John Neihardt was named Nebraska Poet Laureate 100 years ago this April
One hundred years ago, on April 18, 1921, Nebraska's state legislature became the first to name a state poet laureate, honoring forty-year-old John G. Neihardt of Bancroft.

What prompted the legislature to bestow this unprecedented honor?

The event demonstrates our changing interpretation of American history, and how Neihardt played a role in that change. Keep reading.

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**How the Ford Center stabilizes shattering silk**

Sometimes we store artifacts in perfect archival housings, within ideal environmental conditions, and materials still deteriorate rapidly due to some problem inherent in the material itself. Our conservators at the Gerald R. Ford
Conservation Center recently dealt with this condition in a Sioux tradecloth dress. Here’s what they did.

Preserved, Restored, or Conserved?

When an artwork or artifact has been damaged through use or time, several terms get used, often interchangeably. Is the object going to be “preserved,” “restored,” or “conserved”? What is the difference and why does it matter? Let’s find out.

2021 History Nebraska Awards
Winners will be presented with their awards during a special Legislative event on Wednesday, April 7, at the historic Kennard House in Lincoln. Learn more.

German prisoners of war in Grand Island
And we mean in Grand Island, just a few blocks from the heart of downtown. During World War II, a farm labor shortage prompted the US military to put war prisoners to work as paid farm laborers. Years later, Edith Robbins of Grand Island corresponded with a former prisoner who recalled his time in Nebraska. In the Spring 2021 issue of *Nebraska History Magazine*, Robbins translates his letters and tells the rest of the story. [Keep reading.](#)

**Remembering Cloyd Clark**
Former History Nebraska Board of Trustees president Cloyd Clark, 78, died on February 28 at Kearney Regional Hospital. Clark, a retired judge from McCook, was a staunch supporter of History Nebraska and a founding member of the Buffalo Commons Storytelling Festival, among many other community activities. The McCook Gazette has his obituary, and the History Nebraska Foundation has created a fund to honor his life, legacy, and commitment to sharing Nebraska’s history.

The Destruction of Omaha’s Easter Sunday Tornado
The tornado of March 25, 1913, was the deadliest in Nebraska history. These amazing photos illustrate the storm’s power.

Upcoming Events

We’re planning both virtual and in-person events, including this month’s History Café, “Jazz Tunes and Poetry Groove” (via Zoom), and a walking tour of a historic African American neighborhood in Lincoln. Read more.
Complete articles:

Why John G. Neihardt was named Nebraska Poet Laureate in 1921
By David L. Bristow, Editor

One hundred years ago, on April 18, 1921, the Nebraska state legislature became the first to name a state poet laureate, honoring forty-year-old John G. Neihardt of Bancroft.

What prompted the legislature to bestow this unprecedented honor?

The answer has to do with the veneration of classical Greek and Roman literature plus Nebraska’s recent frontier status. The event also demonstrates how our interpretation of American history has changed since then, and how Neihardt played a role in that.

The legislature’s resolution cited Neihardt’s American epic poem-in-progress, a five-part work eventually titled *A Cycle of the West*. The poet had completed the first two books by 1921. Both celebrated the “mountain men” of the Missouri River fur trade era. The legislature recognized Neihardt’s

“national epic wherein he has developed the mood of courage with which our pioneers explored and subdued our plains, and thus has inspired in Americans that love of the land and its heroes whereby great national traditions are built and perpetuated.”

Two phrases are important here: “national epic” and “subdued our plains.”

Did you read *The Odyssey* in high school? Students still read some of the Greek and Roman classics, but those works have lost their central place in our idea of what it means to be educated. When Neihardt was young, a traditional college education involved the study of Greek and Latin so that one could read the classics in the original languages. Most people never went to college, and fewer still mastered the ancient languages, but the idea remained that epic poetry in the style of Homer and Virgil was a supreme expression of a nation’s cultural legacy.

Meanwhile, Nebraska in 1921 was a pretty rough and unromantic place—dirt roads, small farms, and plenty of work that was still horse-powered. Then as now, most Nebraskans thought of themselves as practical-minded people. A common opinion in Bancroft was that Neihardt was the sort of dreamy oddball who never gets ahead in the world.

But to people who read his work in the light of the adventures of Achilles and Odysseus, it was a big deal that a fellow Nebraskan was doing for Western American history what the ancient bards had done for Greece and Rome. These people felt that Neihardt was validating their national story, placing Americans in general and Westerners in particular within a grand and noble tradition.

Today we hear the arrogance in the phrase “subdued our plains,” with its preemptive claim of ownership and its erasure of the Native people who were subdued. But this is where the legislature’s statement proved ironic. Neihardt made Native peoples the protagonists in two of the *Cycle*’s later books: *The Song of the Indian Wars* (1925) and *The Song of the Messiah* (1935).
To an unusual degree for a White man of his generation, he attempted to give Native peoples equal status in his portrayal of Western history.

To further the irony, today Neihardt is best remembered for a side project that came from his research for the *Cycle*. He based his 1932 book *Black Elk Speaks* on interviews with Lakota spiritual leader Nicholas Black Elk. Neihardt’s interpretation of Lakota culture continues to receive both praise and criticism, but he was striving toward a more inclusive vision of America than people anticipated in 1921.

*Photo: Neihardt (right) communicated with Black Elk (second from left) through an interpreter. History Nebraska RG1042-ai-55*

*Top photo: Neihardt doing a radio broadcast in the 1920s. History Nebraska RG1042-1-4*

In 1976 the State dedicated the [John G. Neihardt State Historic Site](https://www.historicnebraska.org/sitese/JohnGNeihardtStateHistoricSite) in Bancroft. Today the site is an affiliate of History Nebraska and is managed by the John G. Neihardt Foundation, which is planning events to commemorate the centennial of Neihardt’s selection as poet laureate. [Read more in the Lincoln Journal Star.](https://www.ljs.com/homepage/10/16/316076434)
Ford Conservation Center: Stabilizing Shattering Silk

Sometimes we store artifacts in perfect archival housings, within ideal environmental conditions, and materials still rapidly deteriorate due to inherent vice within. This was the case with a Sioux tradecloth dress from History Nebraska’s collection, which was recently stabilized at the Ford Conservation Center.

The Sioux tradecloth dress in 2009. Many of the brightly colored sections of ribbon would shattered over the next decade, resulting in large sections of ribbon loss.
The dress was donated to the Museum in 1934 from the family of Charles Zimmerman, who had amassed a large collection of Native American artifacts during his twenty-seven years working for the Indian Service. The dress is composed of navy blue wool tradecloth with a rainbow selvedge, which is patterned so that the rainbow is on the cuffs and hem. Hundreds of cowrie shells have been sewn to the dress, and rows of colorful silk ribbon are sewn to the skirt hem above the rainbow selvedge. Four hundred ninety-two tin cone tinklers cut from tobacco tins have been secured by twine under the top ribbons of the skirt. These cones would have swung against each other when the wearer of the dress walked or danced, creating a “tinkling” sound. The dress was likely created around the turn of last century, and worn by the owner on special occasions.

The dress was in very good condition overall except for one component: the silk ribbons. We could see that the silk ribbons were blanched and faded in many sections, an indication of light damage from display decades ago. The silk was also shattering right before our eyes, leaving a trail of colored fibers on every surface, including the bottom of the dress’s archival storage box. Unfortunately, this type of silk degradation is something we often see in collections due to the late 19th-early 20th century practice of treating silk with metallic salts. These salts were added to give the silk “rustle” and add weight to the material so that it could be sold for more. Today we describe silk treated with metallic salts as having an “inherent vice.” The presence of these metallic salts causes the silk to be more inherently unstable and subject to more rapid degradation over time.
Detail of the shattering silk ribbons and tin cone tinklers.
The stability of the shattering ribbons was also threatened by the rows of tin cone tinklers sewn to the dress. The sharp-edged tinklers rested on the most shattered of the silk ribbons, making it impossible to move the dress safely without further shredding the silk.

We knew we couldn’t halt the rapid degradation of the silk, but luckily there was a simple way to salvage what remained and prevent further loss of original material. This could be done by sewing a stable, sheer fabric over each ribbon to contain the detaching silk shatters and prevent the sharp-edged tinklers from cutting into the silk below. After some initial testing, sheer polyester organza turned out to be the best material for the overlays. The organza’s tight weave would contain fibers as they broke, but the material was sheer enough so that the original dress ribbons were visible under it.

For each shattering silk ribbon on the dress it was necessary to choose the correct color of sheer organza; one that would almost “disappear” when laid over the shattering silk ribbon. Once the best color was determined, the organza was cut to the correct size using a heated needle tip to neatly melt the edges of the polyester to prevent fraying. Each organza overlay was sewn carefully to the wool just outside the border of each ribbon using ultra-fine polyester thread.
The following three pictures show the process of stabilizing the silk ribbons. In the areas of the worst damage, the sheer overlay was layered to help minimize the appearance of losses to the silk below.

Detail of one of the dress gussets before stabilization treatment.
Detail of the gussets during treatment, as sheer polyester overlays are sewn to the wool just bordering the ribbon.
Detail of the gusset after treatment, after all of the ribbons have been stabilized.

After many hours, and the completion of several audiobooks, all of the shattering silk ribbons on the dress were finally stabilized. Although we know the silk will shatter more in the future due to inherent vice caused by metallic salts, we have done what we can to minimize the damage and prevent further loss of original materials. The dress can now safely be moved and viewed by others in the future as part of Nebraska’s History.
Detail of the dress after all of the ribbons have been stabilized with sheer overlays. Some of the ribbon colors appear darker than they did in 2009, which is a result of silk loss over the past decade while the dress was in stable conditions in storage.

Preserved, Restored, or Conserved

When an artwork or artifact has been damaged through use or time, several terms get used, often interchangeably. Is the object going to be “preserved”, “restored,” or “conserved”? What is the difference and why does it matter? Let’s find out.

Preservation, also known as “preventive conservation” is the act of avoiding and minimizing future damage or deterioration. In order to preserve an item, it will be placed in protective housings, handled properly, and stored or displayed with proper environmental controls. Emergency planning, education, and even having an identifying number within a collection are all part of the preservation of an object.

Restoration takes place when an object is made to appear as it originally was. Restoration focuses primarily on the aesthetics or physical appearance of an object. This might involve filling losses, removing a discolored varnish or replacing a missing part. A restorer’s main concern is the look of the piece.
Conservation is a broader term that encompasses both preservation and restoration while also maintaining as much of the original object as possible. Any treatment is carefully documented. For example, if a table has a broken leg, a restorer might replace the leg altogether while a conservator would do their best to repair the leg and keep as much original material as possible. If the leg couldn’t be saved, it would be documented in photographs and a treatment report and the broken pieces likely kept with the table.

Conservators also strive to keep their treatments as reversible as possible. Retreatablility is important so that any work done on a piece can be undone if needed. It is easy for a work to be over-treated, as we will see in the following example, and sometimes when this happens, it can not be returned to its original state.
Before treatment photos of the two certificates, both of which were treated at different times in the past. This certificate was bleached resulting in an overly bright appearance.
This certificate was not bleached but was lined on an inappropriate material with an improper adhesive which might have contributed to the darkened color.
These two certificates were issued in on the same day in 1806 by James Wilkinson, Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the United States and then Governor of the Territory of Louisiana and Superintendent of Indian Affairs. The certificate on the left recognizes Chief Wash-Com-Ma-Ni of the “Maha” Tribe and the certificate on the left recognizes Chief Wa-Shng-Ga-Sa-Be of the “Maha” Tribe. The certificates are made of the same materials and were issued only months apart, but centuries later were treated differently.

Both certificates are in the collection of the Nebraska History Museum. They both exhibit tears and losses to the paper. They were folded at one time and creased. The certificate on the left was conserved previously when it was lined onto the heavyweight paper. It appears the certificate was washed and possibly bleached due to the very bright white color of the paper support. Some tears were misaligned when the piece was lined, and the ink has faded.
James Wilkinson
Commissioner and payee of the Army of the United States
Governor of the Territory of Louisiana
And Governor of the State of Louisiana
To all to whom the within Bearer may come

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Seal of the United States of America in the city of New Orleans this 3rd day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fourteen.

John Seabury
Chairman
The Senate of the United States of America

Ezra B. French
Secretary
The Senate of the United States of America
Before treatment photos of the two certificates. Here the certificates were photographed in raking light. Raking light means the light source is positioned at a low angle to highlight the surface distortions on a flat object.

The certificate on the right was previously lined onto a fabric lining. It is now delaminating from the lining and in some areas the lining is missing entirely. The paper support has darkened unevenly overall, and is particularly dark around the center. The overall dark discoloration appears to be the result of deteriorated adhesive from the lining. The paper has also become very brittle.

The certificate on the right was not washed so aggressively, if at all, but was lined onto an improper backing. Linings should be of a similar weight and material to the original piece. The adhesive used also likely contributed to the discoloration of the paper which will require more intervention to reduce the staining.

Both certificates are good examples of why conservators aim for minimal intervention in treatment and retreatability. By today’s standards, the certificate on the left has been overtreated. The paper was washed and bleached, resulting in an overly bright paper that is not in keeping with its original appearance or the object’s age and history of use. Bleaching also has the potential of weakening the paper fibers if used too aggressively.

Check back next month to see how these documents will be treated and stabilized for long-term preservation.

You can find more about the Ford Conservation Center HERE.
2021 History Nebraska Awards

History Nebraska is proud to announce the winners of the 2021 History Nebraska Awards. History Nebraska annually recognizes people that provide significant contributions to the preservation and interpretation of Nebraska history. Winners will be presented with their awards during a special Legislative event on Wednesday, April 7th, 2021, at the historic Kennard House in Lincoln.

- **2021 Champion of History Award** – Genoa U.S. Indian School Foundation, Genoa, NE
- **2021 History Nebraska Excellence in Teaching Award** – Michael Sandstrom, Chadron Public Schools, Chadron, NE
- **2021 History Nebraska Advocacy Award** – Dan Worth, BVH Architects, Lincoln, NE
- **2021 Nebraska State Historic Preservation Award** – Tom McLeay, Clarity Development, Omaha, NE
- **2021 James L. Sellers Award** – Lisa Lindell, Brookings, South Dakota

### 2021 Champion of History Award – Genoa U.S. Indian School Foundation, Genoa, NE

The Champion of History Award will be given to the Genoa U.S. Indian School Foundation in Genoa, NE. The Foundation, which volunteers almost entirely run, has been working for roughly 30 years to collect and preserve the history of the Indian Industrial School in Genoa, NE. Without the Foundation, we would know far less about the school than we currently do, school
buildings and remnants would likely not still exist, and hundreds of Native people would not have seen what took place at the school and the lasting impact it has had upon Nebraska’s Native communities.

The Champion of History Award recognizes outstanding contributions by an individual or organization that helps preserve or interpret Nebraska history.

**2021 History Nebraska Excellence in Teaching Award – Michael Sandstrom,**

**Chadron Public Schools, Chadron, NE**

The History Nebraska Excellence in Teaching Award will be given to Michael Sandstrom from Chadron Public Schools in Chadron, NE. Mr. Sandstrom is an outstanding teacher that goes the extra mile for students. Students learn to utilize primary documents in a way that makes history fun and interactive. Each year Mr. Sandstrom travels across the entire state with students to compete in the Nebraska State History Day competition. His students demonstrate mastery of historical analysis of original primary and secondary documents. He inspires his students to love history and think critically about the many points of view found in accounts. Getting students to this level of skill attainment and be willing to travel seven hours in a big yellow school bus across the state speaks volumes about his ability to motivate and inspire his students.

The History Nebraska Excellence in Teaching Award is presented annually to a teacher who excels in teaching Nebraska history through creativity and imagination in the classroom by using documents, artifacts, historic sites, oral histories, and other primary sources.

**2021 History Nebraska Advocacy Award – Dan Worth, BVH Architects, Lincoln, NE**

The History Nebraska Advocacy Award will be presented to Dan Worth of BVH Architects in Lincoln, NE. Mr. Worth’s career has been spent preserving our built environment, both as an architect and an advocate for preservation. He has assisted the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office by being a catalyst for preserving historically meaningful buildings throughout Nebraska and the Great Plains States, the importance and value of whose architectural heritage was previously unappreciated. Dan has spearheaded the listing of four historic sites on the National Register of Historic Places and their inclusion in the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s “11 Most Endangered Places.” Those sites, whose preservation he also undertook, include the Dr. Susan LaFlesche Picotte Memorial Hospital, built by the nation’s first Native American woman doctor. As chair of History Nebraska’s Historic Preservation Board, he led the successful drive to have more than 250 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
The History Nebraska Advocacy Award is given annually to recognize outstanding contributions or assistance by an individual or organization to History Nebraska through volunteerism, advocacy, or donation.

**2021 Nebraska State Historic Preservation Award – Tom McLeay, Clarity Development, Omaha, NE**

The Nebraska State Historic Preservation Award will be given to Tom McLeay of Clarity Development in Omaha, NE. In partnership with GreenSlate Development, Tom and his team gave new life to the former Blackstone Hotel in Omaha through a $75 million rehabilitation project. The former hotel closed in 1984 and was extensively renovated for office use and renamed the Blackstone Center. The tile floors and ornamental plaster ceilings were covered, and the guest rooms and hallways were removed for an open-air office. All that remained on the interior of the former hotel’s glory days were the marble staircase and the eighth-floor ballroom. The current rehabilitation started in 2018. The exterior was thoughtfully repaired, and the interior was restored to its historic appearance. Guests are greeted with dazzling, intricate tile floors, which were uncovered and painstaking restored using matching tiles. The ornamental plaster ceiling of the top floor ballroom was loving restored. The famous Cottonwood Room, a restaurant and cocktail lounge, was recreated in the basement level. Even the faux cottonwood tree documented in historic photos was reproduced. The upper-story hotel rooms and corridors were restored based on historic blueprints, replacing the open-air offices from the 1984 redevelopment. Because of Tom and his team’s efforts, what was once one of the ritziest hotels in Omaha is now one of the hippest hotels.

The Nebraska Preservation Award recognizes significant achievements in historic preservation in Nebraska by an individual or organization. The award is given for one of two categories: “brick and mortar projects” or “individual or group achievements.”

**2021 James L. Sellers Award – Lisa Lindell, Brookings, South Dakota**

The James L. Sellers Memorial Award will be given to Lisa Lindell of Brookings, South Dakota. Lisa is being recognized for her article, “The Nebraska Cyclone’: Lillie Williams and the Embrace of Sport and Spectacle,” published in Nebraska History Magazine in 2019. Judges from Doane University wrote, “The information that Lindell includes about Williams’ early life shows careful and thorough research, as does her discussion of the history of cycling and of women’s involvement in professional sports.”
German Prisoners of War in Grand Island

By Breanna Fanta, Editorial Assistant

Nebraska and other rural states faced a severe farm labor shortage during World War II. The draft shipped men off to war, and wartime industries attracted much of the remaining labor pool. Grand Island, in particular, faced a dire situation: local farms lacked workers, the army turned the airport into a training base, and the newly built Cornhusker Ordnance Plant required thousands of laborers.

As hundreds of thousands of German prisoners of war began arriving in the US, people began to wonder if POWs could help solve the farm labor crisis.

Edith Robbins explains how a POW camp ended up in the middle of Grand Island, and translates letters from former German POW Dietmar Neubert. Robbins’ article, “Prisoners of War in Grand Island” appears in Nebraska History Magazine’s Spring 2021 Issue.

With agriculture being a primary focus in Nebraska, it was crucial to provide farmers with laborers. In April 1944, the US Department of Agriculture Extension agreed to survey how many prisoners would be needed. Local farm groups were formed to determine this number. Later, the Association for Handling of Negotiations with Army signed contracts with the War Department to employ the prisoners.

That year, the Hall County Non-Stock Co-op Labor Association was created and placed in charge of finding farm laborers: German, Japanese-American, or workers from Mexico or Jamaica. Men from Jamaica and Mexico were brought to Hall County, but residents refused workers of Japanese descent. Following this, the association contacted Camp Atlanta, a German POW camp near Holdrege, Nebraska, regarding the conditions and requirements necessary to receive German laborers.

In July 1944, 28 German POWs arrived in Grand Island to renovate the old Dodge school which would house the prisoners. The building wasn’t functional, but after renovation they were able to use the east side and part of the yard for exercise. The War Department also provided food and bedding.
By the summer of 1944, the first 100 German prisoners arrived from Camp Atlanta, Nebraska’s largest POW camp. Prisoners were required to dress in a trouser and shirt set that read in a large white print “PW.”

Since the new camp was in downtown Grand Island, which was an anomaly, there were concerns about housing such “dangerous” prisoners. However, most of the locals (many of whom were of German descent) were interested in their new neighbors—but socializing with the prisoners was a felony.
The Ordnance Plant also had its own POW Camp known as the “Cornhusker POW Branch Camp.” There, prisoners were employed for “common labor” constructing additional facilities for the plant under the direction of army engineers.

Often prisoners were paid in coupons or canteen money equivalent to 80 cents per day. These were used to purchase toiletry items and occasionally cigarettes in rations.

The Cornhusker Camp, the only German POW Camp on a military location in Nebraska, closed in February 1945. Though Hall County made plans for the POWs return for the farming season.

In early summer, 1945, German POWs returned and were housed at the Dodge school.
Every morning consisted of the same routine: roll call, breakfast, and a morning salute. Details were delivered later and another head count would be conducted before the groups were sent to their designated areas.

(Pictured Left: This German prisoner received a cake from the Quandt family on his twenty-first birthday. Stuhr Museum)

When time, farmers would arrive in trucks to pick up the POWs. With larger groups, guards would ride along. Others would drive out to different details to ensure duties were being fulfilled. Since the War Department didn’t always provide German-speaking guards, a prisoner with sufficient English sometimes had to translate.

During and after the war, the American press rarely made a distinction between members of the Nazi Party and German draftees who were not necessarily as fanatically committed to Hitler. Hence, many of the guards (most of whom were soldier) were harsh to the prisoners. “Some must have thought we were all Nazis and had two horns on our forehead,” said Neubert. After a while, some guards had a change of heart, but others remained abrasive.

As for the farmers, a majority tried to help the POWs as much as they could within the rules. In the beginning, farmers were told to keep communication to a minimum, but unlike most places, a language barrier didn’t exist between many of the farmers and prisoners in Grand Island. As a result, some German POWs formed close relationships with them after the rules relaxed.

On their time off, prisoners were allowed free time in the yard, but were prohibited from approaching the fence. Despite this, some prisoners were sneaky enough to get cigarettes and other treats from beyond the fence.

After work, organized activities were provided at the Grand Island camps. Educational programs were conducted to study subjects such as democracy, the constitution, and American History. Ministers of different faith also visited for religious opportunities.

Eventually the need for prisoner war labor decreased as war plants closed and more laborers became available. As this era ended and POWs planned to return home, parties were held as a parting celebrations. Prisoners extended invitations to farmers and ministers, but guests were limited.
The Grand Island camp closed in November 1945. While the prisoners expected to return home, many were sent overseas to forced labor camps as European nations demanded German prisoners for “postwar reconstruction.” Even the United States continued to employ a percentage of the POWs until the spring of 1946. It wasn’t until 1947 that many of these prisoners made it home.

After returning home, some prisoners, like Dietmar Neubert, stayed in contact with the families they worked for. While the circumstances were unfavorable, this story provides a glimpse of humanity in a wartime setting.

The entire article can be found in the Spring 2021 edition of the Nebraska History Magazine. Members receive four issues per year.

Learn More

Other Links:

“Letters from Home: Prisoner of War Mail at the Fort Robinson Camp during World War II” by Thomas R. Buecker
The Destruction of Omaha's Easter Sunday Tornado

With an average of about 50 annually, tornados are not exactly rare in Nebraska. However, the one that hit Omaha on March 23, 1913, was a rare one. With a total of $8 million in damage, 103 fatalities, and 400 injuries, the Easter Sunday tornado is the deadliest in Nebraska history.

The description of the tornado's total destruction is powerful, but the best way to truly appreciate what happened that day is to look at pictures taken of the aftermath. We have a great many photos of that day in our collections; here is a small selection.
A picture postcard depicting a tornado & the damage in its wake. The caption reads: As tornado appeared after passing 38th St., Omaha March 23, 1913, 120 dead $8,000,000 loss.

A picture postcard of the ruins of houses in Omaha, NE after the 1913 tornado.
A picture postcard of the ruins of houses in Omaha, NE after the 1913 tornado.

Tornado damage, March 23, 1913. Omaha, Nebraska. A scene on North 55th Street.
Tornado damage, March 23, 1913. Omaha, Nebraska at 25th & Grant Streets.

Despite the destruction and death toll, the people of Omaha quickly began the long process of cleaning and rebuilding.
A picture postcard of a crew of men in front of a tent by a house getting new rafters in Omaha, NE after the 1913 tornado.
A picture postcard of two men on a pole, presumably fixing downed power lines in Omaha, NE after the 1913 tornado.

A picture postcard of a horse-drawn buggy & a horse-drawn wagon amid the ruins of houses in Omaha, NE after the 1913 tornado.
A picture postcard of a crowd of people amid the ruins of houses in Omaha, NE after the 1913 tornado.

While it was absolutely the worse off, Omaha was not the only Nebraska town to get hit by a tornado that day; a total of seven tornados touched down that day. We also have photos of the destruction wrought by a tornado in Yutan, Nebraska that day.