

# Cresco Trivia



**Information about the old pictures of Cresco.**

<b>1.</b>	<b>This picture looks south along Elm Street. Notice the absence of so many automobiles. Also notice the ornate streetlights. These were a trademark in Cresco until they were removed in 1946.</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>St. Joseph's Mercy Hospital built in 1910. The Sisters of Mercy opened Cresco's second hospital in 1911.</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Kessel Hospital founded in 1902 by Dr. George Kessel in his own home.</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Medical Arts Center—west of the law enforcement center.</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Howard County Courthouse (its location causes 'War') In January, 1867, Cresco entered the county seat fight, offering to construct a brick court house free of cost to the county. Although the building in Cresco was completed and the county offices and records had been moved, the old courthouse between Vernon Springs and New Oregon was still considered the legal county seat. The argument continued. In December, 1876, the courthouse in Cresco burned. The question of rebuilding the courthouse at Cresco finally brought a solution to the county seat problem. In 1880 the present courthouse was finished and the board ordered all records and offices moved to the new building.</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>St. Joseph's Mercy Hospital built in 1910. The Sisters of Mercy opened Cresco's second hospital in 1911.</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Looking north along Elm Street. Quite a lot of snow!</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Cresco Opera House was built in 1914 and opened in 1915. It replaced Lyric Hall (pic 75) as the community's center for entertainment. In addition to the main theatre areas, a party and dance hall was located in the basement.</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Looking north along Elm Street.</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Kessel Hospital founded in 1902 by Dr. George Kessel in his own home.</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>This is the vocational high school building (East Building) before the gymnasium and attached hallway were built. It was built in 1919.</b>
<b>12.</b>	<b>Cresco Opera House was built in 1914 and opened in 1915. It replaced Lyric Hall (pic 75) as the community's center for entertainment. In addition to the main theatre areas, a party and dance hall was located in the basement.</b>
<b>13.</b>	<b>Looking north along Elm Street</b>
<b>14.</b>	<b>Early autos were a big attraction for parades. Notice the right hand drives of the cars.</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Looking south along Elm Street. Notice the Texaco station on the left side of the picture.</b>

16.	Looking north along Elm Street
17.	Dr. George Kessel : Founder of the first hospital in Cresco
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19.	Kessel Hospital founded in 1902 by Dr. George Kessel in his own home.
20.	The Cresco Schools: A grade school was built on the west end of the block in 1913. The center structure or high school was built in 1905. The building to the east was for vocational education and was built in 1919. The two high school buildings were later joined with a hallway structure when the gymnasium was erected north of the high school in 1935. (Picture taken toward NE)
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24.	Kessel Park
25.	This was the oldest school building in use in Cresco. It was called South Ward and built in 1896.
26.	This lodge and land along 7 <sup>th</sup> Avenue West was given to the city of Cresco by Dr. George Kessel in 1929. The home was originally owned by John Beadle, son of the town's founder.
27.	The oldest park in Cresco is Beadle Park. This park was named in honor of the town's founder, Augustus Beadle. A small bandstand and fountain with a pond were early features of the park. Concerts were played in the park's bandstand. A log cabin was moved to the park in 1965 by the county historical society.
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29.	There was plenty of recreation at the Vernon Springs park at the turn of the century as the swimming area on the Turkey River Mill pond. A bathhouse was provided for the swimmers who could rent suits as well as dress in privacy. The 'chute' or slide into the river was popular with the swimmers as was a diving board. Area around the swimming beach was a picnic grounds.
30.	Cresco Country Club

31.	Vernon Dam
32.	Cresco Country Club
33.	Cresco train depot
34.	A passenger train serving the Cresco area in 1911. The freight depot served as the passenger depot at that time. This train is headed to Austin.
35.	The Vernon Springs Baptist church united with the Baptist residents of Cresco in May, 1878, and the name of the church in Cresco would be the First Baptist Church. November 26, 1881, the Baptist Church became a corporate body and the present site on Elm Street, was purchased for a church building. A new building was erected at a cost of \$2,700 and dedicated on November 5, 1882.
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37.	Cresco High School Gymnasium was built in 1935.
38.	Cresco Public Library
39.	June 19, 1894, the trustees of the First Methodist Episcopal Church purchased the property on the corner of Elm Street and Third Avenue for a new church and parsonage. Three lots were bought from Aaron Kimball for \$2,000. On December 23, 1900, the new church was dedicated. The cost of the building and furnishings, including the pipe organ was \$16,400. By a vote of the Methodist General Conference, the name of the church was changed in 1939 to the First Methodist Church of Cresco. A fire on February 23, 1941 razed the interior of the church. A new \$41,000 church was dedicated on December 28, 1941. The original outside walls and cornerstone were kept. The main entrance was moved to the southeast corner and the sanctuary was built facing north.
40.	The first church was organized at Vernon Springs on September 7, 1856 and was known as the Congregational Church of Oregon Grove. The church was moved to Vernon Springs. The first church structure and parish house were built in 1860 near the town of New Oregon. In 1868, with the shift of population, the Congregational Church building was moved to Cresco. The building was place on runners and pulled by 24 yoke of oxen led by two teams of horses. The church was put on the site of the Sears, Roebuck and Company store (across from the theatre). The present church was built on Third Avenue East in 1899. (\$15,907.50)
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	were kept. The main entrance was moved to the southeast corner and the sanctuary was built facing north.
42.	St. Joseph's Parish erected the core of its present church in 1917. This replaced a smaller brick church which became inadequate due to the growth of the parish. The first church was a frame structure built in 1870. (This is now Notre Dame Parish.)
43.	Howard County Courthouse (its location causes 'War') In January, 1867, Cresco entered the county seat fight, offering to construct a brick court house free of cost to the county. Although the building in Cresco was completed and the county offices and records had been moved, the old courthouse between Vernon Springs and New Oregon was still considered the legal county seat. The argument continued. In December, 1876, the courthouse in Cresco burned. The question of rebuilding the courthouse at Cresco finally brought a solution to the county seat problem. In 1880 the present courthouse was finished and the board ordered all records and offices moved to the new building.
44.	Assumption is the oldest Catholic Congregation in Howard County. The church is of English Gothic design and was dedicated on June 25, 1930. The limestone used in the footings came from the foundations of the wooden church (which burned in 1929) and were the same stones used in the construction of the original church at Vernon Springs. (now the Heritage Center)
45.	St. Joseph's Parish erected the core of its present church in 1917. This replaced a smaller brick church which became inadequate due to the growth of the parish. The first church was a frame structure built in 1870. (This is now the Notre Dame Parish.) This picture includes the church, the sisters' residence, and the old elementary school.
46.	Notre Dame High School
47.	Cresco Public Library
48.	St. Joseph's Mercy Hospital built in 1910. The Sisters of Mercy opened Cresco's second hospital in 1911.
49.	Notre Dame High School and gymnasium
50.	This is the first church erected following the formation of the town of Cresco. This structure was built as a Methodist Church for \$3,000. The lot was deeded to the trustees of the church by Augustus Beadle, the town's founder, along with other residents. The new church was dedicated on November 8, 1868. This structure was used until 1900 when a new church was erected. The former church was sold to the Odd Fellows Lodge. It is currently a warehouse for Billmyer Furniture.
51.	The U.S. Post Office was built in 1935.
52.	Cresco Water Works built in 1891 and taken down in 2014.
53.	Cresco's last hotel was the Chambers, which opened as the Strother House in 1876 and served the community until it was razed in 1958. It stood where the CUSB parking lot is now.
54.	Vernon Springs boat dock. (1920's)
55.	Distinctive landmark at the extreme north end of Elm Street is this frame home now owned by relatives of George Laub. The residence is more than 100 years old, being erected by Perry Wanless. A Tennessee design was used. The home was later purchased by Dr.

	<b>William Connolly and then by Mr. Laub.</b>
<b>56.</b>	<b>This home was built in the early 1880's. It remained in the Kellow family until L.A. Kellow, son of William Kellow, Jr., sold the home in 1949. Mr. Kellow was one of the early grocery store merchants in Cresco.</b>
<b>57.</b>	<b>Vernon Springs boat dock (1920's)</b>
<b>58.</b>	<b>Vernon Springs Park</b>
<b>59.</b>	<b>There was plenty of recreation at the Vernon Springs park at the turn of the century as the swimming area on the Turkey River Mill pond. A bathhouse was provided for the swimmers who could rent suits as well as dress in privacy. The 'chute' or slide into the river was popular with the swimmers as was a diving board. Area around the swimming beach was a picnic grounds. (Vernon Mill Pond—1920)</b>
<b>60.</b>	<b>Early Cresco</b>
<b>61.</b>	<b>Steamboat Rock at New Oregon, IA</b>
<b>62.</b>	<b>Howard County Court House erected in 1880. This photo was taken in 1888 during a political rally that included a parade. The courthouse has undergone more than three additions since its original construction.</b>
<b>63.</b>	<b>Augustus Beadle, founder of Cresco</b>
<b>64.</b>	<b>Cresco Public Library</b>
<b>65.</b>	<b>The Cresco Immanuel Lutheran Church was formally organized in 1882, but dates back to 1856 when Rev Carl Jungck arrived in Winneshiek County by covered wagon. On March 22, 1885, the congregation dedicated its first church building, a frame structure 24 ' X 40', on the corner where the present church stands. The present church was built in 1923 with several additions—new entrance and educational wing (1963).</b>
<b>66.</b>	<b>The first church was organized at Vernon Springs on September 7, 1856 and was known as the Congregational Church of Oregon Grove. The church was moved to Vernon Springs. The first church structure and parish house were built in 1860 near the town of New Oregon. In 1868, with the shift of population, the Congregational Church building was moved to Cresco. The building was place on runners and pulled by 24 yoke of oxen led by two teams of horses. The church was put on the site of the Sears, Roebuck and Company store (across from the theatre). The present church was built on Third Avenue East in 1899. (\$15,907.50)</b>
<b>67.</b>	<b>Bridge crossing the Turkey River south of Cresco at Vernon. The old Tower Club is shown in the distance. This wrought iron bridge was erected in 1872. The original structure was built to accommodate horse and buggies. It was narrow and had a wooden slat floor.</b>
<b>68.</b>	<b>Vernon Springs Dam</b>
<b>69.</b>	<b>Still identified in stone at the top of the structure is the E.R. Thompson Building. This Elm Street Building has served a number of purposes--the county superintendant, abstract office, and the city library.</b>
<b>70.</b>	<b>Howard County Courthouse (its location causes 'War') In January, 1867, Cresco entered the county seat fight, offering to construct a brick court house free of cost to the county. Although the building in Cresco was completed and the county offices and records had been moved, the old courthouse between Vernon Springs and New Oregon</b>

	was still considered the legal county seat. The argument continued. In December, 1876, the courthouse in Cresco burned. The question of rebuilding the courthouse at Cresco finally brought a solution to the county seat problem. In 1880 the present courthouse was finished and the board ordered all records and offices moved to the new building. (This artist's sketch shows how two projected additions will be added.)
71.	Cresco Train Depot
72.	Cresco's first major center for entertainment was Lyric Hall. The hall was erected in 1875. First floor contained stores. The second floor was the actual hall (see pic 75)
73.	The Zbornik Building opened in 1905 as a general store.
74.	Cresco's passenger depot served the community from 1912.
75.	Without a doubt, the attraction at Lyric Hall featured the evening this photograph was taken produced an attentive audience as well as a 'packed' house. Lyric Hall was located on the second floor (pic 72). A projection machine is shown in the rear of the hall which apparently used to entertain the evening 's audience.
76.	Old St. Joseph Elementary School
77.	Cresco Train Depot
78.	Notre Dame High School
79.	The first schoolhouse in Cresco was erected in 1869 and included the center portion of the pictured structure. Wings were added in later years.
80.	Cresco Public Library
81.	Howard County Courthouse (its location causes 'War') In January, 1867, Cresco entered the county seat fight, offering to construct a brick court house free of cost to the county. Although the building in Cresco was completed and the county offices and records had been moved, the old courthouse between Vernon Springs and New Oregon was still considered the legal county seat. The argument continued. In December, 1876, the courthouse in Cresco burned. The question of rebuilding the courthouse at Cresco finally brought a solution to the county seat problem. In 1880 the present courthouse was finished and the board ordered all records and offices moved to the new building.
82.	This lodge and land along 7 <sup>th</sup> Avenue West was given to the city of Cresco by Dr. George Kessel in 1929. The home was originally owned by John Beadle, son of the town's founder.
83.	Before Howard County had its first courthouse, court sessions were needed and early residents turned to the homes for a courtroom. This picture is of a stone structure at Vernon Springs that was used as a courtroom.
84.	The dam at Vernon Springs was photographed in its early years on a glass film plate that was discovered by Kevin McGuire in the garage of his home. The log dam was erected in 1853 with improvements made through the years—the dam being capped by cement in 1940.
85.	Andrew Carnegie
86.	Cresco Public Library
87.	Razing of Kessel Lodge
88.	Exhibition hall at the Howard County Fairgrounds was erected in

	1930. It was remodeled in 1963 when the structure became a schoolhouse during the school year and an exhibition hall for use during the fair.
89.	Cresco Public Library
90.	Built in 1911, this is the Grace Episcopal Parish Church. A prior Episcopal Church was built on this same site in 1868 on Third Avenue East. Funds for the building (\$2,200) was primarily contributed by friends in the East. The church bell was donated by Jay Cook, a famous Philadelphia banker
91.	The Electric Specialty Company is a strictly Cresco institution, being established in 1903 by H.G. Addie, based upon improvements in the construction and application of telephone condensers invented and patented by him. In 1924 Mr. Peterson purchased the Alliance store building, remodeled it, and named it the Electric Specialty Building. In 1924 the plant employed 34 girls and 10 men. A fire all but destroyed the plant in 1938, but within 7 weeks production was again supplying the customers. The condenser factory was Cresco's largest industry in 1910. New tenants later moved into the Electric Specialty Building, but the businesses had to be moved in 1946 when Sears-Roeback and Company leased the entire building.
92.	Long time residential landmark in Cresco is the home of Dr. George Kessel. The structure was erected in 1890 at the cost of \$5,000 which included 'barn and appropriate buildings.'
93.	A hearse and trim team of horses stand in front of the White Livery Stable. This building was also a paint store and a farm equipment building (Ingersoll after 1951).
94.	Long a part of the business world in Cresco was the O'Malley Department Store, a double-front structure at the Northwest corner of Elm and First Avenue West. The firm began before the turn of the Century but was not in operation during World War I. The building was divided into two stores at that time, the north half being the Red Cross Headquarters during World War I.