

DID YOU KNOW.....

A look back at early area history as found in the archives of the Enderlin Historical Society and Museum by Susan Schlecht

The following article is from the February 8, 1923 issue of The Enderlin Independent.

HIT THE HORSE MARKET AT RIGHT TIME

The first load of horses shipped from Enderlin to Eastern markets in 1923 brought very satisfactory prices. They sold at Springfield, Mass. on last Friday, Feb. 2nd, and the top or best horse sold for \$240 and the poorest sale was two or three unfit sorts at \$107.00. The best price horse ought to bring the seller about \$200, which is considered a fairly good price for these times, so if good sound horses are put on the market they will fetch all they are worth.

The sale last week embraced three carloads all told, one from Enderlin, averaged \$140 per head, the Wing load brought \$160 per head and the load from Almont brought \$108 per head.

In speaking about the shipment, the Secretary of the Farm Bureau said:

“Three carloads of North Dakota horses, 84 in all, were sold at Springfield, Mass., in three hours auction”, it was reported in a telegram to the North Dakota Farm Bureau Federation. This is the first eastern horse sale of the year under Farm Bureau auspices.

Between now and April 2, it is expected that about five carloads a week will be sold through the Farm Bureau agency in eastern markets. About 60 cars in all will be sold.

Mr. DeLaney reports in his telegram that “Old horses in the car cut the average price, especially in the Almont car. We can get excellent results with quality horses in the east, but old and poor stuff will hardly pay for express and other expenses. The expenses including express total about \$50 a head.”

“We shipped a carload from Jamestown to New Medford, Conn. We will ship a carload from Harvey and another from Bremen next week and a carload from Kelson, Traill County, Feb. 9. We have been asked to sell about 250 carloads in all, but will only be able to handle about 60 with our present force.”

Sue’s Comments: *It was about this time that the farm economy was beginning to struggle and organizations such as the Farm Bureau were being formed to help farmers market their products. Shipping the horses out east evidently provided another market for those in the Dakotas.*

According to the publication *Where Prairie and Plains Meet*, Mr. Tweton states, “Earlier, around 1920, wheat was well over two dollars a bushel and farmers were certain that they had attained permanent prosperity. But the bubble burst, and wheat prices soon plummeted to around a dollar, placing farmers in a terrific price squeeze. Banks began to fail in 1923, signaling the onslaught of farm depression.”¹

¹**Where Prairie and Plains Meet**, North Dakota 1889-1989, D. Jerome Tweton - University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, August 1989