town. Ulysses is located in a valley and sometimes when heavy rain falls the streets are practically impassable. The land around Ulysses is more adapted to spring crops such as maize, corn, and alfalfa than it is to wheat.

As you leave Ulysses you pass the cabin camps which are located on the right-hand side of the road. These camps are especially in a flat area and when it rains, the cabins have water that comes up to the doorsteps and into the cabins. The water fills the ditches and roads, making it hard to see where you are going in an automobile.

We are now leaving Ulysses on National Highway number 160 and going west. There are not many inhabitants along the highway, so there is not a lot to see, nothing but fields where hard-working, never-give-up farmers have toiled and planted crops only to have them blown out by the terrific wind storms that occur quite frequently in this section of the country. It is a pitiful sight to see some of the fields blown down to the soil and the ditches full of sand that will never be any use, nothing but a menace, to the Western Kansas farmers. The least bit of breeze starts the sand to sift and in a few hours, there is a raging blinding sand storm. The dust blows across the Highway until it is necessary to drive very slowly with your lights on and sometimes it is so terrific it is necessary to stop entirely.

When we are about two and one-half miles out of Ulysses we come to a low place in the road. Along the left-hand side of the road is a big lake that fills up when there is a wet season and is used for boating and swimming. In the wintertime, it is a very good place to ice skate.

We now travel on until we reach the Grant and Stanton County line. There is a small sign to tell you that you are now entering Stanton County. We shall go only one mile and when looking south we see a small town with only a few inhabitants in it. This is Big Bow, Stanton County, Kansas. We will not leave the highway to look at this town but will go straight on about one and one-half miles where we will reach a large round-top barn and a small but nice farmhouse. This place is known as the Five Star Ranch. This ranch is owned by John Hikes of Pennsylvania. The round-top barn is the largest ever built in Western Kansas. It was built only a few years ago for the purpose of storing wheat. But, due to so many crop failures, it is being used for a machine shed. This ranch is operated by Casper "Cap" Barlup\*.

We travel west until we reach a large house that is on the left side of the road, with many large trees surrounding it. This is the Government Weather Station of Stanton County. This place is owned and operated by one of the oldest residents of Stanton County, Mr. Charles E. VanMeter (*See story CHARLES EDWARD VANMETER, Stanton County, Kansas*). He has proved to the Western Kansans that trees can be grown in the West. We shall leave this place and go two and one-half miles west. There we reach the small town of Johnson.

Johnson, Stanton County, Kansas is a very old and small town. It was formerly larger than now. The population decreasing due to dust storms and crop failures. The oldest building in Johnson is the Methodist Episcopal Church which was built in 1880. The newest building is the building known as Sigler and White. The railroad was put through Johnson in 1922. This was a great improvement for Johnson. Now we are wondering how Johnson received its name. It was supposed to have been named after Mr. Johnson who was thought to be the first white child born in Kansas. He was an engineer on the Santa Fe Railroad. The town was formerly called Johnson City, but it is now known as Johnson. However, on many maps and to many old timers, it is still known as Johnson City.

The town mostly consists of grocery stores. There are four of them plus a dry goods store, two drug stores, one bank, one barber shop, elevators, cafes, garages, and cabin camps. The population of Johnson for the year 1936 was 586 people. A national highway runs straight through Johnson, passing through part of the business section.

We shall travel west, going only about one-half mile until we come to a junction where State Highway number 27 intersects with National Highway 160. This state highway goes north to Syracuse and south to Elkhart. We go about one-half of a mile farther west and we reach the Johnson Cemetery, the town of the deceased. Here many of the old settlers are laid to rest in the fertile but blowing dust. This small cemetery has been much improved in the last few years. There has been a woven wire fence put around it and small drives through it, which makes it look more modern and not quite so forlorn.

We shall now go north for one-half mile and then on west. We go for about four miles seeing nothing but the rolling land, which is gradually rising. We then come to a very low place on the road. During heavy rains and floods, this place in the road fills with water and for months, we must detour into the fields to get back on the highway and on to Johnson.

We go a little bit farther and we reach Bear Creek. This is a supposedly dry creek but when heavy rains in the west begin to fall, Bear Creek rises with great vengeance and does great damage to bridges and things along the way. The bridge over Bear Creek is only a one-way bridge as it has only a small territory to cover. It is a good substantial little bridge and only endangered of going with the tide once in the year 1932. In fact, nearly all of the bridges along the creek did.

We go west for about three miles when we reach Manter Road. This road leads south to the small town of Manter. We will not leave the highway to take a look at Manter, but we know it is there because we can see the water tower and some elevators.

We go west, and there is nothing of interest to us now until we reach the State line where there is a small filling station, owned by John B. Cockrum and operated by

Burchfield and Toole. Here we shall buy some gasoline and oil and shall travel on west into colorful Colorado.

### Additional information

#### CASPER MALEN "CAP" BARLUP

*(The name 'Malen' is sometimes spelled 'Malon')*

CASPER "CAP" BARLUP, son of George Washington Barlup (1858-1931) and Ida Linderman (1867-1928), was born 30 Aug 1891 in Waynesboro, Franklin County, Pennsylvania. He married NETTIE BLUBAUGH, daughter of Harry A. Blubaugh (1870-1953) and Susan Elizabeth McCarney (1877-1970), on 12 Dec 1914 in Lemoyne, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. Nettie was born on 26 Nov 1897 in Gettysburg, Adams County, Pennsylvania. One son was born in their marriage, JAMES E. BARLUP.

In 1920, Casper and Nettie were living in Leitersburg, Washington County, Maryland. After 1925, they left Maryland and made their way to Southwest Kansas. In 1940, they were living in Big Bow, Stanton County, Kansas. They moved back to Pennsylvania sometime after 1942.

Casper Barlup died on 28 Dec 1969 in Gettysburg. Nettie died there on 19 Aug 1976. Both were buried at the Green Hill Cemetery in Waynesboro, Franklin County, Pennsylvania.

### Newspaper Obituaries

#### CASPER M. BARLUP

*The Gettysburg (Pennsylvania) Times – Monday, 29 Dec 1969*

#### C. M. BARLUP DIES SUNDAY

Casper M. Barlup, 78, Gettysburg, Route 5, died at his home Sunday morning at 6:30.

He was born in Waynesboro, the son of the late George and Ida (Lindenman) Barlup. He was a member of the Gettysburg Church of the Brethren and a former member of the Gettysburg School Board.

He was a wheat farmer in Southwest Kansas for 17 years, before moving to Adams County where he continued farming until his retirement in 1954.

Surviving is his wife, the former Nettie Blubaugh, to whom he had been wed for 55 years; a son, James E. Barlup, Seattle, Washington; a sister, Mrs. Aaron Hartman of Marion, Franklin County, Pennsylvania, and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be at the Monahan Funeral Home, on Wednesday afternoon at 1:00 o'clock

with his pastor, the Rev. Merlin G. Shull officiating. Burial will be in the Green Hill Cemetery, Waynesboro.

### NETTIE (BLUBAUGH) BARLUP

*The Gettysburg (Pennsylvania) Times – Friday, 20 Aug 1976*

#### MRS. CASPER BARLUP DIES ON THURSDAY

Mrs. Nettie B. Barlup, 78, Breckenridge Village, Gettysburg, died Thursday at 11 p.m. at Warner Hospital in Gettysburg, where she had been a patient since August 13.

Nettie was born in Waynesboro, the daughter of Harry and Elizabeth (McCarney) Blubaugh. She was a member of the Church of the Brethren. Her husband, Casper M. Barlup died in 1969. One son, James Barlup of Seattle, Washington, survives her. Also survived by eight brothers and sisters; Norman H. Blubaugh, Ordean Blubaugh, Mrs. Marlin Zeigler, and Mrs. Chauncey B. Shanoltz all of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, Mrs. Paul Lambert of Frederick, Maryland, Mrs. John Todt of Littlestown, Pennsylvania, Mrs. Rosalie Stauffer of Hagerstown, Maryland, Mrs. Norman Baumgardner of Aurora, Colorado, and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be held Monday morning at 10 o'clock at the Monahan Funeral Home with her pastor, the Rev. Harold L. Bowser officiating. Interment will be in the Green Hill Cemetery in Waynesboro.