

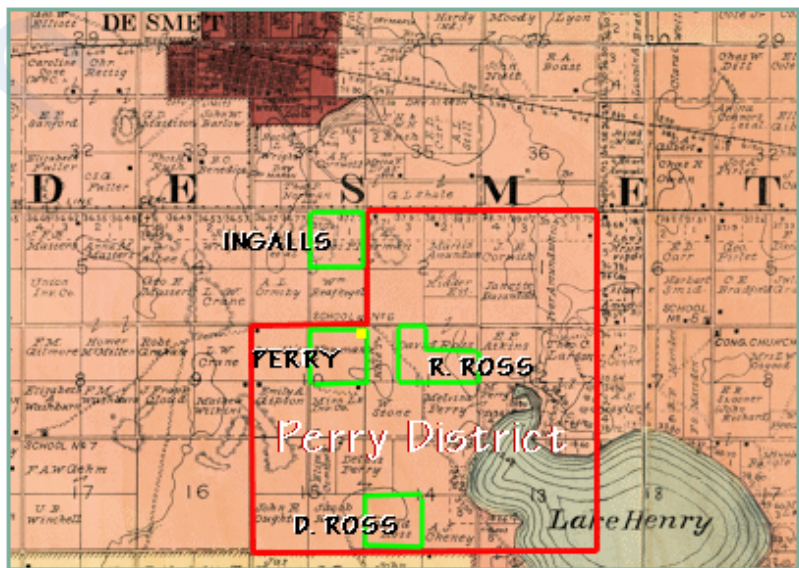
# ROSS

## Block 13, Lot 16 De Smet Cemetery



☛ There are 5 stones in the Ross rows: To the left (west) is Harrison Ross (flat stone, died 1892, age 35 years); stone with bird is Wilma Ross (Feb. 1903 – Dec. 1903); Celesia Ross (1838-1911, Russel Ross’s second wife); Russel Ross (Civil War marker: Q. M. Sgt. Russell J. Ross / 11 PA Cav); Viola Ross (1838-1887, Russel Ross’s first wife); Walter Wheat (unmarked grave).

The Ross family members mentioned in *Pioneer Girl* were Mr. Ross (Russel Jesse Ross); David Ross, said to be Mr. Ross’s brother and married to Fanny Perry, sister of Delos Perry); Gaylord Ross; and Jenny / Jennie Ross. Gaylord (age 19) and Jennie (age 20) were two of the three children of Russel J. Ross; they stayed with Laura, Carrie, and Grace when Ma and Pa went to Iowa to take Mary to the Blind School. In *Little Town on the Prairie*, Gaylord and Jennie are said to be a little older than Laura (age 14), and related to the Perry family. Russel Ross was treasurer of the De Smet school beginning in 1884. He was named moderator of School No. 5 (Perry School) in October 1883. In early school maps, the school is on his land.



## RUSSEL JESSE ROSS

Block 13, Lot 16 De Smet Cemetery

March 15, 1838 – May 7, 1919; died at age 81

Son of Harrison Ross (1813-1893) and Abigail (Beach) Ross (1814-1883).

Husband of (1) Viola Betsy (Roberts) Ross (1838 – 1886); married March 17, 1859.

Husband of (2) Celestia Pratt Manning (she died 1912); married February 11, 1889.

Father of William Harrison Ross (August 5, 1866-1892); Jennie May (Ross) Wheat (1860-1941); and Sellick Gaylord Ross (1861-1934).

Russel Ross helped Rev. Brown and V.V. Barnes draft constitution for temperance society in March 1882. --- R.J. Ross spoke at opening of DS graded school in town, was on school board. --- He bought lumber for Wilkin School, signed Laura's contract for teaching Wilkin School. --- Was Justice of the Peace in 1888. --- For Boasts' 20<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, worked with C.P. Ingalls to organize party. --- After taking school money, seems to have gotten back in good graces with people... was committee for GAR meeting with Couse and others in 1893.

*August 28, 1891: [Lake Preston Times]: R.J. Ross, late treasurer of De Smet school township, is presumed to have started for No-Man's Land, last Tuesday morning, by the way of "the underground railway." There was known to be a rather startling deficiency in the school funds in his charge, but it was expected he would stay and "face the music." At the annual meeting of the board, Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Ross appeared and requested until Saturday to prepare and submit a report at that time. The extension was readily granted. But when he came into town the following Saturday, he said his books and records had been accidentally destroyed by fire Thursday night previous, and asked permission to submit an approximate report. This was refused, but he was given thirty days in which to secure duplicate receipts and vouchers for money which he had paid out. From all investigations, it is known that his shortage for the last term exceeds \$1,100. His bondsmen are J.H. Carroll and A.B. Imus. His shortage in preceding years amounts to about \$600. The News very much regrets the need to publish such things about a heretofore highly respected man, a prominent church member and Sabbath school worker, and a veteran soldier. If there are any extenuating circumstances, they have not come to the surface. He probably ran away to escape a criminal prosecution, which would have been likely to follow, and will hereafter if he is ever captured. A criminal complaint has been sworn out and it now remains to be seen if the officers will bring him back. Mr. Ross was seen by Judge Barnes near Yankton last Saturday, making for Nebraska.*

*September 4, 1891 [New and Leader]: Ross, not Carroll. Dr. Hunter who is acquainted at De Smet, S.D. and is familiar with all the particulars of the embezzlement of the school treasurer there, said to a Journal reporter yesterday: "The name of the treasurer who took the funds is not J.H. Carroll, as was reported in the Journal. His name is R.J. Ross. Carroll is president of the First National Bank at that place and was one of Ross's bondmen. Ross and Sheriff Sherwin are both Farmer's Alliance men, and I am unable to say why they should represent the prisoner's name to be Carroll, unless it is some feeling they have against Carroll." The Journal reporter, who made the item, saw both the prisoner and the sheriff, and both gave the prisoner's name as Carroll. The prisoner gave the name of J.H. Carroll to the proprietor of the Sioux City house barn where his team was left. [Sioux City Journal]*

*December 25, 1891 [De Smet News and Leader]: (Info in last issue about Russel Ross being sued because he says School records burned. He was about \$300 short of money supposed to be in account. Still in court as of this issue.)*

March 8, 1907: DSN --- R. J. Ross of Drakola was quite seriously hurt in a runaway last week, also one of his horses had two of its legs broken. Mr. Ross was driving to town with a cow in the wagon, when the team became frightened and ran away.

March 8, 1907 [Kingsbury County Independent]: Mr. and Mrs. R.J. Ross met with a severe accident Saturday when driving up from Drakola. Mr. Ross had sold a cow and loaded the animal into the sleigh for the purpose of bringing it to the city. When opposite the David Ross farm two and one-half miles south the sleigh tipped over and the horses ran away. Mr. and Mrs. Ross were both thrown to the ground and both were unconscious for a time. Mr. R. was the first to recover. He went back to where Mrs. Ross lay and succeeded in reviving her. He then looked for the team and found them up against a fence a half a mile away, one of the horses having two legs broken. Wm. Janssen, who lives near the scene of the accident put the horse out of the misery and brought Mr. and Mrs. Ross to the city. Both were badly shaken up and Mr. R. was quite badly cut about the head, although we understand both are doing nicely and will not suffer any material injury. It was supposed that the sled was overturned by the cow either swaying or being thrown against the side of the box.

May 16, 1919. The De Smet NEWS.  
Obituary of R. J. Ross.

Russel Jesse Ross was born in Granville, Bradford County, Pennsylvania, March 15, 1838, and died May 7, 1919, aged 81 years, 1 month and 11 days.

The first twenty-two years of his life were spent on a farm at the place of his birth. After this he lived for eight years at Canton and eight years in Tioga county, Pennsylvania, then moved to central Iowa on account of the ill health of his wife. After a year and four months he moved to Dakota territory, settling at Dell Rapids and engaging in farming. This was in 1874. Six years later he came to Kingsbury county and settled on a farm three miles south of De Smet. From here he moved, in 1892, to Drakola, where the last earthly home was made.

Mr. Ross was twice married. His first wife was Miss Viola Roberts of Canton, Pa. The marriage occurred March 17, 1859, when Mr. Ross was twenty-one years of age. To this union three children were born. They are Mrs. W.H. Wheat of De Smet, Gaylord of Carthage, and William of Drakola, all of whom survive him. In 1886 Mrs. Ross died and was buried in the cemetery at De Smet. On February 10, 1889, Mrs. Ross was married to Mrs. Celestia Manning ([sic] Celestia L. (Pratt) Newell) of Drakola. She died in May, 1912.

On July 12, 1862 Mr. Ross enlisted as a private in Co. C., 132<sup>nd</sup> Reg. of Pennsylvania to serve for nine months, and was discharged in May, 1863, with the rank of 1<sup>st</sup> sergeant. At the time of his discharge he reenlisted for a term of three years in the 11<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania cavalry and served until the close of the war. He entered as quartermaster sergeant and returned with the rank of 1<sup>st</sup> lieutenant. Among engagements he participated in were the battles of Fredericksburg, Dec. 13, 1862, Antietam and Chancellorsville.

Mr. Ross was active in educational work. He taught in the public schools in Pennsylvania and for years in Dakota. Dell Rapids, the Johnson school south of De Smet and



Q M Sgt. / Russel J. Ross /  
11 PA Cav

*Drakola were among his fields of labor. He also served one term as superintendent of schools in Minnehaha county.*

*Mr. Ross was converted by the preaching of a chaplain while in the army and returned a Christian man. He first united with the Christian church. In Iowa he joined the Presbyterian church, the only one in the place. On coming to De Smet he united with the Congregational church, the only church in town at that time. For years his church home has been the Congregational church at Drakola. He was active in all the affairs of the church, often superintending the Sunday school or teaching a class. Till a few weeks ago he was the teacher of the large adults Bible class at Drakola. Many testify to his faithfulness and help in time of need. His children call him blessed.*

*Funeral services, attended by the entire neighborhood and many from outside were held Friday afternoon at the Congregational church at Drakola. Rev. J.D. Whitelaw officiated. Interment was in the De Smet cemetery.*

## **VIOLA BETSY ROBERTS ROSS**

Block 13, Lot 6 De Smet Cemetery

May 4, 1838 – January 16, 1887; died at age 48

Viola was the daughter of William J. Roberts (1796-1865) and Elizabeth “Betsy” Pratt, and the mother of Jennie, Gaylord, and Harrison Ross.

*Saturday, January 8, 1887. The De Smet LEADER.*

*Mrs. R.J. Ross, who has been at death's door for many months, died on Thursday night. The funeral services will be held today at 2 o'clock p.m., at the Congregational church.*

*Saturday, January 15, 1887. The De Smet LEADER.*

*Died. Ross.—At De Smet, Dak., January 6, 1887, Viola B., wife of R.J. Ross, aged 48 years, 8 months and 2 days. Deceased, daughter of Wm. And Betsy Roberts, of Canton, Bradford County, Pa., was born May 4, 1838. She united with the Disciple church of that place on profession of faith in Christ about the year 1856. Was married to R.J. Ross March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1859. Removed to Wellsboro, Pa., with her husband in 1866 and united with the Presbyterian church of that place. Removed to Ackley, Iowa, in 1873, and united with Presbyterian church of Ackley. Came to Dakota in 1874 and united with Presbyterian church of Dell Rapids, and later with Congregational church at De Smet, where membership was retained to the time of decease. In the decease of Mrs. Ross her family sustains the loss of a kind wife and mother, the church of a faithful member and the community of a good woman who modestly and unpretendingly sought to discharge her duty, and her end was peace and hope. A large concourse attended the funeral sermon conducted at the Congregational church by Rev. E. Brown though the day was one of the coldest of the season.*



In memory of / Viola B. / Wife of R.J. Ross /  
Died Jan. 16, 1887 /  
Aged 58 years, 8 mos. and 2 Dys.

## CELESTIA L. (PRATT) NEWELL ROSS

March 23, 1838 – May 22, 1911; died at age 73

Block 13, Lot 16

Second wife of Russel J. Ross, former “Mrs. Newell”.

*February 16, 1889. The De Smet LEADER.*

*Married. Ross—Newell.—At the Congregational parsonage in De Smet, by Rev. J.R. Bonney, February 10, 1889, Mr. Russell J. Ross and Mrs. Celestia L. Newell.*

*September 30, 1904 [Kingsbury County Independent]: Mrs. R.J. Ross is at this writing enjoying a visit by her daughter, Mrs. A.B. Baker and son, Roy Brown. While entertaining friends with pleasure, she suffers all the discomfort of a very pronounced type of sciatica, with no prospects of relief in sight.*

*February 24, 1905 [Kingsbury County Independent]: Mrs. R.J. Ross is suffering great inconvenience by total disability of her left hand, which is somewhat swollen, and quite painful. Also extremely sensitive to the touch. The arm above the wrist is not seriously afflicted. The old gent don't like to do housework though.*

*August 16, 1907 [Kingsbury County Independent]: Mrs. R.J. Ross on Wednesday went to De Smet to remind her son, C.E. Newell, that it was his birthday, and help him to properly celebrate the event.*

*May 29, 1911. The De Smet NEWS.*

*Obituary. Mrs. R.J. Ross of Dracula passed away Monday, after an illness of several weeks duration. Pneumonia was the cause of her death. The funeral services were held Wednesday at 11 a.m. from her late home at Drakola, conducted by the Rev. J.E. Booth. The interment was in the De Smet cemetery.*

*Celestia L. Pratt was born in Pennsylvania, March 23d, 1838. She died May 22<sup>nd</sup> age 73 years 2 months. In 1856 she was united in marriage to W.M. Newell, to which union three children survive. In 1889 she was united in marriage to R.J. Ross. Mrs. Ross early in life became a Christian and united with the Methodist church, remaining a member of that branch of God's visible church for many years. After her marriage to Mr. Ross she united with the Congregational church at Drakola, in which society she was a valued and helpful member.*

*Mrs. Ross was one of the early settlers in Kingsbury county, and has played no small part in the development of the religious and social activities of the county.*



Wife of R.J. Ross, Died May 11, 1911

*She leaves a sorrowing husband, and three children, E. Newell, Mrs. Clara Manning, Mrs. L. Baker, one brother W.E. Pratt of De Smet and one sister in Pennsylvania, nine grand children, four great grand children to mourn her death. To them the sympathy of the community is given. A large concourse of neighbors and friends followed the body to its last earthly resting place, thus testifying to the esteem that Mrs. Ross was held in.*

## **DAVID BENJAMIN ROSS**

Buried in Garfield, Washington

February 26, 1845 – January 12, 1920; died at age 74

Husband of Fanny J. (Perry) Ross (1849-1930).

Brother-in-law of Delos Perry.

Details if needed

Children.

David Ross born February 26, 1845 in Centre (Beaver Co.) Pennsylvania. In 1904 and 1907, David and Fanny Ross lived in Farmington WA. Were back living in Drakola area in 1918 but left to go spend winter with their son Rev. Floyd Ross in Milton, Oregon. Came back to Kingsbury County. David Ross died January 12, 1920 in Garfield WA.

*January 23, 1920: Paper tells of Death of Early Settler of This County. From the Garfield (Washington) Enterprise. In the passing away of David B. Ross, Garfield has lost one of her splendid citizens and neighbors. Mr. Ross was born in Granville, Center, Pa., in 1845, in which community his early life was spent. At the age of twenty-two he united with the Christian church of that place. During the Civil war his father and two older brothers enlisted in the Union army. Although, it was the desire of Mr. Ross to enter the service but someone must remain at home and care for the family. This lot fell to Mr. Ross which he gladly accepted. In 1868 he was married to Miss Fannie J. Perry. For over 51 years they enjoyed he fellowship of one with the other, celebrating their Golden Wedding on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 1918. Soon after their marriage they moved to South Dakota, being pioneers in the settlement of that country. Mr. Ross was always interested in the welfare of the community where he lived and every good enterprise was given his hearty support. He was interested in the public schools and church life in his community. In January of 1901 he came to Garfield, Washington, where he resided until his death. The funeral service was held in the local Christian church, Wednesday afternoon and was in charge of the pastor, Rev. Glen Hutton. Interment was made in the local cemetery.*

## **FANNY J. (PERRY) ROSS**

Fanny Perry Ross died September 7, 1930 in Garfield WA. She was born April 3, 1849 in Center (Beaver Co.) Pennsylvania.

## HARRISON ROSS JR.

Block 13, Lot 16 De Smet Cemetery DO NOT HAVE OBIT  
February 24, 1857 – May 20, 1893; died at age 35

Brother of Russel. Harrison had a preemption NW 12-110-56 in the Perry District, preempted May 1888. He was part of the party of nine that came to Kingsbury County in 1879: including Delos Perry, Russel Ross, David Ross, Harrison Ross, Charley Haywood, Mr. Burk, Mr. Popp, Frank Stout, Dan Jones.

Harrison Ross, Jr. was the son of Harrison Ross, Sr. and Abigail Beach. He was born February 1857 in Granville Center, Bradford, PA. He died May 20, 1893 in Kingsbury County. He married Nettie Bartlett (born 1864 in Trempealeau Co. WI) in 1883, daughter of Jeremy W. Bartlett and Lydia Dobier Bartlett from Lake Preston. She married John Joseph Madash in 1894 and they lived at Lake Preston before moving to Douglas County MN in the early 1900s.

Harrison Ross and Nettie Ross four daughters: Josephine Abigail (born March 3, 1884); Zerna Atlanta (Born February 2, 1887 – died August 20, 1972 in Douglas Co. MN); Laura Ruth Ross (Born May 20, 1890-) Hazel Pearl Ross (born November 21, 1891 – died 1911).



Harrison Ross / Died May 20, 1892 /  
Aged 35 Yrs. 1 Mo. 26 Days

## JENNIE MAY (ROSS) WHEAT

Buried in Estherville (Emmet County) Iowa  
February 17, 1860 – October 31, 1941; died at age 80

Seven children. Two survived her.

*May 5, 1883. De Smet LEADER.*

*Wedding Bells. Last Thursday evening was a joyous occasion at the residence of Mr. R. J. (Russel) Ross. A large concourse of invited guests filled the house to witness the marriage ceremony of the host's daughter, Jennie, and Mr. Walter H. Wheat, one of this county's substantial young farmers, who has made a home in the Oberlin Settlement. The ceremony took place at 8 o'clock, Rev. (J. T.) Otis, of Lake Preston, officiating. Afterward the company sat down to a sumptuous supper, to which all did ample justice. Mr. and Mrs. Ross left nothing undone to make the occasion a happy and memorable one for all present. The young couple received very many substantial and beautiful presents from the friends who were there. They will reside on their homestead in this county. The LEADER joins a host of friends in wishing them perfect happiness.*

February 20, 1925:  
Mrs. W.H. Wheat  
returned to her home  
in Sioux Falls Friday  
morning after a visit  
at the home of her  
daughter, Mrs. J.O.  
Purinton.



Jennie and Walter Wheat

Friday, October 26,  
1934: Mrs. W.H.  
Wheat came from  
Sioux Falls Saturday  
night and visited at  
the home of her  
daughter and  
husband, Mrs. and  
Mrs. J.O. Purinton  
and on Sunday  
attended the 50th anniversary of the Drakola Congregational church, returning to Sioux Falls  
that evening.

Only Walter Wheat is buried in De Smet Cemetery – Daughter (1) Daisy Marian Wheat Roberts (born 1885) , married to Roscoe C. Roberts. Lived in Estherville, Iowa. Jennie Wheat was living with them when she died. --- Jennie and Walter had daughter (2) Florette who married J.O. Purinton and lived in Kingsbury County. Florette is buried Block 23, Lot 2.

November 6, 1941. *The De Smet NEWS.*

*Mrs. Wheat Died; Was Early Resident Territory, County*

*Death came to Mrs. W.H. Wheat Friday at the Coleman hospital in Estherville, Iowa, at the age of 81 years, following a short illness. With her at the time were her daughters, Mrs. J.O. Purinton of De Smet and Mrs. Ray Roberts of Estherville.*

*Mrs. Wheat had gone there recently to be with her daughter after several weeks in a Sioux Falls hospital following the automobile accident in which she was injured.*

*An early resident of Dakota Territory and of Kingsbury county, Mrs. Wheat had lived for years in De Smet. In recent years she had divided her time between De Smet, Sioux Falls and Estherville.*

*Funeral services were held Sunday afternoon at a funeral chapel at Estherville, the Rev. Claude Faunsaugh in charge, and burial was in Oak Hill cemetery there.*

*Born February 17, 1860, she was named Jennie May Ross. At the age of 13 she accompanied her parents to Ackley where her father was engaged in business. About 1874 the family moved to Dell Rapids, S.D., where she taught school for several years. In 1879 her father took up a homestead near De Smet. In 1883 she married Walter H. Wheat of Oberlin, Ohio, and to this union seven children were born, only two of whom survive her.*

*Mr. Wheat died in 1912. A few years later, following the death of a daughter, Mrs. Wheat moved to Sioux Falls to make a home for her grandchildren. Much of her time in recent*



years has been spent there, where she was active in church and social work, especially so in knitting for the needy and for the Red Cross.

Besides the two daughters she is survived by eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

November 4, 1941. Estherville Iowa VINDICATOR AND REPUBLICAN.

Rites of Aged Lady

Services Held Sunday For Mrs. W. H. Wheat Who Passed Away Friday

Funeral services were held Sunday [November 1, 1941] afternoon at the Mahlum and Anderson Funeral home for Mrs. W. H. Wheat, 81, who passed away Friday afternoon at the Coleman hospital. The Rev. Claude Fausnaugh, of the Presbyterian church was in charge of the services and burial was in the Oak Hill cemetery. Mrs. Wheat was the mother of Mrs. Roy Roberts, of this city, and had been making her home with her.

On Wednesday of last week Mrs. Wheat was taken to the Coleman hospital where her condition was pronounced as extremely serious and very little hope was given for her recovery. She was involved in an automobile accident near Sioux Falls last Labor Day and although she was thought to have recovered from the accident there may have been complications that eventually caused her illness and death.

During the years that Mrs. Wheat has made her home in Estherville she had many friends who will regret to learn of her death. She was an active woman as long as her health permitted and during her illness has been a patient and never complaining sufferer.

Besides her daughter, Mrs. Roberts in this city, Mrs. Wheat is survived by one other daughter, Mrs. J. O. Purintuin, of DeSmet, So. Dak., who was also with her when she passed away. Mr. Wheat passed away in 1912.

## WALTER HALE WHEAT

Block 13, Lot 6 De Smet Cemetery (unmarked grave)

October 1855 – October 6, 1912; died at age 56

October 11, 1912. The De Smet NEWS.

Walter H. Wheat. - After an illness of but a few days Mr. Wheat breathed his last on Sunday afternoon last. Deceased had been in poor health for many years as a result of asthma, but he was about most of the time and lost little time from work. - The funeral was held on Tuesday afternoon in the M.E. church, conducted by Rev. A.C. Bevers in the absence of the pastor, and the interment was in the De Smet cemetery. - Walter H. Wheat was born in New York City in 1856. He lived in Oberlin for twenty-seven years, coming to Kingsbury county, Dakota, in 1882 and settling on a claim in Mathews township. - On May 3, 1883, he married Miss Jennie Ross, who survives him; also three daughters and a son, Mrs. Ray Roberts of Shelby, Indiana, Mrs. R.C. Roberts of Manchester, S.D., Florette and Harold, of this city.

Eight years ago the family moved to De Smet, their present home. Mr. Wheat for many years was a faithful and consistent member of the M. E. Church.

## **SELLICK GAYLORD ROSS**

Buried in Des Moines, Iowa

December 13, 1861 – September 4, 1934; died at age 72

In *The Road Back* diary, Laura learns that he is helpless cripple in north part of state.

Around 1899, Gaylord married Frances Abigail (Marshall) Drury, widow of Josiah Flint Drury. They had one daughter, Frances Viola Ross, born 1899 in Sanborn County.

March 25, 1921: DSN: S.G. Ross, of Carthage (Miner County), was in De Smet Friday calling on old friends. Mr. Ross lived in De Smet in the early days, closing out a dray line at the time of the Spanish American war when he went to the Philippines. Since that time he has lived at Carthage, first on a farm and the last ten years in a lumber yard. S.G. or Gaylord, as he was known here, is a son of the late R.J. Ross, of Drakola vicinity.

September 20, 1929: W.H. Ross of Hazelton, N.D. and Gaylord Ross of Carthage were in De Smet Monday, visiting their sister, Mrs. W.H. Wheat, who had come from Sioux Falls to meet them here at the home of her daughter, Mrs. J.O. Purintun. The Ross brothers are sons of the late R.J. Ross, pioneer of Drakola neighborhood. They came to Kingsbury county in 1880 and recall well the early history of the town and county. --- 1930 census: Selic (sic) G. Ross. age 58