Charles T. Lanman and Arthur W. Foss—were to publish the county financial statement, delinquent tax list, Commissioners’ proceedings and other official notices, and to do the job printing.

The First National Bank of McIntosh, the Citizens’ Bank of McIntosh, and the Bank of Mentor were designated the official depositories of the county. Geo. D. Barnard & Company agreed to furnish the county a $600 steel vault for the preservation of the public records. This company had already agreed to do $1,975 worth of printing for the county, and now the steel vault was to cost $600 more. But how it turned out that Barnard & Co. were the victims of misplaced confidence, and never received a cent for their contract, will be explained on another page.

BUSINESS DONE REGULARLY AND IN ORDER.

The officials of Cook County upon appointment immediately organized their respective offices and began the transaction of appropriate business. The Register of Deeds began transcribing the records at Crookston so far as they pertained to Columbia County, and new deeds, mortgages, and other transfers were recorded as fast as offered. The Polk County officials relinquished all claim to any deeds or mortgages sent to the Register of Deeds of that county and sent them to the proper officers of Columbia County. The Clerk of the Courts transcribed from the Polk County records all judgments recorded therein which affected lands in Columbia County and recorded them in the latter county’s books. His office at McIntosh was open every day.

The County Treasurer received all fees and payments due to Columbia County and deposited all sums in the county’s name. At the spring election of 1903 a full complement of justices of the peace and constables was elected and they filed their official bonds with the Columbia officers; bills from justices’ courts were duly allowed by the Columbia authorities. All former Polk County notaries residing within Columbia were re-appointed in the new county.

The Judge of Probate committed a number of persons to the insane asylum and the bills for their transportation were audited and paid. He also probated a number of estates. His office, too, was open every day.

In the Clerk of Court’s office Joseph Ekstad, Mrs. Samuel Hanson, and Guro Anderson, aliens, made their proper declarations to become U. S. citizens. The following named couples were licensed to marry: Lars Engester and Ingeborg R. Oppegaard, both of McIntosh; Carl A. Johnson and Anna Sophia Johnson, both of Gully; Olaf Axel Engdahl, of Park Rapids, and Abigail M. Olsen, of McIntosh; Ingvat E. Solberg, of Winsor, and Florence Coon, of McIntosh; John N. Sanden and Anna W. Ahman, both of McIntosh; Thomas Oystad, of Winnipeg, Man., and Inga Anderson, of Fosston; Ole Kamplien, of Gossen, and Emma Josephine Faylestda, of Fosston; Ole Mykleby and Krestene Lokken.

Thus the county of Columbia, while it existed, was a de facto county and as such was recognized by the State and sister county authorities. A subsequent Legislature passed a special act legalizing all the acts of the de facto officials of the county, thus preventing much confusion and embarrassment.

DEFEAT AND DISASTER AFTER ALL.

But all the while officials and common citizens were apprehensive and uneasy. The result of the Attorney General’s action to have the proceedings, the election, etc., leading to the county’s organization declared illegal was uncertain. There were devout wishes that the Supreme Court would decide in favor of Columbia, and there were fond hopes in certain quarters—yet there were many doubts and misgivings.

At last, on April 16 (1903) the Supreme Court handed down its decision in the Attorney General against Larsen and Others case, and that decision was that the pretended organization was invalid and of no effect and its pretended officials were ousted from the offices which they claimed to hold. In brief, the Court’s decision was (and it is still the law) that