# Article Title: Covers; Foreword

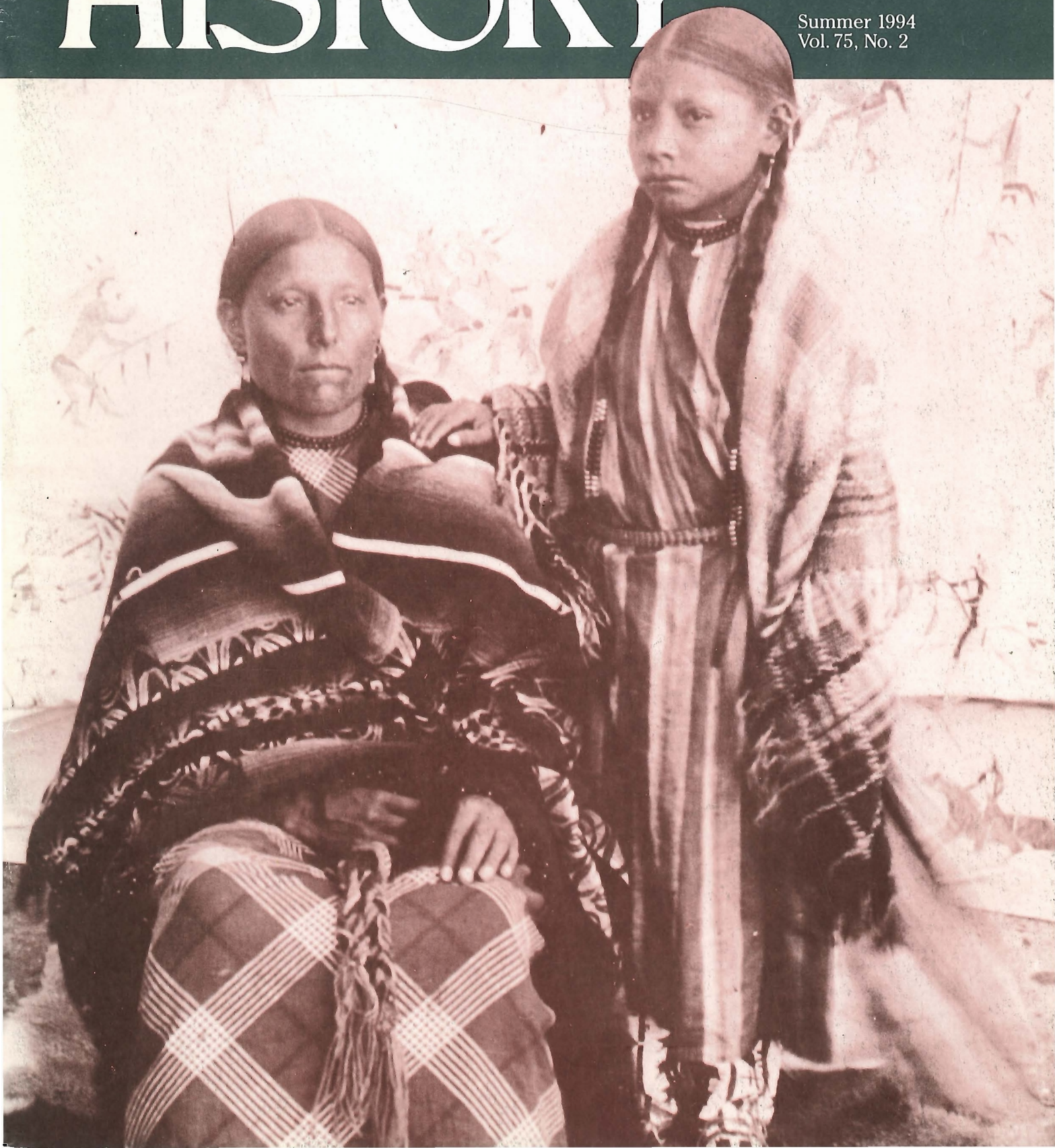
Full Citation: Covers; R Eli Paul, "Foreword," *Nebraska History* 75 (1994): 164

URL of article: http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/full-text/NH1994covers.pdf
Date: 6/07/2011

Photographs / Images: Lakota woman and girl, Pine Ridge Reservation, 1891 (front cover); Sitting Bull's rattle (back cover). R Eli Paul mentions the front cover photograph and discusses the rattle pictured on the back cover in the article "Wounded Knee and the 'Collector of Curios,'" *Nebraska History* 75 (1994): 209-215.

# nebraska HISTORY

Summer 1994
Vol. 75, No. 2



# FOREWORD

Sometimes the planets do align themselves, if only in pop songs from the late 1960s and the "Age of Aquarius." And sometimes the same thing happens in the solar system of historical journals, when a group of independently submitted manuscripts related to a similar topic appears on an editor's doorstep. This issue of *Nebraska History* is such an example. Five authors have written six articles, varied in length and scope, that share a common thread—they concern the history and ethnology of the Lakota Sioux people, whose story is tied closely to the history of Nebraska.

In "Teton Sioux Population History, 1655-1881," Kingsley Bray provides a fitting companion to Richard White's "The Winning of the West: The Expansion of the Western Sioux in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," a ground-breaking and influential article (*Journal of American History* 65). While White's 1978 essay dealt with external influences on the Sioux, Bray in 1994 looks at the internal political and social changes taking place within the seven Lakota tribal divisions. As more population data become available (for example, *The Crazy Horse Surrender Ledger* to be published this year by the Nebraska State Historical Society) Bray's conclusions may be refined and expanded.

The big picture offered by Bray is balanced by an assortment of snapshots by Thomas R. Buecker, Paul L. Hedren, and R. Eli Paul, brought together under the heading, "Editor's Showcase." Documentation on Crazy Horse, arguably the most famous Lakota leader of the nineteenth century, is scanty and open to interpretation, and the authors provide new information on such diverse topics as Crazy Horse's early appearance in the historical record, his surrender to government authorities at Red Cloud Agency, and the legacy of his death. Two of the research notes illuminate unusual items of material culture, an old ledger filled with Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho names, and a silver medal presented after the death of Crazy Horse.

Jerry Green in "The Medals of Wounded Knee" confronts a still painful subject in Lakota history—the Wounded Knee Massacre and the seemingly improbable issuance of twenty Medals of Honor to soldier participants. In recent times much heat and little light has been generated on this controversial topic. Green provides a better view of how the Medal of Honor was perceived in the nineteenth century, accompanied by previously unknown details on the lives and exploits of the medal recipients.

Finally, on another Wounded Knee topic, R. Eli Paul looks at the relic trade which arose before, during, and after the massacre of December 29, 1890, a cautionary tale with modern implications. As museums in the 1990s examine their ethnographic collections to fulfill various federal mandates, do they really know what they have? Or do they risk perpetuating errors of fact to their audiences, the same fallacies the collectors of Wounded Knee curios perpetrated on a gullible public?

As the guest editor and a contributor to this issue, I wish to acknowledge the assistance of my colleagues at the Historical Society, especially those in the Research and Publications Division—James E. Potter, Patricia Gaster, and Richard E. Jensen. To my fellow authors, a special thanks for their enthusiasm, cooperation, and good will.

R. Eli Paul
Nebraska State Historical Society