

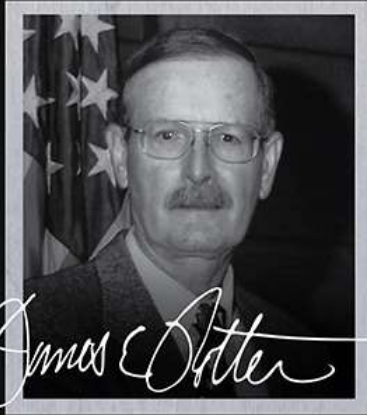


**Happy New Year! It's Monday, January 3, 2022.** In today's issue: Historian Jim Potter; 1926 hog calling championship; BISON exhibit; archeologist Rob Bozell; Nebraska Historic Tax Credit Story Map; Against college football bowl games; Silver spoon collecting.

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**Research Room re-named in honor of historian  
James Potter**

# A Trio of Historians

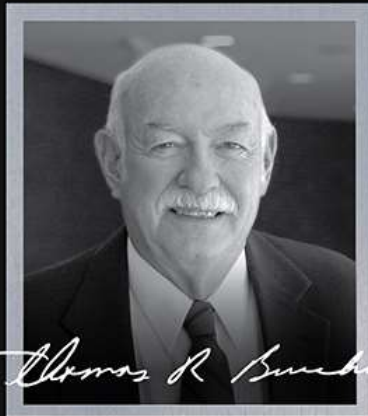


*James Potter*



*Tom Buecker*

Jim Potter (1945-2016), Tom Buecker (1948-2015), and John Carter (1950-2015) devoted the entirety of their professional careers—a combined 129 years—to Nebraska history. This trio of public historians carried out original research throughout the state, as well as in the vast collections of the Nebraska State Historical Society, for the benefit of the Nebraska public. They shared their knowledge in a variety of ways, including books, articles, exhibitions, lectures, historical markers, oral histories, public events, teacher development, and student education. They contributed significantly to our understanding of Nebraska, its land, and people.



*John Carter*



History Nebraska’s reference room—where generations of researchers have accessed books, microfilm, and archival collections—has been renamed in honor of historian James E. Potter thanks to the generosity of his wife, Gail. Potter worked for History Nebraska from 1967 until his death in 2015, serving at various times as state archivist, editor of *Nebraska History Magazine*, and senior research historian.

A ceremony was held at the agency’s headquarters building in Lincoln on December 9. But Potter wasn’t the only person honored at the event. Gail Potter also wanted to recognize two of his colleagues: John Carter and Tom Buecker. The three historians died within about a year of each other in 2015-2016, by which time they had served this agency for a combined 129 years. ([Read more in the Omaha World-Herald.](#))

Potter, Carter, and Buecker helped build and interpret our collections. They wrote numerous books and articles, were known for being generous with their knowledge and time, and for their lifelong curiosity.

And while they were serious about the value of Nebraska history, they were never *too* serious—each had a great appreciation for amusing stories from the past.

Speaking of which, below is a “new” story from Potter that we rediscovered in our files. We don’t believe it has been published before now. The title is vintage Potter:

## **Patzel’s “Poo-ey” Piques Pigs’ Passion**



By James E. Potter

When his last dynamic “Poo-ey” died away at the Omaha Auditorium on the night of September 11, 1926, and wafted over the radio airwaves to any of the thirty million Midwestern hogs who might have been tuned in, Fred Patzel had won the title of World’s Champion Hog Caller. His call was described as “a smooth, musical, but sweetly insistent command, rising in pitch and volume which, the judges agreed, no pig could resist.” [Keep reading.](#)

**BISON** exhibit coming in February



*BISON* is a traveling exhibit exploring the past, present, and future of this great North American mammal. It will be at the Nebraska History Museum in Lincoln from February 12 until May 15.

The exhibit creates an interactive environment that combines history, artifacts and hands-on activities to bring to life the story of this great North American mammal. *BISON* is touring thanks to the National Buffalo Foundation in collaboration with the Kauffman Museum and the National Buffalo Museum.

We'll tell you more about the exhibit in our February newsletter. In the meantime, learn more at [bisonexhibit.org](http://bisonexhibit.org).

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**Pawnee Nation, Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs honor archeologist Rob Bozell**





*NCIA Executive Director Judi gaiashkibos and NCIA outgoing chairman Larry Wright Jr presented State archaeologist Rob Bozell with an admiralship in the great Nebraska Navy and a Pendleton blanket upon his upcoming retirement and in thanks for his years of service working with Nebraska tribes on repatriation. [Photo: Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs](#)*

The Pawnee Nation recently honored Nebraska State Archeologist Rob Bozell at a meeting of the Plains Anthropological Conference in Boulder, Colorado. Pawnee leaders praised Bozell and his team for their work in building relationships with the tribe, and for their assistance with the repatriation of human remains and funerary objects.

Members of the tribe surprised Bozell by presenting him with a special blanket.

Designed by tribal member Bunky Echo-Hawk, the Pathway Pendleton blanket was given as a token of gratitude and a symbol of how the pathways of the Pawnee Nation and of Nebraska archeology have merged. Bozell received a standing ovation.

Archeologist Courtney Ziska says that during an Indigenous panel discussion that day, “Rob is the ONLY archeologist who was specifically named in a conversation about what good relationships with archeologists look like.”

For Bozell, who retired from History Nebraska at the end of 2021, the Pawnee recognition is the latest in a series of honors. The Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs recognized him on December 3 (shown above), and earlier last year Bozell received the William Duncan Strong Award from the Nebraska Association of Professional Archeologists. The award recognized his contributions to research, outreach, education, and service during his forty-year career.

“Rob’s contributions to the field and this agency will be felt for decades to come,” Ziska said.

And his work is not yet complete: as a retiree, Bozell plans to do a lot of archeological writing in the coming years.

[Read \(or listen to\) Nebraska Public Media's recent interview with Rob Bozell.](#)

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**Nebraska Historic Tax Credit Story Map**



Since its inception in 2015, the Nebraska Historic Tax Credit Program (NHTC) has created 2,755 jobs in Nebraska and has generated \$8.6 million in state and local taxes. The State Historic Preservation Office (part of History Nebraska) administers the program.

The [Nebraska Historic Tax Credit Story Map](#) helps you find stories of photos of properties around the state that have benefitted from this program.

This year the Unicameral will decide whether to continue the NHTC.

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## Against College Football Bowl Games, 1938



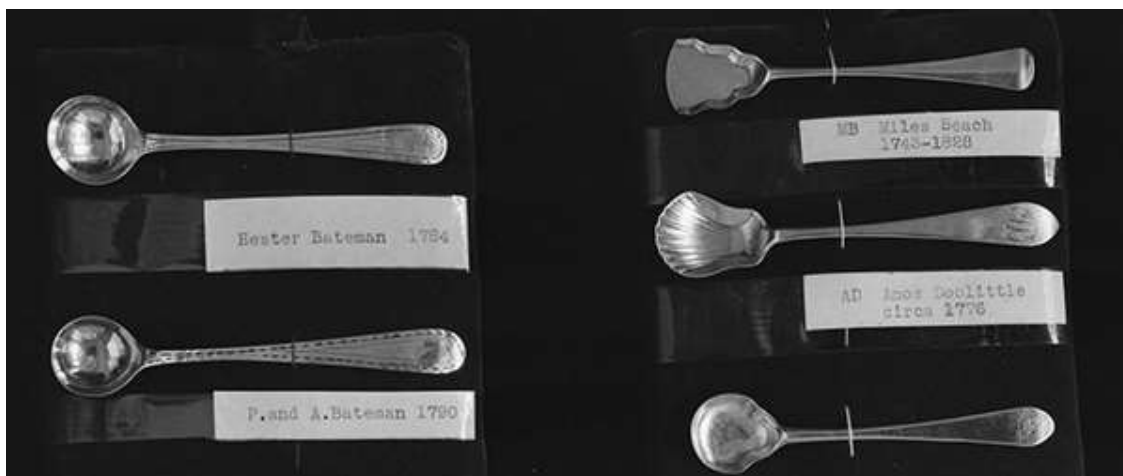


Yes, Nebraska is not playing in a bowl game this year. Again. Nor did they play in one in 1938, another three-win season. That year the *Nebraska City News-Press* printed a syndicated article that reported that most sports editors opposed a postseasons playoff and that most even opposed existing bowl games.

“But they do help liven up the sport pages during the dull holiday season,” one editor admitted. [Keep reading.](#)

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## Silver Spoon Collections



Did your mother collect commemorative spoons? When did that become a thing?

Spoon collecting began as a European fad. It became popular in the United States in the 1890s. Wealthy Americans visiting Europe brought home these mementos marked with the names of foreign cities and famous landmarks they had visited. [Keep reading.](#)



*History Nebraska Newsletter*, David Bristow, Editor, [history.nebraska.gov](http://history.nebraska.gov). © 2022

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<https://history.nebraska.gov/blog/patzels-poo-ey-piques-pigs-passion>

# Patzel's "Poo-ey" Piques Pigs' Passion

**WEATHER FOR NEBRASKA**  
Wednesday-Partly cloudy, but no wind to speak of; tomorrow much cooler, but cooler in afternoon (partially); tomorrow possibly snowing and raining.  
Thursday-Partly cloudy, occasionally drizzle and cool; Friday; tomorrow fair with nearly strong southerly winds.

**WEEKLY FORECAST**  
The week will be a mixture of sun and clouds, with some showers in the afternoon and evening. The temperature will be in the 40s and 50s.

**WOL. LXI—NO. 58** Published by World-Call Bureau at Omaha, Nebraska, Saturday, September 12, 1926—SEVENTY-FOUR PAGES. Price: Five Cents. (Copyright, 1926, by World-Call Bureau, Omaha, Neb.)

## Sunday World-Herald.

# PATZEL WINS WORLD HOG-CALL TITLE

### NEW LAW JARS UNDERWORLD, LESSENS CRIME

New York State Act With "Tough" Is It His Criminal Habit.

PAROLE NOT SO "SOFT," PENALTIES MULTIPLY

By BRADLEY TAYLOR.

New York, Sept. 11.—(Special Staff Writer.)—The legislature has passed a law which will curtail the "softness" of the parole system in New York state and make it more severe.

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### ITALIAN PREMIER, TARGET OF BOMB, MENACES FRANCE

Debarred as Anarchist Hurls Explosive at His Auto—Others Wounded.

WARNS 'GOVERNMENTS' MUST STOP PLOTTERS

Rome, Italy, Sept. 11.—(Special Staff Writer.)—The Italian premier, Benito Mussolini, today denounced the anarchists who had hurled a bomb at his auto today in Rome.

Mussolini said the anarchists were "the enemies of the state" and that they were "the enemies of the people."

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### A New World's Champ

**Waterloo Man Second; Bender Places Third**

New World Champion Scores 562 Points Out of Possible 600 by 3 Judges.

TWO WOMEN IN MONEY; MRS. WARNER IS FIFTH

Waterloo, Wis., Sept. 11.—(Special Staff Writer.)—Fred Patzel, Waterloo, Wis., today won the world's hog-calling title at the World Hog-Calling contest, Waterloo, Wis., today.

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By James E. Potter

*Editor's Note: Historian James E. Potter (1945-2015) wrote and published many articles and books during his lifetime, but we think this article from HHistory Nebraska's files is published here for the first time (1/3/2022).*

When his last dynamic “Poo-ey” died away at the Omaha Auditorium on the night of September 11, 1926, and wafted over the radio airwaves to any of the thirty million Midwestern hogs who might have been tuned in, Fred Patzel had won the title of World’s Champion Hog Caller. His call was described as “a smooth, musical, but sweetly insistent command, rising in pitch and volume which, the judges agreed, no pig could resist.” Fred himself described his technique as giving “the first call as an introduction, the second as an invitation, the third as an order, and the last several as a punch on the flanks of any lazy animal that may be immersed in the mud somewhere out in the hills.”

The competition, sponsored by the World-Herald and the Omaha Radio Trades Association, drew 6,000 spectators and a radio audience of unknown proportions. Patzel, a farm worker and ditch-digger from Madison, Nebraska, received the World-Herald’s gold medal and a check for \$700. He had bested forty-nine callers, including six women, from Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Alabama, Arkansas, Wyoming, and the District of Columbia in a week-long competition.

“I can get my teeth fixed now,” said Fred, “and I may buy a few shoats and maybe a milk cow. . . I never got past the second grade in school and I reckon I had better fix things so the wife and children will have a good living. If you got one of these telephones around here,” he said, “I believe I’ll telephone Madison, my home town, that I won. I told my wife when I left home that I would, but she was just a little doubtful.”

Fred’s fame would not be confined to the Corn Belt. New York newspapers announced his triumph, and the Oct. 9, 1926, issue of *Literary Digest* told his story and published a musical notation of the famous call, said to have been provided by the champion himself.

More was to come, however, when Fred’s hog-calling prowess earned him mention in a 1927 short story by the English writer P. G. Wodehouse. The story, entitled “Pig-hoo-o-o-o-ey!” tells of a prize-winning Berkshire sow, the Empress of Blandings, who had gone off her feed when her keeper got thrown in jail following a birthday binge at the local pub. The pig’s owner, the Earl of Emsworth, had exhausted all avenues to insure that the Empress might be restored to her former rotundity, described as resembling a captive balloon with ears and a tail, in time for the

pending Shropshire Agricultural Show. James Belford, a young Englishman who had just returned from America, where he had worked on a Nebraska farm, provided the solution. “I imagine she is missing [the pig man] and pining away because he isn’t there. . . She probably misses his evening call.” Belford went on to tell Lord Emsworth that pigs are temperamental and hog-calling is one of the first things you learn on a farm. In fact, he said, “I’ve studied under Fred Patzel, the champion. What a master. I’ve known pork chops to leap from their plates when that man called ‘Pig-hoo-o-o-o-ey.’” Belford then demonstrated Fred’s call to Lord Emsworth.

There’s more to the story than that, of course, but in the end Lord Emsworth and his butler learn the call, and with Belford’s help, entice the Empress of Blandings out of her sty and back to her trough. Following the restoration of her hogly appetite, she went on to take the silver medal at the Shropshire ag show.

Fred returned to Madison after his great triumph in Omaha and resumed work as the town handy man. “No sewer ever ran backward if he dug the ditch,” recalled an acquaintance, and of the graves he dug in the cemetery, “families were consoled with the thought that their dear ones lay straight, level, and true in their perfectly sculpted graves.”

Fred Patzel lived in Madison for the rest of his days. His hog-calling prowess was still intact in February 1933 when announcer Karl Stefan invited Fred to lend a little atmosphere to the noon market report on Norfolk radio station WJAG. Fred cut loose and, as the Norfolk Daily News put it, “the famous calls were so loud they overloaded the broadcasting lines and blew out more than \$200 worth of tubes,” putting the station off the air for three minutes. “The engineer had not set the broadcasting apparatus to handle the vocal charge.”

As far as we know, no monument to Fred Patzel stands in Madison and when a new pork processing plant opened there in 1967, the idea to name it “Patzel’s Memorial Pork Packery” was turned down. When Fred died on April 27, 1956, his obituary in the Madison newspaper made no mention that he had once been the world champion hog caller. It said only that he had worked in the excavating business for most of his life.

**Categories:**  
[agriculture](#)

<https://history.nebraska.gov/blog/bowl-games>



## Bowl Games

The annual debate over the best way to crown college football's national champion is nothing new. Bowl games and playoffs were the subjects of a poll of the nation's sports editors as the 1938 season came to a close. Under the headline, "Writers Against 'Bowl' Contests," a syndicated article appeared in the December 21, 1938, issue of the Nebraska City News-Press.

Ninety percent of the editors queried did not favor a postseason playoff to decide the national championship. However, sixty-six percent voted "no" when asked if they favored the existing bowl games. Eight percent said they didn't care one way or another, while the remaining twenty-six percent approved bowl games. Even editors who favored bowl games had reservations: "They are okay if we don't get any more." "Two or three are all right, but too many of them cheapen the sport." "Personally, I dislike the hypocrisy connected with the games, but they do help liven up the sport pages during the dull holiday season."



*The University of Omaha football team in the huddle during a game. 1935.*

Although a postseason playoff struck some editors as a good idea, they felt it was impossible to conduct such a tournament. "Besides," said one editor, "there'd still be many arguments over

who to invite to such a tournament, and the fighting would continue long after the tournament had ended. Anyway, it's more fun just speculating on the national champion."

The editors probably would be shocked by the number of bowl games now, but they would not be surprised that "speculation" continues to play a part in determining the national champion.

**Categories:**

[football](#), [bowl games](#), [national championship](#), [Omaha](#), [university of omaha](#), [college football](#)

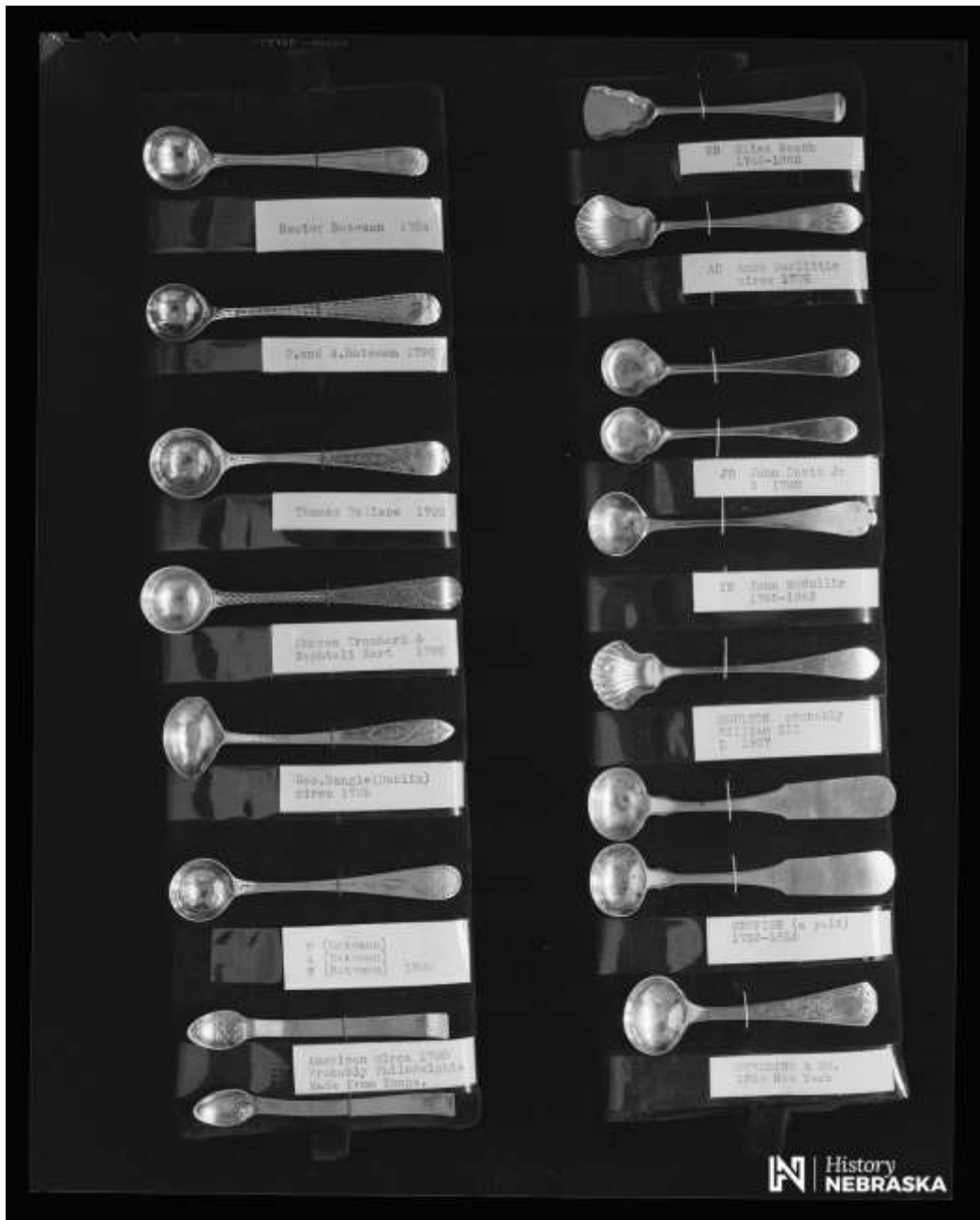
<https://history.nebraska.gov/blog/silver-spoon-collections>

## Silver Spoon Collections

Collecting souvenir spoons became a popular hobby for Americans in the late 1800s when this European fad swept the nation. Wealthy Americans visiting Europe brought home these mementos marked with the names of foreign cities and famous landmarks they had visited. The first souvenir spoon produced in the United States, in Washington, D.C., featured a profile of George Washington and was created to mark the centennial of his presidency. It was shortly followed by the Martha Washington spoon.

The Omaha Daily Bee on May 10, 1891, noted: "The season of summer traveling, so near at hand, will give a new impetus to the spoon fad. So great has been the demand the past season for souvenir spoons that all the larger cities of the United States, as well as every city and town in Europe, with but few exceptions, manufacture a spoon characteristic of the place or of some object of peculiar interest to the people of that place.

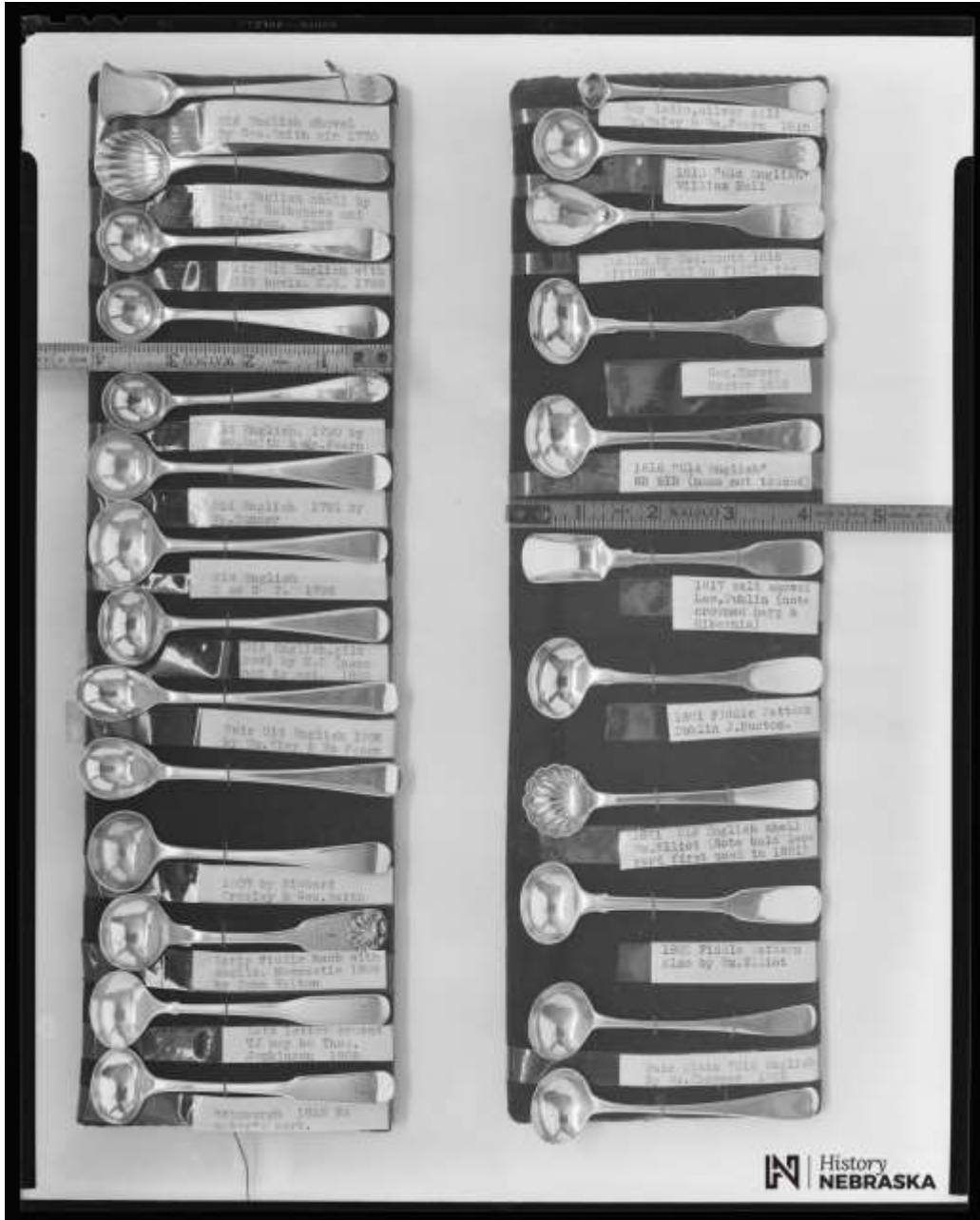
"While in many places the spoons are found in tea sizes only, a number of the more extensive shops furnish them in orange, sugar, coffee and tea sizes. The souvenir spoon of the District of Columbia comprises several designs. The George Washington has a medallion of the father of the country stamped in the bowl or on the top of the handle, the remainder of the spoon being perfectly plain. The Martha Washington is identical. The likenesses in both cases are said to be exact, and it is the favorite spoon with nearly all collectors."



*Silver spoon collection, Dr. H.W. Orr, 1946*

Souvenir spoons at the height of their popularity were given as wedding and holiday gifts, displayed at art exhibitions, and even found their way into popular jokes. They were made to honor not only American cities and towns, but famous people and historical events. The World's Columbian Exposition, held in 1893 in Chicago, gave the spoon collecting craze national exposure with a large number of commemorative spoons produced for the fair.

But like most fads, the spoon collecting craze did not last. By the outbreak of World War I the appetite for souvenir spoons had waned and by the end of the war it had almost disappeared. Today it is once again a niche hobby. Souvenir spoons at tourist attractions are a familiar sight, and hundreds of spoons change hands at auctions around the world.



Silver spoon collection, Dr. H.W. Orr, 1946

Categories: