

History



This valley is rich in history, natural beauty and thriving businesses. Centrally located within these fertile acres in Western Nebraska are Scottsbluff, Gering, and Terrytown. These cities are separated by the North

Platte River - Scottsbluff on the north side and the cities of Gering and Terrytown are on the south. Scotts Bluff County also includes the cities and communities of Henry, Lyman, Minatare, Morrill and Mitchell.

Wildcat Hills has panoramic views sweeping the North Platte Valley with the North Platte River meandering along the north base, and **Scotts Bluff National Monument** majestic and towering above the lush, green valley dotted by attractive farmsteads. From other perspectives one can see Chimney Rock piercing the eastern sky or Laramie Peak looming 100 miles to the west.

The character of this community is what makes this area prosperous and prepared for growth. It is a character shaped by a rich heritage in the building of the west. The basis of that heritage is an act of creation, since the area is gifted with a beautiful natural landmark. Because such a landmark exists, it serves as a focal point for human activities, dating back to pre-historic man and extending through the present and into the future. This landmark is Scotts Bluff which is a natural promontory rising 4649' above sea level.

The ghost of Hiram Scott lingers in the name of the Scotts Bluff National Monument, Scotts Bluff County, and the City of Scottsbluff. Scott's story has become legendary. According to early historians, Scott, a fur trapper, became ill, deserted by his companions, and somewhere within the shadow of

the 800-foot bluff, he died in 1828. Scotts Bluff National Monument was incorporated into the national park system in 1919.

Between 1830 and the late 1860's, the North Platte River was the median for the two earliest east-west super-highways: The Oregon-California Trail on the south and the Mormon Trail on the North. The Oregon-California Trail penetrated the bluffs through what today is known as Mitchell Pass. After the hundreds of miles of flat prairie to the east, the vision of Scotts Bluff was a welcome sight to the early pioneers as recorded in diaries and sketches and early photographs. Still visible are deep

ruts gouged by thousands of hooves of oxen, mules, and horses and wheels of covered wagons carrying emigrants and their limited possessions westward, first to Oregon and later to California where gold was discovered in 1848.

The coming of the railroads became the contributing factor in establishing the townsites of Scottsbluff and Gering. Gering was named after the town's first banker, Martin Gering and was established in 1887 at a site based on a survey by the Union Pacific Railroad. The U.P. tracks arrived in 1910. The Scottsbluff townsite was laid out in December 1899, by Lincoln Land company, a Burlington railroad subsidiary, with tracks reaching the site in February 1900.

Scottsbluff, Gering, and Terrytown serve as a regional center for agriculture and livestock production, food processing, manufacturing, finance, health and human resources, retailing, education, tourism, and recreation. The population of the primary and secondary trade area is approximately 100,000 people.

