



The Editor's Table

(Article begins on page 2 below.)

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Article Contents: The Historical Society's War Service

Nebraska on the War Front

Seventy-Five Years

War Service Publications

A Soldier of the Civil War and the Plains Frontier

An Acknowledgment

The Cover for This Issue

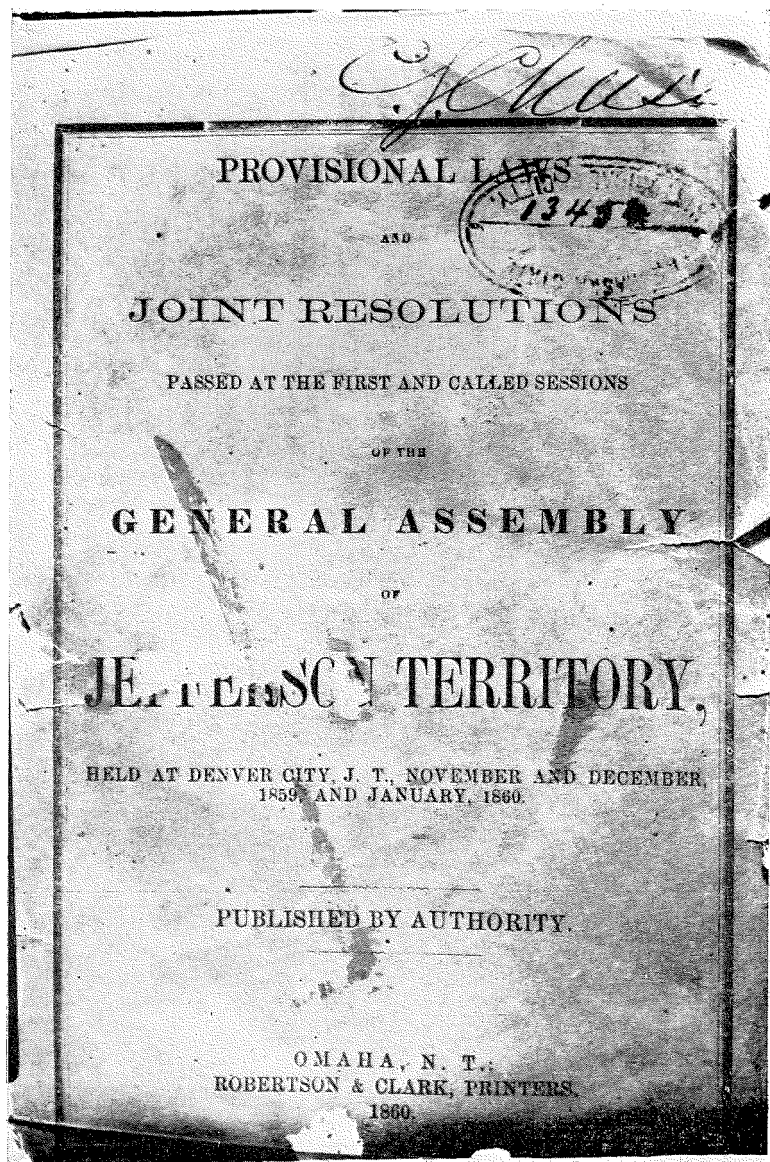
The Lincoln Signature

R Gerald McMurtry, "Orbits of Freedom"

Cataloging Information:

Names: William H Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, Alvin Saunders

Photographs / Images: provisional laws of Jefferson Territory, 1860; President Lincoln's last signature, 1865



One of the few known copies of this 1860 imprint, lacking in most of the finest law libraries. Autographed by C. S. Chase, three times mayor of Omaha (1875-77, 1879-81, 1883-85) and member of the first board of regents, University of Nebraska. Owned by the State Historical Society

The Editor's Table

Historical Society War Service

Washington and Richmond

The Second Annual Meeting of the American Association for State and Local History was held at Richmond, Virginia, October 27-28, 1942. This is a new association formed to organize and promote what is now recognized as a separate and growing force in American life—the institutions which assemble, preserve, organize and publish the historical records and exhibits which tell the story of the human race in the past and present and make it available as guide and director for the future.

This Association extends over the United States and Canada. It has a membership of over three hundred, including the leading institutions in North America. The Superintendent of the Nebraska State Historical Society was present at Washington and Richmond and will publish a more complete report in a later issue.

The chief topic at the Richmond meeting was the work of all Historical Societies in the World War. Some of the strongest addresses and discussions were upon that theme. They represented leaders in public thought and historical service from Washington, New England, the Middle States, the South, and the Mississippi Valley.

* * *

"Wars are won by united, devoted, consecrated, instructed, patriotic peoples, plus resources, military training, skill, discipline, strategy, transportation, tanks, airplanes, ammunition, gasoline, inventive genius, endurance."

These were some of the expressions at the Richmond convention. But above and beneath and beyond all these physical powers and materials, each speaker emphasized the importance of the spirit of a people, united, patriotic, determined. This spirit

is a mental and spiritual product. Its fundamental basis is the thought-stuff in the mind. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

The mind of America is mainly a historical product. It is made in the home, in the school, in the labors of life. Its chief ingredient is found in the history—the ideals and traditions—which it absorbs from its family, its state, its nation, its race.

History is the foundation of patriotism—for the nation, for the world. The noble ideals which make men eager to face any peril for their country arise from the noble deeds which make their country's history.

The message and the urge of the historical societies of America in their national Association is for increase of the energy and devotion of their war service.

And this is and has been the mission and the message of the State Historical Society in Nebraska since the founding of Nebraska and its first institutions.

Nebraska on the War Front

Nebraska has been on the fighting front for world causes from her earliest history. Her land lies in the latitudes along which mighty world movements have passed. Her altitude, soil and climate have given the basis and discipline for human progress. Her people have come from the best blood in the Old World and the New. Hence—her leadership.

Nebraska Saved from a Spanish Power

First great battle for freedom and progress on her soil was the Battle of the Spanish Caravan fought August 10, 1720, in the Platte Valley, probably near Columbus. A Spanish army from Santa Fe crossed the plains to conquer the Nebraska region, make its Indian tribes subject to Spain, colonize the country and make it a Spanish province. The united Pawnee and Otoe Indian tribes surprised and destroyed the Spanish command. This little-known battle changed the fate of the Nebraska region. It was reserved for leadership in the English-Speaking United

States and to furnish the main travelled highway for the American nation in its march from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean. It made Hawaii, Manila Bay, Midway and the Solomon Islands possible in our own day.

The Nebraska Front in Indian Wars (1823-1891)

In the sixty-years war for control of the Great Plains of the West and their settlement by white men, Nebraska is the central region. The "Old Nebraska" included all the area of conflict west of the Missouri and Red Rivers. The present Nebraska has within her borders the stage on which were enacted the final scenes in this great drama which ended the domination of hostile Indian tribes and made these plains the great English-speaking, food-producing section of America. Upon this hostile Indian frontier have appeared the heroic pioneers, the most noted scouts, the most thrilling episodes of America. The literature which describes Nebraska in this period furnishes inspiration for American youth today to face the most critical situation in all human history.

Nebraska in the Civil War for Freedom and Union

The Civil War (1861-65) arose from the effort of the Slave Power to make Nebraska a slave state. In that war the people of Nebraska furnished near four thousand volunteers from a population of less than 30,000. There was no need of the draft for soldiers here. Our volunteers marched with Grant and Sherman. They met Indian invasion on their own frontier. Their battle-flags in this War for Freedom hang in the State Historical Rooms in our State Capitol. Their swords, rifles and insignia are among the patriotic exhibits seen every day by the visitors there.

Nebraska in the Spanish- American War

In this great world event the First Nebraska Regiment crossed the Pacific Ocean and set our flag on the Philippine Islands. In their wake came the American school teacher and civil administrator who gave the Filipino the training which made

him willing to fight with America against Japanese slavery. The Second and Third Nebraska Regiments had their time of service in the campaign which made Cuba free.

Nebraska in World War I

The story of Nebraska in World War No. 1 is briefly and strongly told in the book "Nebraska Old and New," written by the Superintendent of the State Historical Society and studied by the children in the grades of all the public and private schools of this state. The book is a part of that great literature which arose from the events of our first world war. From it a few sentences are quoted here:

In all, Nebraska's share of the war bond purchases was \$240,000,000, and her people purchased more than they had been asked to purchase. So far as War Savings Stamps were concerned, Nebraska not only exceeded her quota, but she took more, according to her population, than any other state in the Union.

Nebraska furnished 47,801 men for the war. Her soldiers and sailors were scattered throughout the entire United States Army and Navy. Many of them took part in the great battles overseas. The largest body of Nebraska soldiers in any one command was in the 355th Infantry, 89th Division. This regiment, taken from the farms, offices, shops and stores, with only a few months' training, fought gallantly in the battles of the Argonne Forest and the Meuse River. There it lost about one-third of its members. After the Armistice was signed, the regiment marched into Germany and spent the winter at Saarburg, near the Rhine. About one thousand Nebraska soldiers died in the war. Nebraska Base Hospital 49 consisted of four hundred men and women. It was stationed at Allereye, France, and cared for the wounded and sick from the battlefields in the Argonne. It made the best record for saving life of all the American hospitals in Europe.

Nebraska has never failed in patriotic duty in the past. She never will fail—in the present or the future.

Hats off for that glorious 37th Star in the Flag of Freedom—Nebraska's Star!

Seventy-Five Years

Nebraska is the scene of important events in human history:

Coronado's Discovery of the Great Plains
 Triumph of the English-Speaking Race
 Defeat of Slavery
 Conquest of Arid Lands
 Free Homesteads for the People
 Arbor Day—A Reforested World
 Omaha Populist Convention, July 4, 1892
 Co-Operative Farm Leadership
 Independent Political Action
 Recreated Government and Industry

Nebraska has been the home of noted leaders in different fields:

William Vincent Allen	J. Sterling Morton
William Jennings Bryan	George W. Norris
Edward Creighton	The North Brothers
William F. Cody	Roscoe Pound
Chief Crazy Horse	John J. Pershing
Robert W. Furnas	Chief Red Cloud
Gilbert M. Hitchcock	Edward Rosewater
Chief Standing Bear	

Nebraska has the universal highways—east and west—for ideas as well as covered wagons and airplanes, in their journey around the world:

The Oregon Trail	The Pacific Railway
The Mormon Trail	The Lincoln Highway
The Black Hills Trail	The Transcontinental
	Radio Broadcast

Nebraska is the theme, the inspiration and creator, of a noted world-literature. Some of the famous writers who have found themes in her plains and history are:

John Bradbury	Washington Irving
H. M. Chittenden	Henry W. Longfellow
Howard R. Driggs	Stephen H. Long
Father De Smet	Prince Maximilian
John C. Fremont	John G. Neihardt
Horace Greeley	Francis Parkman
George Bird Grinnell	Bayard Taylor
Mark Twain	

A multitude of other names, events, localities, rise for recognition. But this summary must be brief. They may be supplied by the reader.

Seventy-five years is a long time in a man's life. It is a short time in the story of a state or a nation. In the foundation of a state or a human society it is long and deep and wide. For its effects and influences, its standards, acts and ideals, reach out through the centuries. So the founders of the colonies along our Atlantic Coast made their lives a part of the life today. And the founders of the great Western Plains Empire between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains will live in the future peoples and institutions here, far beyond the forecast of the most daring prophet.

* * *

A peculiar public institution exists in these western American commonwealths—the State Historical Society. In Nebraska it was first in the mind of the founders of the state and its capital, and they made it the first state institution. Through many trials and vicissitudes this institution has survived. It has become the chief center of important information upon our State. It has been active in the creation of a Nebraska literature. It is and has been foremost in patriotic service in the World Wars.

In the celebration of the Diamond Anniversary of the State and its Historical Society, it has been thought good to bring together in one issue of this magazine a conspectus of its chief publications. It was then resolved to add a list of the most important works on Nebraska history from other sources. The final result is this book—a descriptive guide to the chief sources of our history in the first seventy-five years of our statehood.

Many noted writers among Nebraska's own have contributed to the literature of Nebraska and the World. Included in such a list should be the following:

William J. Bryan, *The First Battle* (1896); *The Second Battle* (1900); and a long list.

Willa Cather, *My Antonia* (1918).

John G. Neihardt, *The Song of Three Friends* (1919); *Song of the Indian Wars* (1925).

John Bratt, *Trails of Yesterday* (1921). A classic volume on the range history of Nebraska and the West which deserves to be better known.

Charles G. Dawes, *Journal of the Great War* (1921); *As Ambassador to Great Britain* (1939).

Captain J. H. Cook, *Fifty Years on the Old Frontier* (1923); *Longhorn Cowboy* (1942).

Bess Streeter Aldrich, *A Lantern in Her Hand* (1928).

John J. Pershing, *My Experiences in the World War* (1931).

Mari Sandoz, *Old Jules* (1935).

Everett Dick, *The Sod-House Frontier, 1854-1890* (1937). One of the most valuable and comprehensive books for students of pioneer settlement.

L. E. Aylsworth and J. G. W. Lewis, *Nebraska Party Platforms, 1854-1940* (1940).*

William H. Jackson, *Time Exposure* (1940). A rare volume by the Pioneer Photographer of the Plains Region. (Died June 30, 1942; aged 99 years.)

War Service Publications

By the Nebraska State Historical Society

A series of pamphlets, posters and documents designed to help place Nebraska on the front fighting line for the achievement of World Freedom and Peace. The following publications are in preparation:

Fighting on the Frontiers of Two Continents

Nebraska in War Time—1823-1942

Furnishing Food for Two Worlds

Nebraska on the Fighting Line for the Frontier and for the Nation

The English-Speaking People and the World War

The Grand Island German Colony of 1857 and its Nebraska Frontier Service

Nebraska's Contribution to the World

Nebraska Women and their Service in War and Peace

Heroes of the Nebraska Frontier

The Patriot Peoples of Nebraska from Continental Europe

The Next Step in World Government

*In the Historical Society collections are 290,000 index cards guiding the reader and researcher into original sources of information on Nebraska. They are the chief (and in many respects the only) accurate and speedy guides in their field.

A Soldier of the Civil War and the Plains Frontier

William H. Jackson is gone. Just at the end of the year he saw the publication of a splendid memorial volume, *Westward America*, in which many of his notable paintings are made available to its readers—paintings which bring “the explorers, the mountain men, the covered-wagon pioneers, and other builders of our nation back to life.”* This was a great joy to him and to his myriad friends, for Jackson was the very incarnation of The West which his thousands of photographs depict. In the Interior Department and in Ford’s Greenfield Village these photos are prized as among the finest artistically, the most revealing historically, ever taken. And to the very day of his accident his amazing creative energy had never weakened, his will to perpetuate the stirring story of America’s making never faltered.

As a boy Jackson had served in the Union Army at Gettysburg and on the Potomac. In 1866 he crossed the Nebraska plains as a bullwhacker, and throughout the years that followed he kept his contact with Nebraska life in all its aspects, as well as with “the glorious West.” He it was who explored the unexplored Yellowstone, making a photographic record that impelled Congress to safeguard that region as our first National Park.

At the age of 92, for the third time, Mr. Jackson wished to retire from active life to the quiet of a routine career, where he might enjoy “the almost novel pleasure of living with my own family.” He did not succeed. Instead, he accepted a government commission to execute a series of murals for the Department of the Interior. This is recorded in *Time Exposure* under two significant chapter headings: “I Retire,” and “I Go to Work.”

A typical example of the inextinguishable enthusiasm of this man is given in *The Reader’s Digest* (June 1939) where is told the story of “the last sad march” of the G. A. R. in New York when its sixteen surviving members met on Riverside Drive for the parade. “But Comrade Bill Jackson didn’t show up. The tottering Boys in Blue were apprehensive. But after the parade had started, they discovered him. He was running up and down with the press photographers taking pictures. The last march of the G. A. R. was something to record for posterity, and he wanted it recorded right.”

In 1940 Mr. Jackson completed his autobiography, romantic as any work of fiction. To the end he was sought as a speaker on memorable

*In the collections of the State Historical Society at the Capitol are several files of the Jackson photographs, including the earliest Indian, immigrant and pioneer photos; also some of his original (framed) paintings. His books are available in the Historical Library.

occasions (three in a day, sometimes); to the end he flew about the country on wings where once he had plodded behind bulls, or—as on a trip from Los Angeles to Omaha—rode horseback. Two million miles this inveterate explorer of our planet has traveled, “and by every type of transportation known to man.”

Born at Keeseville, New York, April 4, 1843, death came to W. H. Jackson on June 30, 1942, following the serious fracture of a femur a few days before. The shock overcame his body but his mind was clear and cheerful to the last. Details first reached this office in a letter from Dr. Howard R. Driggs, president of the American Pioneer Trails Association and who will be recalled vividly by all present at the 1940 Convention of this Society, which he addressed. The letter closes fittingly with these words:

“We cannot think of William H. Jackson as dead. He has simply gone to a happy reunion with those friends who have worked with him in our Association in the great cause of saving America. He lives on with reality in our hearts. He lives in the rare work of his hand, mind and soul. We are grateful to have had the privilege of working with him through the rich closing years of his splendid life. We shall honor him best by carrying forward our patriotic work.”

Acknowledgment

Publication of this Historical Catalogue, with its notices of kindred historical literature relating to our region during the past seventy-five years, constitutes a guidepost in Nebraska history. It also impels recognition by the editor of the outstanding services of the assistant editor, Loraine Ferris. The plan for this catalogue issue was hers. The research and critical revision of the material was mainly her work. She has spared no pains or overtime in securing the final result—a document which will be a guide to the chief historical literature of Nebraska in its first three-quarters of a century. This brief acknowledgment finds fitting place as a legend upon a historical literary landmark.

* * *

The world is at war. Discord, conflict and confusion are forced upon us. Hence—the color of this cover. It was our desire to produce a catalogue number easily distinguished from other issues. None can deny that it is *distinguished*, even down to the last dot of ink on the midrib!

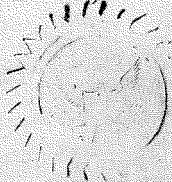
Abraham Lincoln,

President of the United States of America.

To all who shall see these Presents, Greeting.

It now appears, that reposing special trust and confidence in the Integrity and Ability
of Alvin Saunders, of Iowa, _____

It appears him to be Governor of the Territory of Nebraska;
and do authorize, and empower him to execute and fulfil the duties of that Office according to Law,
and to have and to hold the said Office with all the powers, privileges and emoluments thereunto of right
appertaining unto him the said Alvin Saunders, during the pleasure of the President of the United States
for the time being, and until the end of the next session of the Senate of the United States, and no longer.



In Testimony whereof, I have caused these Letters to be made patent
and the seal of the United States to be hereunto affixed.

Given under my hand, in the City of Washington, the fourteenth
day of April, - in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred
and sixty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of
America, the eighty-ninth.

Abraham Lincoln

By the President

Wm. B. Mc-

Secretary of State

The signature of President Lincoln attached to this Commission, was
manifestly the last official signature made by him - He signed it just before
leaving for the theatre, where he was assassinated, and left the Commission
on his desk without shipping to both its ends where it was found
after the 15th - was opened after his death - These facts were con-
firmed to me by one of the clerks

Alvin Saunders

THE LAST SIGNATURE OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN

Commission to Alvin Saunders as Territorial Governor of Nebraska,
April 14, 1865.

The Lincoln Signature

Foremost among the treasures of the State Historical Society is what is believed to be the last signature of President Lincoln. It appears on the commission appointing Alvin Saunders of Iowa "to be Governor of the Territory of Nebraska."

This gift was made to the Society at its annual dinner commemorating Nebraska's Diamond Jubilee, September 26, 1942. The donor was Mary Saunders Harrison, one of the most romantic figures of the '80s. Her father, Alvin Saunders, was a member of the Constitutional Convention (1846) under which Iowa was admitted to the Union. In 1854 and again in 1858 he was elected to the State Senate of Iowa; was a delegate to its first Republican State Convention and aided largely in laying a solid foundation for his party, and in 1860 was a delegate to the Republican National Convention that nominated for the presidency Abraham Lincoln, whom he greatly admired and for whom he made a spirited campaign canvass of his state. On March 26, 1861, twenty-two days after his inauguration, Lincoln appointed Senator Saunders as Governor of Nebraska Territory. He was reappointed April 14, 1865. This office he held until 1867 when Nebraska was admitted to statehood. Governor Saunders served as United States Senator from Nebraska 1877-1883—the only man in the state to receive this double honor.

Mary's mother was a cousin of the wife of Robert Lincoln, then Secretary of War; she was also a niece of Senator Harlan of Iowa, Secretary of the Interior during Lincoln's administration.

Mary Saunders married Russell Benjamin Harrison, whose family line is of equal public interest. He was the son of General Benjamin Harrison, then United States Senator from Indiana and who, both as soldier and statesman, had made a brilliant record; four years later he was elected President over Grover Cleveland. President Benjamin Harrison was the grandson of President William Henry Harrison (1840), ("Old Tippecanoe"), and the great-grandson of the first Benjamin Harrison, Governor of Virginia, member of the House of Burgesses of the state and of the Continental Congress, and one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

The wedding of Mary Saunders to Russell B. Harrison on January 9, 1884, "the most brilliant that ever took place in Omaha," was held in beautiful Trinity Cathedral; the reception at the Paxton was followed by another in Indianapolis; the bridal tour of six weeks took the couple to many eastern cities before making their home in Helena, Montana, where Mr. Harrison was superintendent of the United States Assay Office.

Mrs. Harrison, now living in Washington, D. C., was unable to make the journey for this event. Her son, William Henry Harrison, performed the office for her, coming from his ranch home in Dayton, Wyoming, to

make the presentation of this document that had been guarded by the Harrison and Saunders families for seventy-seven years.

It will be noted that the commission bears the words: "Given under my hand, at the City of Washington, this Thirteenth day of April . . ." At the time of its receipt Governor Saunders was informed by clerks in the President's office that the commission was prepared for signature on the 13th; that other matters intervened, and that it was not actually signed until the day following, just before the President left his desk never to return. Thereupon the Governor wrote upon the commission, in his own hand, this statement:

"The signature of President Lincoln attached to this commission was evidently the last official signature made by him—he signed it just before leaving for the [Ford] Theatre where he was assassinated, and left the commission on his desk without stopping to fold it; and where it was found when the room was opened after his death. These facts were communicated to me by one of the clerks.

Alvin Saunders."

Abe's angel mother wove the warp and woof
Of freedom as she sat within their door
And trod the spinning-wheel, and told
 young Abe
Of freedom in the heavens among the stars,
And sun, and moon, and strange erratic
 comets;
And drew the lesson that all breeds of men,
Regardless of their color and their creeds,
Should likewise have their freedom in
 their orbits.

—R. Gerald McMurtry, in
Lincoln Log Cabin Almanac.