Ottawa Herald 4-10-1931

**OTTAWA REBUILT IN FORTY YEARS**

**B.D. BENNETT LOOKS BACK**

**INTO THE PAST**

**On His 76th Birthday, Ice Business Is Ony One Which Has Not Changed Ownership**

With a record of 40 years continuous ownership of one of the city’s most important industries, B.D. Bennett, ice manufacturer, tomorrow celebrates his 76th birthday anniversary. In March 1897, Mr. Bennett, known as “Pop” to many of his friends, took over the ice business from his father-in-law, J.H. Ransom, He later also became interested in what is now the Bennett Creamery.

A native of Maroa, DeWitt county, Ill., Mr. Bennett came to Kansas in 1880. He was in the lumber business at Williamsburg for a time and on November 13, 1884 was married to Miss Myra M. Ransom, daughter of Captain and Mrs. J.H. Ransom at Ransomville. Mr. and Mrs. Bennett celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1934. Soon after their marriage they moved to Harper and from there to Wichita and then to Pittsburg where he was in the lumber business. On January 1, 1895, the family moved from Pittsburg to Ottawa where he joined Capt. Ransom in the ice business.

“The city of Ottawa is practically a rebuilt town” said Mr. Bennett this week as he recalled the town of 40 and 50 years ago. “It has improved a lot. The ice business is the only one which has not changed ownership at least once in that time.”

In the days when Mr. Bennett took over the ice business his company got about 3,000 tons of natural ice from the Marais des Cygnes each season and stored it in ice houses located near the river bank at the ends of Locust, Willow, Ash and Beech streets. “Of course we lost a lot of it in storage,” said Mr. Bennett.

By 1901 the present 10-ton storage plant was under construction at 306 North Main. Frank Sweet, plant engineer, who helped build the present building has been employed there since. Mr. Bennett is the company and all the officers. For a number of years he shared the contractor offices of Captain Ransom in the basement of the Peoples National bank building and when it was remodeled, he moved his office to 107 East Second, where it is now located.

In 1905 he bought the Forest Park Creamery and it was renamed the Ottawa Condensing Company, Hee [sic] and his sons have been interested in making what is now the Bennett Creamery, one of the foremost milk products manufacturing businesses in this area. In 1922 the present creamery buildings were completed and within the last year considerable modernization of the plant has taken place.

Mr. Bennett, in his spare moments, takes an active part in the Kiwanis club and the Elks lodge and is a “partner” in all sorts of fun with his grandsons and his family.