

# 100 YEAR HISTORY OF THE CITY OF OSSEO



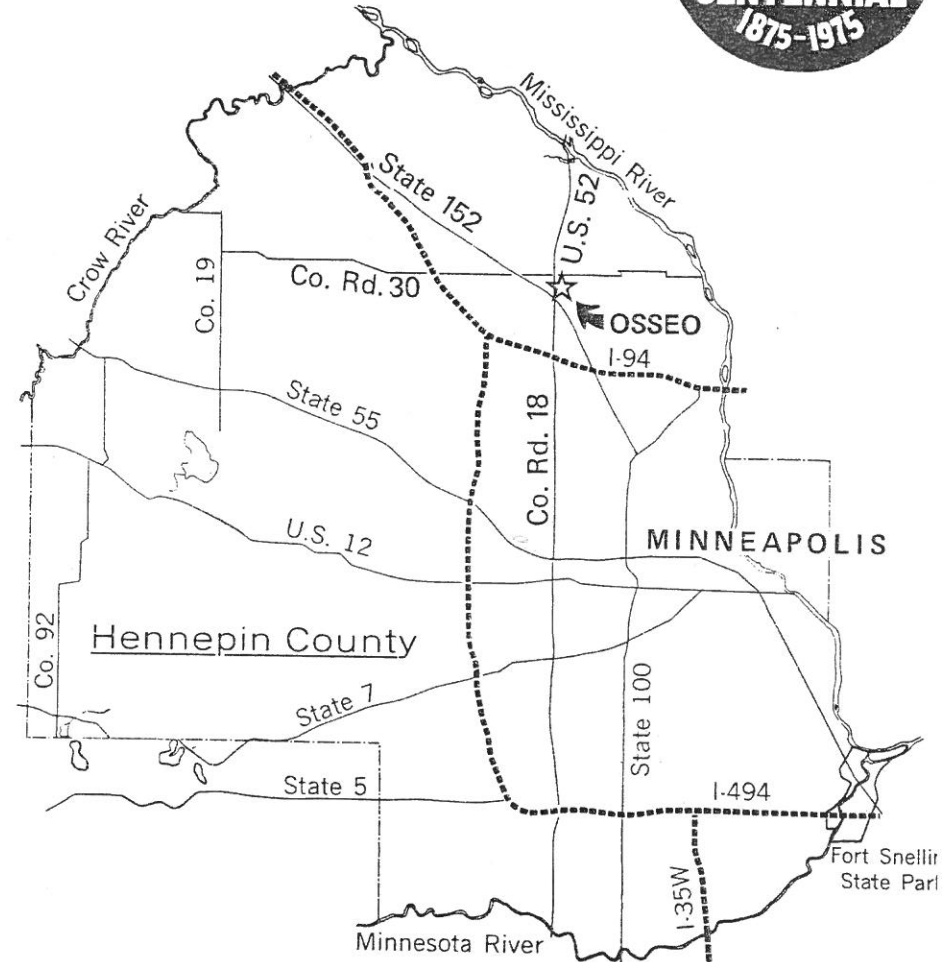
**Souvenir Edition**

Part 1 of 5: Introduction, Early History, Hotels (pp. 1-12)

# 100 YEAR HISTORY OF THE CITY OF OSSEO



45 pages



## September 6-7 1975

The Centennial committee would like to thank all those who submitted pictures and data to complete this historical book.

The pictures selected for the edition were chosen for clarity and historical value by the Centennial committee.

Any errors of historical data are purely accidental. The committee did their utmost to give an accurate account of the last 100 years of Osseo.

**THE OSSEO CENTENNIAL ORGANIZATION  
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*Souvenir Centennial Booklet was prepared by Osseo Lionelles and North Hennepin Pioneer Society.*



## FOREWORD

The purpose of this booklet is to bring to its readers the history of a community dedicated to making Osseo a city to be proud of.

It has been one hundred years since Osseo was incorporated in 1875. One hundred years is a long time and much progress has been witnessed – progress in comforts and luxuries – but even greater than those – progress in education of our youth – progress in getting along with one another – and progress in health and well being.

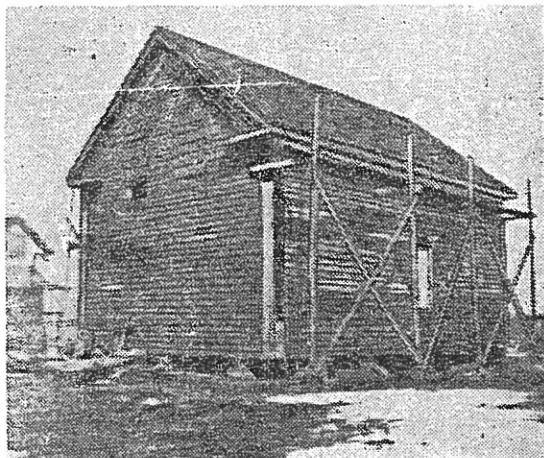
The beauty and the happiness of a small city is that we all share our joys and our sorrows.

The progress of people is always indicated by their faith in God. Osseo can be very proud of this faith as shown by churches of many denominations.

May those who read this booklet enjoy it as much as those who so unselfishly gave of their time and effort to put down on paper a history of such a great little city as Osseo.

  
Victoria Krienke Joyner, Mayor.





Pierre Bottineau's old home in Osseo. Built in 1854.



Pierre Bottineau.

## EARLY HISTORY

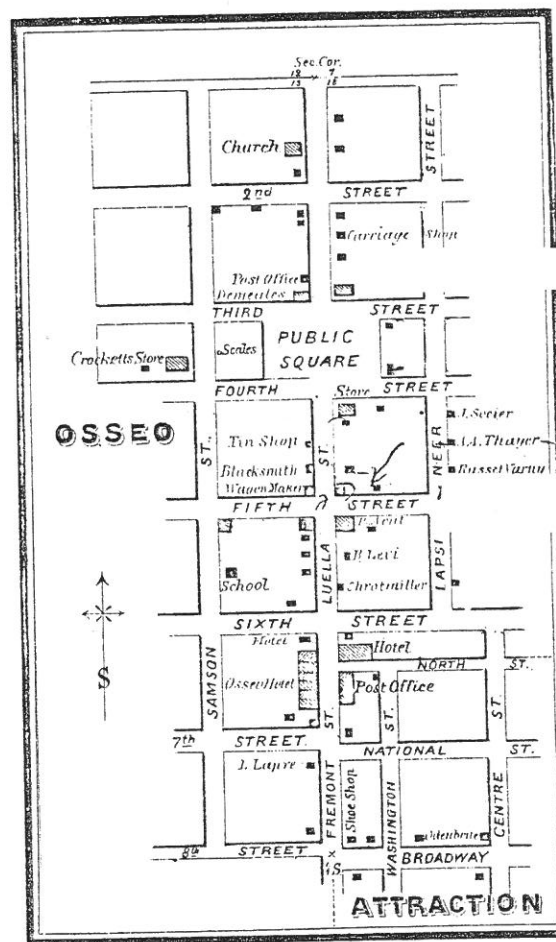
The city of Osseo is located in the northeastern part of Hennepin County, Minnesota. Originally Osseo was under the government of the townships of Brooklyn and Maple Grove. In the spring of 1875, by an act of the state legislature, Osseo was incorporated with a president, three councilmen, a recorder and a treasurer constituting its officers.

"This is Paradise", Pierre Bottineau exclaimed as he and his traveling companions: Joseph Potvin, Peter Raiche and Peter Gervais stepped forth from the deep woods and scanned the beautiful prairie before them. They relaxed around the campfire, took an evening meal and slept peacefully beneath the stars. Morning found them determined to make this "spot" a settlement. This all happened in July 1852. Claims were made on "Bottineau Prairie" and it wasn't long before other brave and adventurous men came to the area.

Pierre Bottineau was born near Pembina in the Red River region, now a part of North Dakota. His ancestors were of the Huguenots who came to America to enjoy a freer religion and settled near Boston. Pierre's father, Joseph, went into the great wilderness of the Northwest in the early part of the nineteenth century. Here he married a woman of the Chippewa race, "The Clear-Sky Woman" her Indian name. From his hardy and, in a civilized sense, nomadic father, and from his Indian mother, Pierre inherited those characteristics that made him the most noted scout and voyageur in mid-America.

In 1854 Warren Sampson, Isaac LaBissonniere, Clark Ellsworth, Seneca Brown, D. B. Thayer, and James McRay settled on "Bottineau Prairie". Mr. Sampson built and opened a store of general merchandise, and a post office in the settlement – then called Palestine. The years 1855-1856 saw much growth, and in 1856 the settlement was renamed Osseo, and platted by Mr. Sampson and Mr. LaBissonniere. It is said that Osseo is an Indian name, "Waseia" meaning 'there is light' although more commonly known as "Son of the Evening Star". The author Henry W. Longfellow mentions Osseo in one of his Indian legends contained in his poem "The Song of Hiawatha". It is also claimed that Longfellow visited Osseo while in St. Anthony.

A short time later another village "City of Attraction" was laid out to the southeast by A. B. Chafee. This little city, with its stores, homes and post office, was later absorbed into Osseo.



Map of Osseo—1873

Utilizing the natural resources of the neighboring Maple Grove area, trees, a wood market was established by Sampson in 1855. Cord wood was cut, cured for a season and then sold to Minneapolis merchants. It was common to handle up to one hundred cords per day during the wood season. The cord wood was hauled by teamsters over the rough trails to the big city. The monies received were used to purchase much needed goods by these hardy pioneers.

A blacksmith shop was established in 1855 by Clark Ellsworth; Eli Haviland became his partner in business in 1857. Later O. Leferrier and Charest also opened blacksmith shops. In 1865 John Hechtman established a store of general merchandise dealing largely in cord wood. Emil Lefebvre opened a general merchandise and drugs store in 1873. He was also a postmaster.

As more and more people; French, Canadians, Germans, and native Americans settled here, more businesses sprang up. Among the many other businessmen who established themselves early in the development of Osseo are: Z. Labrasch, groceries and notions; Nelson Rougier, wagon maker; William Krueger and Joseph Woodly, boots and shoes; Samuel Pavitt, harness maker; and Maggie Rougier and Frances Thayer, dressmakers.

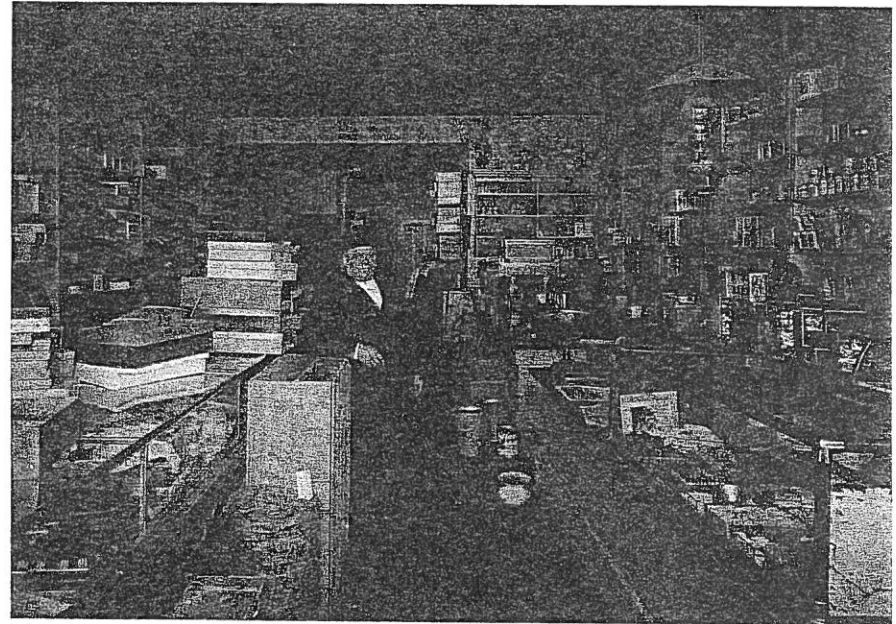
Osseo has always been fortunate to have a resident physician to care for the sick. The first doctor to make his home in Osseo was Dr. A. Guernon, a Canadian, who came here in 1866, a young man from Mpls.

Many businesses have been established since those very early days. Some pictures of these former businesses have been located and have been included in this booklet to give the reader an eye view of how some "really" looked in their "hey day".

## OSSEO BAKERY



The Osseo Bakery occupies the former Farmers State Bank building. It is located at 116 Central Avenue. The proprietors are Karl and Chloe Mortenson.



Early General store. The owner was Hugo Schwappach, who never used a cash register or cash drawer but made change from his pocket. The store was located on the west side of Central Avenue, between 3rd and 2nd street.



This was Geo. Heesen's store before the wait-on-yourself came into use. Many things came in bulk, notice the open baskets, pickle jars, cookies in bins under the counter. Persons: Geo. Heesen, owner; Elsie Deisting Goetze, clerk; others not identified. (1920)

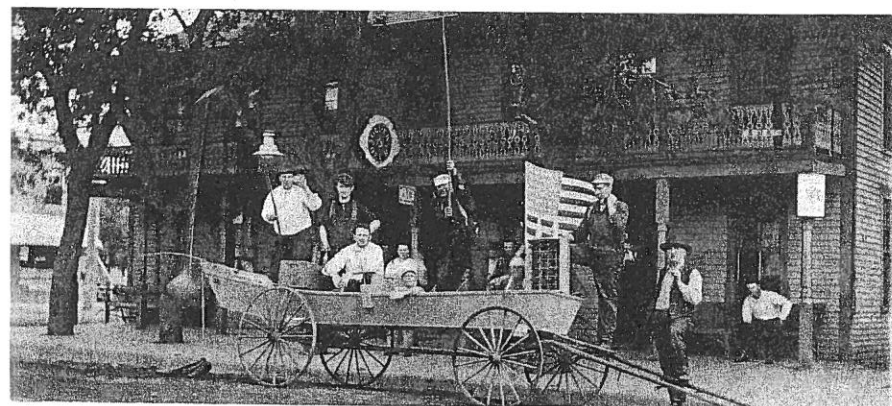
## HOTELS

In 1867, Rudolph Niggler, who had previously kept a smaller house for boarders and transient guests, erected a hotel at the cost of nearly \$4000.00. It was not considered a good investment, because there wasn't enough business to sustain it. This house burned in 1870.

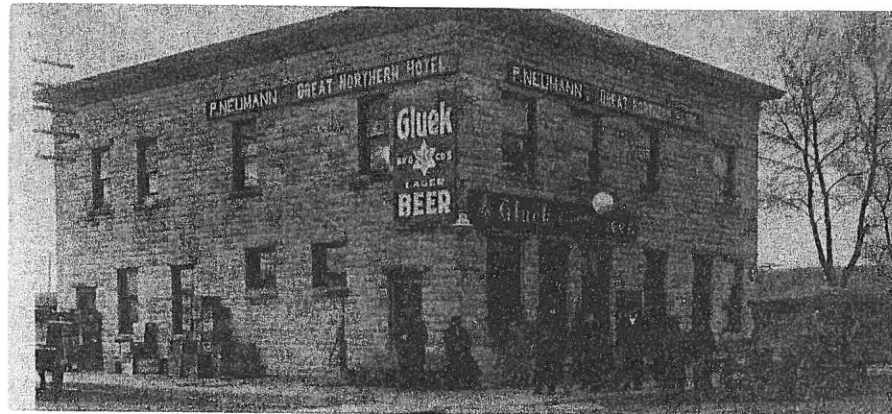
The International Hotel was built by Fritz Schmidt in 1874. It was two stories in height and had rooms for thirty guests. It was conducted by Mr. Schmidt at its opening.

The Great Northern Hotel, also two stories, a completely modern structure for the times, was erected by Peter Neuman in 1907.

These buildings have been gone for sometime, other businesses built in their places. The community does not have a hotel but motels are a short distance away by car.



The International Hotel and Bar was located at 2nd and Central. In the picture those that are identified are: Meinke Bros., bar owners, Joe Blonigan, Harry Richey, Joe Paul, Isaac LaBissonniere, and others.



The Great Northern Hotel. Located at Central Avenue and Broadway. This area now part of Highway 152.

## JOHNSON & GIERE

### Accountants

In the fall of 1958, two young men started a public accounting office in Osseo. Harold Johnson and Victor Giere formed Johnson & Giere, located at 119 Central Avenue.

The firm does accounting for small businesses, prepares income tax returns and accounts receivable billing. Offices have been located in two Osseo Shopping Center areas in addition to Central Avenue. Present address is at 253 - 5th Avenue S.E.

Both Johnson and Giere have taken an active part in community organizations and affairs. They deem it a pleasure to be a part of this fine city and the celebration of its centennial.

## Furniture Manor



ON HIGHWAY 52 • OSSEO, MINN.

Furniture Manor was purchased from its original owner in 1969 by Pat and Bob Chupurdia. Furniture Manor specializes in better quality Traditional and Early American furniture at discount prices. They are located in the Osseo South East shopping center.

## TAK OSADA D.D.S.

PHONE 425-3023

Doctor Osada was born in Tacoma, Washington, and moved to Minneapolis in 1946. He received his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Minnesota in 1952 and his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree in 1954. He entered the United States Air Force in October of 1954 and spent 2 years in Alaska. He opened his office in the Wiley Building in February of 1957, and in 1973 moved his office to the new wing of that building.

Doctor Osada and his wife have five children and reside in Brooklyn Park. They would like to take this time to thank their patients for the opportunity of serving them.

# SAWYER CLEATOR LUMBER CO.

Since 1906  
LUMBER AND MILLWORK

On March 1, 1953, Peavey Lumber Service opened a general lumber yard, handling lumber, millwork, paint, etc., in Osseo. At that time, the business was managed by Einar Petersen, with two employees, Ted Eastman and Logan Ammon.

Approximately two years later, Logan Ammon became manager and operated under the Peavey name until March 1, 1971. At that time, the business was purchased by Sawyer Cleator Lumber Company of 1400 Washington Ave. N., Minneapolis, retaining all personnel and employees.

Both companies have enjoyed serving the surrounding community and the many building contractors who operate in this area, and Sawyer-Cleator Northwest is looking forward to a continuation of this fine relationship.

## KING GAS CO.

425-2161

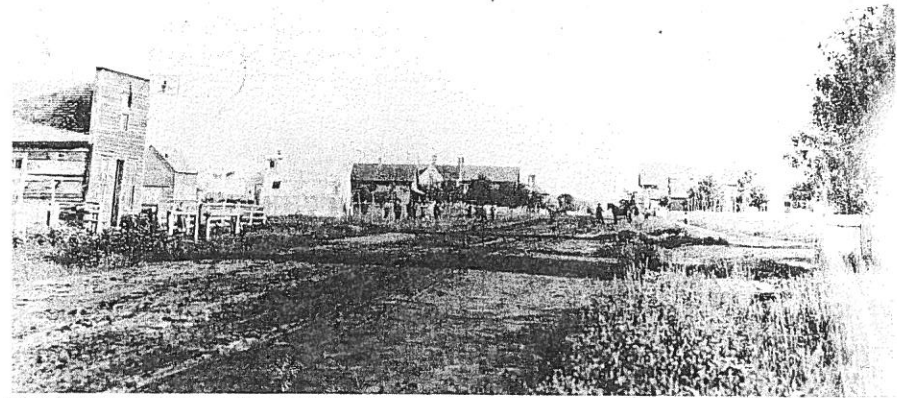
*OUR TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR IN OSSEO*

Serving the area with the best  
of L.P. Gas and NH3 82% Nitrogen

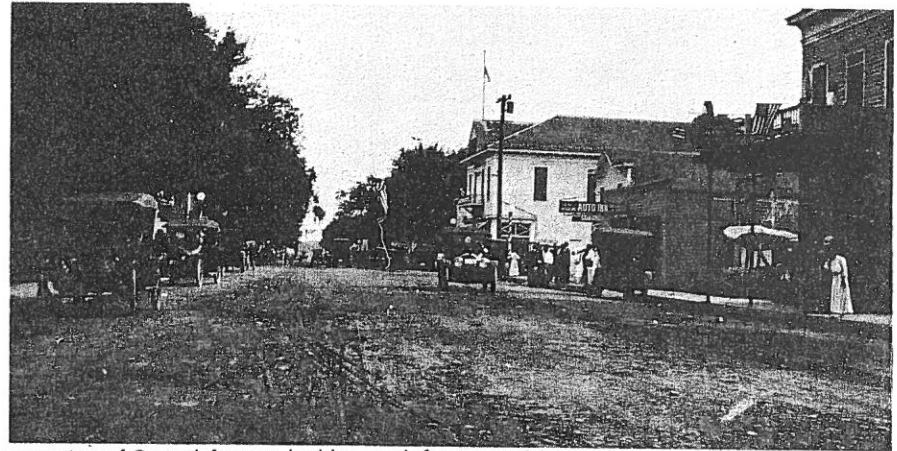
## JOHNSON'S IGA OF OSSEO INC.

425-2625

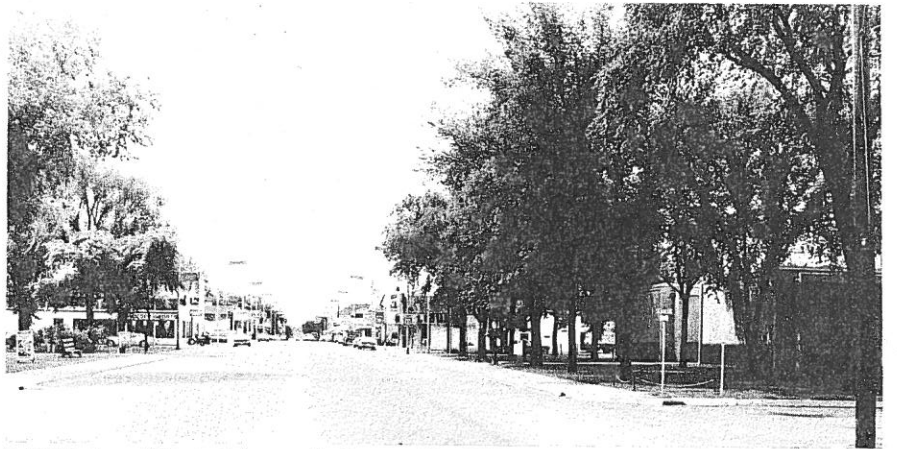
Dennis Johnson acquired the store in February 1973. It was formerly known as Bob's Red and White. Mr. Johnson also owns a store in Anoka. IGA is located in the Osseo Shopping Center.



This first view of Osseo that could be found was on a tin type — of the year 1869.



1915 view of Central Avenue, looking south from near 4th Street.



A 1975 view of Central Avenue in Osseo. The 1869 view was taken from the same location.



(1914)

## PHENOW BROTHERS

Phenow Brothers was started by Karl Pfenow, a stone-mason. He was granted citizenship in 1897. His sons, Peter Sr. and Bill took over the business in 1900. Arnie, Peter Jr. and Tom joined the business in 1950. And it became known as Peter Phenow and sons. The sons took over the business in 1960 and Peter Phenow Sr. passed away in 1965. They are still doing business in the same location.

## EARLY PIONEER LIFE

During the development of the Osseo area many brave and determined pioneers, from the Eastern states and Canada, migrated here to make homes for their families. Some of the area was prairie, but to the northwest there were many trees, this being known as the "Big Woods". With grub hoe and ax in hand the pioneers proceeded to grub out undesirable ground cover and chop down some of the trees. The logs were used to build homes; and to provide fire wood with which to heat their homes. In this part of the United States the winters could be very cold and the summers very warm—the people needed shelter. The land was gradually cleared, acre by acre, so crops could be planted.

There were no roads, but as more families came, trails on the prairie and through the "Big Woods" became a reality. One of the trails eventually led all the way from St. Paul to St. Cloud, known to many as the Territorial Road. One very important use for this trail was to carry mail from St. Paul to the outlying settlements, on "foot", even though St. Cloud was 70 miles away. On warm days it was not uncommon to see the children walking along barefoot carrying their "store boughten" shoes, to be put on just before entering the church or school. This saved on the shoes and besides it could be fun going barefoot in the soft earth.

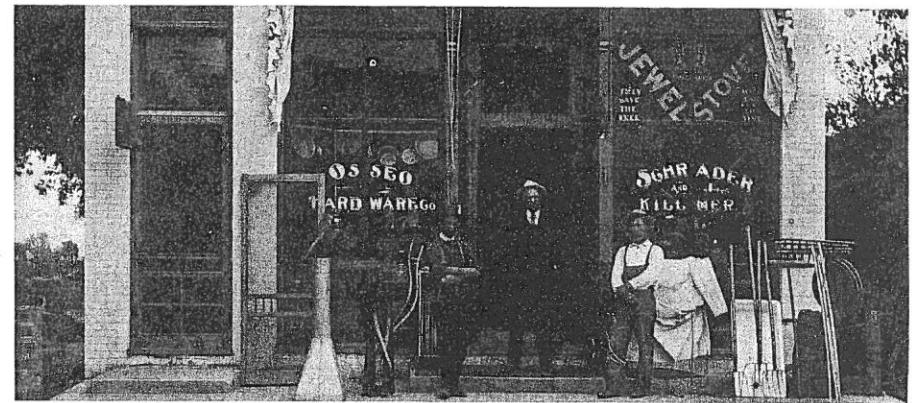
Each season of the year had its special tasks for these early settlers. Gathering of sap from the maple trees, and making syrup and sugar was an early spring activity. A little later it was time for the soil to be tilled; sometimes by hand tools, but later oxen and horses were used to pull a plow, which might have been made at the local blacksmith shop in the village. Seeds were planted and every tiny plant was carefully tended. Sometimes the weather wasn't ideal and crops would be scarce. Every bit of the crop was utilized, even extra straw might be used to make straw hats, while the cornhusks filled the mattresses for their beds.

Tasks done during the summer included the weeding of the crops, tending of the family garden and preserving foods for the coming winter. To preserve sweetcorn, the housewife would cook the corn slightly, cut it from the cob, spread it out to dry in the sun until hard. The dried corn would then be stored in flour sacks in a dry upstairs room in the house. When the family wanted corn for a meal, some of the dried corn was soaked for several hours then cooked and made into "corn dishes".

Fall found the finishing up of the harvest, cutting cord wood and generally getting ready for the winter.

Winters were difficult even for these hardy pioneers. Snow fell and sometimes the people in the outlying areas would find themselves isolated from the rest of the world. They had many things to do during the long winter. One important job was to keep plenty of firewood split for the woodbox. This was usually done by the men and big boys, and was often carried into the house by the other members of the house. Each day, everyday all year long too, the water must be pumped and carried into the kitchen to be used for drinking, cooking, washing dishes, bathing and washing clothes. Water for washing clothes was heated in the clothes boiler, while the reservoir on the range heated water for other purposes.

The mother and big girls of the family spent many hours sewing, by hand, the clothing for the family. Mending and darning by lamp light was a common sight; and each coming day saw the filling of the lamps with kerosene, trimming the wick and shining of the chimney thus making it ready for the next evening. There were quilts to make; these might have been made from outgrown or worn clothing or from scraps left over from the sewing projects. When the quilt had been all pieced together neighbor women were invited in and a "quilting bee" was soon in progress. This proved to be a much needed social get-together.



A Hardware store before 1900.



It wasn't all work — such activities as taffy pulls, making “hand turned” ice cream, popping corn and cooking fudge urged them on to other tasks that seemed light after some fun.

When sheep were introduced into the Osseo area, the shorn wool was spun by hand or if one were fortunate a spinning wheel was used. Mittens, caps, scarves, and shawls were knitted. Some of the wool was colored by dyes made from berries, roots and leaves — thus sometimes the knitted articles were quite colorful. The hand carded wool was also used as bats inside the hand-made quilts.

War came, which caused much concern to the pioneers. It was in the 1860's that the Civil War broke out and all the able-bodied young men of the community joined the forces of the Republic to fight for the cause of the union. In 1866 the G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) Post was established with an original membership of 30. With the final passing of these honored men the Post was dissolved.

The settlers of Osseo had some scares from the Indians, but because Pierre Bottineau, a half-breed, visited regularly with his Indian friends, he was able to keep peace between the Indians and the white settlers.

Time passed and much could be written about many happenings in the Osseo area. During this passing, things came easier for the people. More modern homes, good roads, more merchandise to be purchased in the local stores and generally the “good life” came into being.

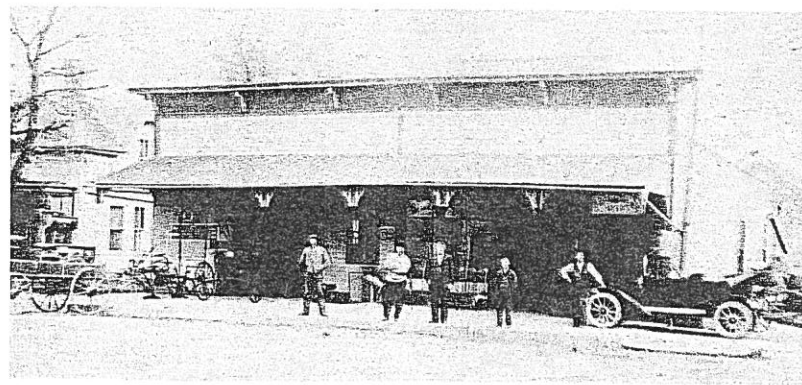


An Early view of one of Osseo's oldest houses that is still in use. This one belonged to Eli Haviland. A picture of a family reunion. The house was located on Central Avenue near 3rd Street, it now belongs to Harry Biederman and has been moved to the other side of the block, on 1st Avenue East. (1910)

## BEIDERMAN OUR OWN HARDWARE

1871 — 1975

Eli Haviland came to Minnesota from Osseo, Michigan, in 1857. He joined the first Minnesota Rangers to help repel the 1862 Indian uprising. He opened a tin and blacksmith shop in 1871 on the present location, and soon put in a hardware line of merchandise. Many things that we can buy factory made today were not available in those early days. Many of these items were hand made. Later he sold automobiles and farm machinery. Mr. Fred Beiderman, husband of Eli Haviland's adopted daughter joined the Haviland Hardware Company in about 1900 and later became manager. Upon the death of Mr. Haviland in 1912, Mr. Beiderman took over the store, after buying out the rest of the business as he had purchased part of the store when he became manager. Mr. Beiderman brought his two sons, Lee and Harry into the business as they became old enough to help. He then changed the name to F. Beiderman and Sons. Lee Beiderman was sent to the Minneapolis School of Business where he completed a course in bookkeeping and business management. The farm machinery line was sold until about 1945. Harry Beiderman joined the Our Own Hardware chain in 1924, to which the present store still belongs. Mr. Lee Beiderman was killed in an auto accident in 1955. Mr. Harry Beiderman took over the entire store after buying his brother's interest. Mr. Beiderman is still operating the store as owner and manager. This store is very likely the only business place in Osseo still operating in the same location since its founding and is now in its 104th year.



## OSSEO CLINIC

Dr. T. J. Bloedel

Dr. S. K. Madireddi

Dr. R. L. Jackson

Dr. P. H. Shah

Dr. L. L. Lira

Osseo has always been fortunate in having a resident physician. The first doctor to make his home in Osseo was Dr. A. Guerson, a Canadian, who came here in 1886. He died 3 years later. Dr. F. Lawson succeeded him for five years, and he was followed by Dr. J. B. Delfendahl. In 1878 Dr. J. J. Pinault came and remained until 1882. He was succeeded by Dr. Nickoli. In 1887 Dr. A. F. Sinnard assumed the practice until 1898. From 1898 to 1902 the medical physicians were Dr. Bacon, Dr. W. B. Murray, Dr. J. F. Landry and Dr. A. D. Haskell. Dr. J. M. Fore resided in Osseo from 1902 to 1911. Dr. F. H. Mee came in 1912 and remained until his death in 1937. Dr. Hammerstead followed Dr. Mee and was succeeded by Dr. Marking in 1940. Dr. St. Cyr arrived in 1940 and left in 1942 as did Dr. Marking.

In 1944, Dr. T. J. Bloedel began his practice here and established the Osseo Clinic the following year. In 1946 Dr. H. R. Ransom joined him until 1972. Dr. Richard Jackson, obstetrician, began his practice here in 1967. Then in 1972, Dr. P. H. Shah, internist, and Dr. S. K. Madireddi, family practice, joined the Clinic. Dr. L. L. Lira, surgeon, began his duties at the Clinic in 1974.

The building housing the Clinic has recently been enlarged and completely renovated, making it one of the finest clinic facilities for emergencies and routine medical care in the area.



Drug store and residence of former Dr. Mee located on Central Avenue near 2nd Street. The Store building is still in use but with a new front.



Osseo has had many bands. These talented men entertained the public many times during the year, particularly summer band concerts when people sat around on the grass listening intently to the "snappy musical pieces".

Pictured above is the Osseo Band at a picnic in the very early 1900s. Members left to right Wm. Neuman, A. P. Hechtman, Elmo Richey, Wm. Jones, Arthur Charest, Chas. Killmer, Alrick Charest, Geo. Rochat, Ed. Killmer, Ed Jones, Fred Rochat, Jack Hunt, Geo. Heesen, Marten Knoble, Wm. Heesen and Louis Killmer.

# WAYNE DRUG

123 CENTRAL AVE. OSSEO, MINNESOTA 55369



PHONE 425-2026



**North Hennepin Sickroom Supply**  
**DIVISION OF WAYNE DRUG INC.**

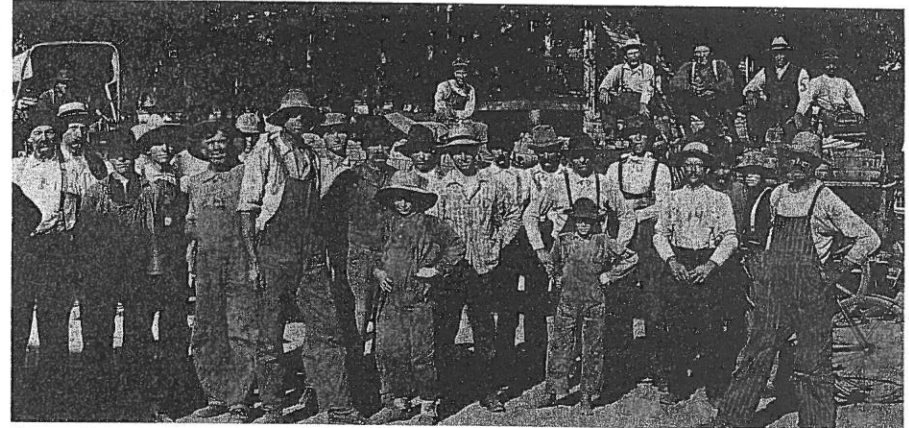
Private & Institutional Sales & Rental



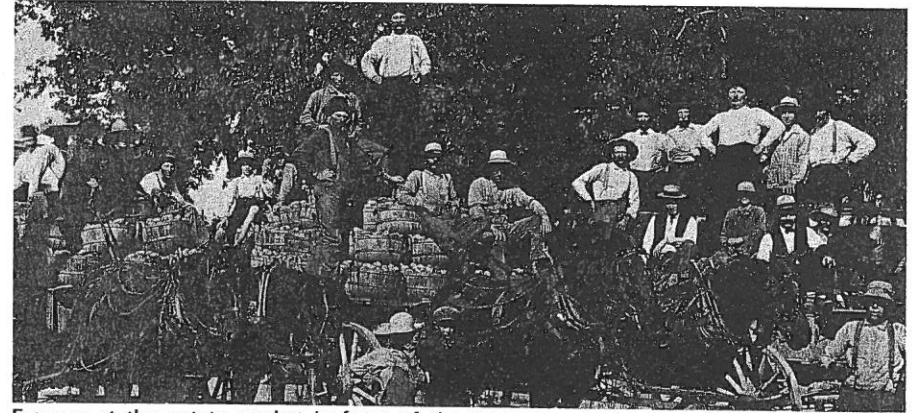
A typical Ice Cream Parlor of the early days. This was located at 3rd and Central Avenue, called Pauline's. The customer is Frank MacJunkin and the owner is O. O. Normandin.

## OSSEO REXALL DRUG

Milan Schulz, pharmacist, started working for Vince's Pharmacy in 1949 after completing his training at the University of Minnesota. In January of 1958, Vince Kenjoski and Milan Schulz became partners in Rexall Drug, which is located in the Osseo Shopping Center. In January of 1973, Milan acquired sole ownership of the drug store.



Potato Farmers at the Osseo Market. Front of the International Hotel on Central Avenue and 2nd Street.



Farmers at the potato market in front of the International Hotel on the corner of Central Avenue and 2nd Street, in the early 1900's.

## POTATO FARMERS AND LOAD OF POTATOES

Potatoes was one of the major farm crops for many farmers in the Osseo area. As many as 100 carloads were shipped by railroad daily to the big cities.

In the very early days of Osseo a starch factory, which made starch from potatoes, was erected by the Wilmes Brothers. It proved of great benefit to the farmers of the vicinity. It was run only during seasons when the crop of potatoes was so abundant and the price in Minneapolis so low as to render it unprofitable to haul to market. The average capacity of the factory, when running, was 10,000 pounds of crude starch per day. It employed about twenty men. The factory was later owned by a stock company of neighboring farmers before its closing.

There are still many potatoes grown in the area, but many of the potato farmers have moved farther from the metropolitan area, the potatoes being shipped by truck over super highways to markets near and far

# OSSEO MOTOR

BUICK

CHEVROLET

## HISTORY OF 100 YEARS OF OSSEO

Pete Iten, owner of the Osseo Motor Co., celebrated a big anniversary this year. On December 9th, 25 years ago, Mr. Iten closed a deal with Mrs. E. W. Peterson that eventually led to his ownership of the Osseo Motor Co. At that time he was affiliated with the Main Motor Sales of Anoka.

Mr. Iten has been in the automobile business for 40 years. In 1918 he started working for Main Motor Sales of Anoka and came to Osseo in December 1926. Almost all of the 40 years in the automobile business Mr. Iten did business with General Motor products — an enviable record.

Mr. Iten has built it up and is now possibly one of the biggest businesses in Osseo. Affiliated with him now are his son Roy and daughter Helen. Another son, Joe, at present is in the Air Corps.

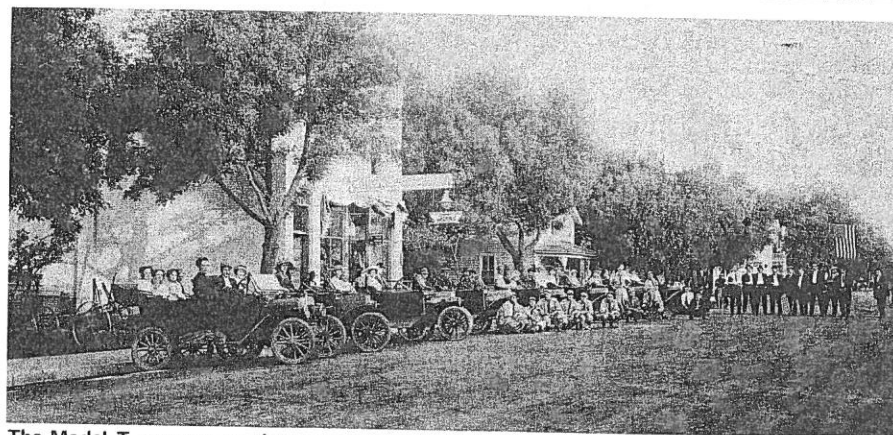
The above article appeared in the 1952 Edition of the History of Osseo. Since that time Osseo Motor Co. changed its name to Iten Chevrolet Co. and moved to its present location in Brooklyn Center in 1965. Peter Iten its founder, passed away in May 1973, preceeded in death by his daughter, Helen, in February of 1962. The business is presently owned and operated by his sons Roy and Joseph. His youngest son Peter Jr., and several of his grandsons are presently active in the business.

# Killmer Electric Co.

332 CENTRAL AVENUE OSSEO, MINNESOTA 55369 425-2525

The firm is a continuation of a family business originally started by Louis H. Killmer in 1915, when he started electrical wiring in Osseo for homes, farms and businesses.

In 1945, his son, Allen returned from the Navy and started his own electric appliance service business and joined the electrical contracting business in 1952 after receiving his Minnesota Master Electricians license. The firm offers a wide variety of electrical services including light and power wiring and design and construction of industrial control centers.



The Model T was commonly seen on the streets of Osseo. Driving a car seemed to be a combination of fun and work. Patching kit, tire pump, tire wrench, side curtains were musts when one took the family for a "spin". (Approximately 1915)

# SERVICE



*Complete Automotive Repair*

Cars & Trucks

From Minor Tune-Ups To Major

Overhauls

Tires Batteries Etc

*Complete Line Of Accessories*



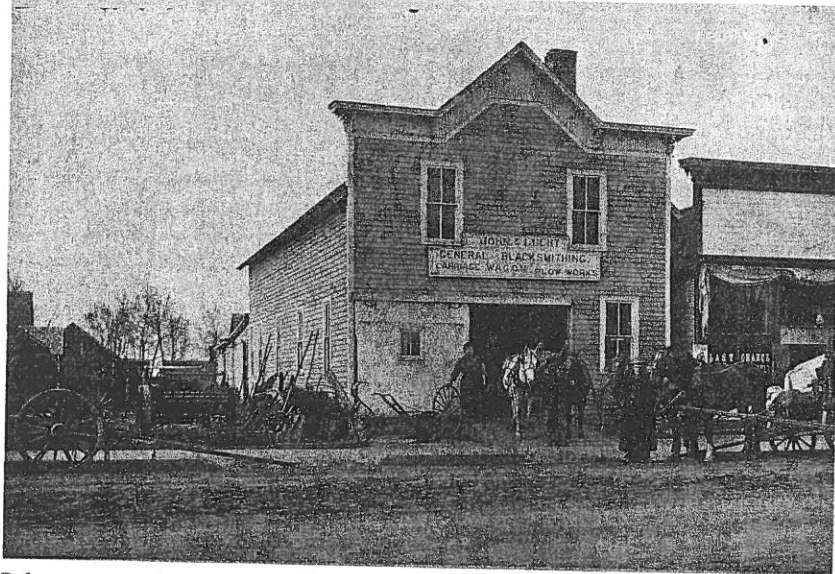
## C & J Automotive Center

(Formerly Clay's Gulf Service)

CALL

**425-2423**

CLAY & JOE VNUK - OWNERS  
248 CENTRAL AVE OSSEO MINN



Before autos and electric lights. The owners in the sign are standing in the door way. This shop long gone, the bar building (Princetons Place) is still being used with a new front. Located next to the corner of 4th Street and Central Avenue.

## L. W. Reinking, Real Estate

L. W. Reinking was born in Corcoran township, the son of Mr. and Mrs. William Reinking. His father was a member of the Corcoran town board for many years, as well as a director of the Farmers State Bank of Osseo.

After farming 10 years in Corcoran township, L. W. Reinking moved to Osseo in 1929 and purchased a gasoline service station. In 1935, he put up his own bulk plant.

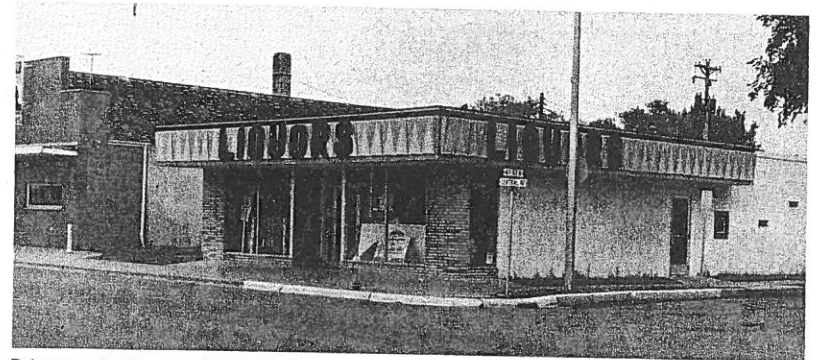
Four years later, his service for the village of Osseo began when he was elected to the board as a councilman. He served as a trustee for three terms, comprising nine years.

He filed for Mayor in 1947, was re-elected to a second two year term in 1949 and again in 1951. The third successive election carried through until the fall of 1953.

In 1949 he constructed the Reinking Building at 9 Central Avenue and entered the real estate business.

Mr. L. W. Reinking would like to express his appreciation to all the persons who entrusted him with their patronage.

## PRINCETON'S PLACE On and Off Sale Liquors 337 Central Avenue Osseo



Princeton's On and Off Sale Liquors. Tavern was built in the 1880's. Off Sale was built in 1966.

In its early years, few places in Osseo changed hands as frequently as the business at this location. It was converted by Charest and Funk from a hardware business to a hard drink place in the "good old days" in 1901. Their successors: Camille Chaset, 1903-1905; Peter Neuman, 1905; Gervais and Gervais, 1905-1906; Gervais and Potvin, 1906-1907; Sidney Potvin, 1907-1918; Potvin and Chouinard, 1918-1919; Sidney Potvin, 1919; DeMars and Potvin, 1919-1920; Louis DeMars, 1920-1921; W. F. Busilmeir, 1921-1925; and Leonard Ayd, 1925-1926.

In January of 1926 William Princeton and his wife, Cora, purchased, what was then because of prohibition, a restaurant, soft drink and confectionary business. With the repeal of prohibition in 1933, liquor became available for sale again. In 1959 the Princeton's purchased the land and buildings from the Gluek Brewing Company. In 1966, the Princeton family — which now included their son, Joel — built a modern off sale liquor facility next to the tavern. In April of 1972 William Princeton passed away. The business is now being operated by Joel Princeton along with his mother, Cora, and his wife, Susan.

The Princeton's have always taken a very active role in the community and are proud of the almost 50 years they have been in business in Osseo.



Interior of Princeton's On Sale, William Princeton, owner, 1926-1972. Picture was taken on December 16, 1941.