

Elsie

In 1836 the Craven family settled on the Maple River and built a saw mill. They platted out a village known as Craven's Mills about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile west of where Elsie is today and several stores were created.



Craven Grist Mill

When the railroad came through east of Craven's Mills, the Village of Elsie was platted in 1857 as a railroad station town. Most of the residents of Craven's Mills moved to Elsie.

Elsie was named for Elsie Amelia Tillotson. She was the daughter of Franklin Tillotson and the first child born in the town. Tillotson was the first postmaster of Elsie.



Elsie Depot

By 1880 the village had three general stores, a hardware store, a grocery, a drug store, two shoe stores, two taverns, and a cheese factory. It officially became a village in 1885.







General Store



Hankins Brothers Elevator

Dairy products became an early industry in Elsie. Many local farmers raised cows and needed a place to sell their milk. A cheese factory was built in the late 1860's. By the early 1900's milk and milk products were processed in a large Elsie plant. In 1929 the milk plant was bought by the Detroit Creamery Company. They closed the plant and moved the business to Ovid.



Cheese Factory

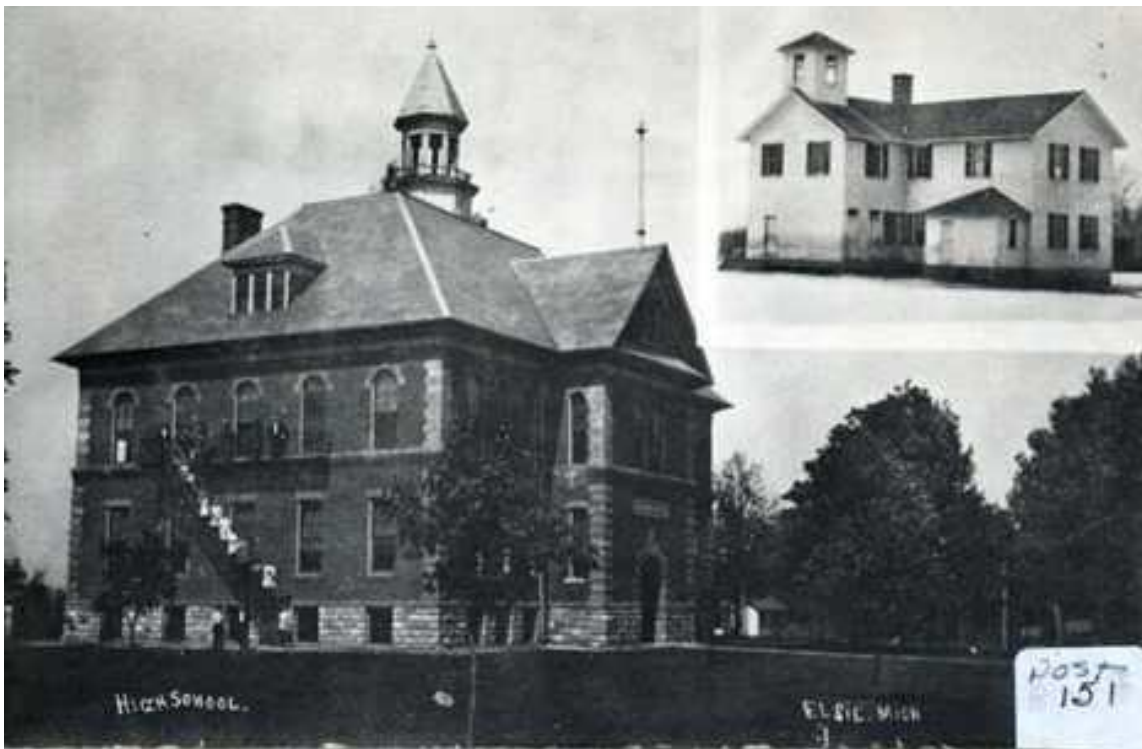


Eckenberg Milk Plant c1913

One of the largest dairy farms in the United States is in Elsie. The Green Meadows farm began with a single cow in 1917. Today they own 7,000 acres and have 9,500 cattle.

Elsie the cow statue is on Main Street. It isn't a cow. It's a bull. Elsie was built as a black angus bull. When it was bought by the town it was painted as a black and white Holstein.

Elsie has a dairy festival every year in July.



The first school in Elsie was held in the Little Red Schoolhouse. In 1868 it was replaced by the frame building in the upper righthand corner. This building was replaced by the brick building in 1903 and was added on to several times when more space was needed.

In 1965 Elsie joined with Ovid to form the Ovid-Elsie Schools.