



Addresses Delivered at the Sixty-Sixth Annual Meeting (Part II)

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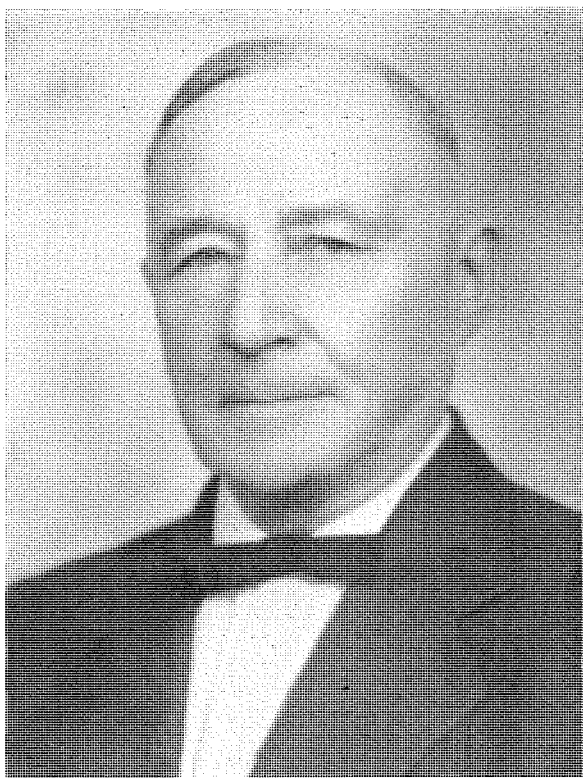
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HON. DANIEL GARBER

The Winning of the War to Preserve Nebraska History

HON. DANIEL GARBER, RED CLOUD

In standing before you to speak on the subject assigned, I am fearful that I may go wrong for the reason that I have perhaps misunderstood the thought in Doctor Sheldon's mind when he selected it. For whenever anyone mentions "The War," my mind leaps at once to the greatest war in all history — the world-war for Freedom.

The necessity of winning this War to preserve not only Nebraska history but also American history is obvious. To lose it would mean to lose everything American or Nebraskan. To calculate the ultimate possible results of the loss of this war is a problem as great, at least, as the formulation of the peace that is to follow its successful termination.

Fortunately, at this date, the winning of the war is well under way. According to the present outlook, the European phase is such that Germany could fold up over night, at any time, or might drag into another year. But Germany (and Japan also) is doomed to defeat.

The Nebraska Historical Society, made up and guided by the surviving spirit of the pioneers, is interested in the manner in which this war may influence our social organization after victory is won. The spirit of the pioneer, the spirit of free enterprise, the spirit of rugged individualism, are the guiding spirits of the American way of life. These are the spirits that made it. This Society steadfastly clings to the traditions and customs of our fathers, and expresses that attachment in its unanimous demand for the preservation of the ideas and materials that projected and promoted the spirit of the pioneer.

The American way of life is at stake in this war, and is at stake in the peace that follows. People free under a Constitution remain free only so long as the Constitution is respected as the fundamental basis of society. Free society continues and pro-

gresses only so long as the Constitutional guarantees operate. Sometimes freedom is misused as selfish license.

Throughout the history of the world three great fundamental reasons have been recorded for war, namely, conquest, defense, and implacable internal disagreement. Permanent peace is a great ideal resembling — perhaps allied to — spiritual salvation.

The peace and the conditions that follow this war are highly problematical. This decade and the decades that follow will be the most interesting period of all history in which to live, if we can keep ourselves attached to a meal ticket. The incalculable destruction and ruin will add new ideas to multiplied old conditions of reconstruction.

According to the views recently expressed by United States Senator Joseph C. O'Mahoney of Wyoming, the spirit of the pioneer, the spirit of America, is being suppressed by reinterpretations of the Constitution and by the expanding authority of the Executive Department, to the extent that the future of the American way of life is uncertain. He enumerates a number of imputations in his observations. There is a vital relation between the statements of the Senator and the work of this and all other Historical Societies. They are reprinted in the *Reader's Digest* for August. At about the same time Senator Byrd showed that various federal agencies are taking over land at an accelerated rate (sometimes contrary to the expressed will of Congress), already equalling in area eight states the size of Nebraska. I suggest that these articles be given very careful consideration by every member of this Society who feels a vital interest in the future of our nation whose history is being written today.

There is much evidence of a very potent school of thought abroad in the land that considers war an opportunity. Winston Churchill is quoted as saying: "We must beware of trying to build a society in which nobody counts for anything except a politician or an official, a society where enterprise gains no reward, and thrift no privileges."

In the beginning of this war and during the first drive for metal and rubber scrap, I saw two pictures circulated by the press which impressed me greatly and offered occasion for deep reflection.

The first picture was that of an aged man donating five ancient rifles and some flint locks to the scrap collector. All these

were tools used in the making of America. All had been proudly handed down through the generations of his family. He was praised for doing his bit by turning over "useless relics" to be made into modern guns to fight a modern war for freedom. He was called a great patriot.

The other picture was that of a woman handing an old copper kettle over to the scrap collector. This kettle has passed down through her family for more than two hundred and fifty years. She also was hailed as a great patriot.

Everybody wishes to win this war — possibly a few wish it not to be won too soon. Any loyal American would give anything necessary. But those five old rifles and that copper kettle could add but a trifle to the sum total of scrap. They subtract a lot from America's wealth of historical relics. We are all proud to show an heirloom and relate its detailed history. Such are the things we live with. Usually we are loath to give them up, and we are pained to see them junked by others.

This same school of thought would cut us off from the past, and cast us out on an unrelated future. In the deepest sense, progress is a two-way process. We move forward by going back — building the future by reconstructing the past, by studying the past, and revitalizing our continuity with it, as a tree grows taller by sending its tap roots deeper into the earth.

Back in the fall of 1933, it was my privilege to attend the District State Teachers Convention out at Holdrege. There I heard a speaker, direct from the Teachers College of Columbia University, lay down the pattern for the New Order. Among a very great many other things relating to her subject, she said:

"All signs about the horizon now indicate that the depression is over, never, never, to return again. Every economic law will be revised and every economic textbook will be rewritten. 'Rugged individualism' is but the dissolute relic of the past. Our public school system will be remodeled to conform to and spread the New Order. Personal ambition will be suppressed, individual aspiration will be submerged, and the youth will be taught to work each for all and all for each." All this beautiful idea was organized in Columbia and is leafing out in modern public-school textbooks. As a matter of fact, the ten-year-old depression is now like a sandbar submerged by the flood.

Not only the winning of this war, but also the proper guarding of our educational institutions, is a prime necessity if we are to preserve Nebraska history—which is supplementary to Nebraska education. Nebraska history is the history of industrious, hopeful men and women, of rifles, of tools, of kettles, of children, of books, of crops, of successes, of failures, of patriotism.

Under the Constitution of Nebraska, a trust fund, better known as the Permanent School Fund, was set up, the income from which is to be used in support of the public schools. The Constitution also provides: "The state shall supply all losses to the trust funds, and the same shall forever remain inviolate and undiminished." During the three-quarters of a century of the operation of this fund, Nebraska has been extremely fortunate. In all this period of seventy-six years only half a million dollars have been lost, and most of that by defalcation. It is safe to say that the Permanent School Fund has been kept intact under political control through depression and prosperity better than any other fund or business capital in Nebraska. Capital structures in Nebraska have been shrunk and distressed with countless fatalities. Great numbers of banks have failed in various segments of this seventy-six year period. Innumerable business houses have faded away. Great groups of farmers have been repeatedly dispossessed. But the capital losses to the Permanent School Fund amount to less than five per cent.

The replacement of this half-million-dollar shortage is long past due. Taxation is the only method of replacement. It would be impossible to levy to meet this obligation exactly. In my judgment it would not be good policy to do so even if it were possible.

Let me repeat: Nebraska history is an indispensable element in Nebraska education. In taking advantage of the inflated war conditions to replenish the Permanent School Fund, it is entirely proper that the welfare, safekeeping and dissemination of Nebraska history be included in the consideration.

The great collection of 200,000 volumes of newspapers, books and manuscripts, recording Nebraska history from the exploration of the territory to the present date, justly and proudly recommends itself to all native Nebraskans and demands a permanent abode suitable to its importance and priceless value.

The Nebraska Historical Society also has a treasure of thousands of articles of the possessions and relics of our pioneers. These articles, plus the discoveries of the archeologists, count up to more than half a million, with more to follow, and all deserving and demanding a place in Nebraska education and a safe place of display to the public. Expansion of this museum and of the several historical libraries must be encouraged, and a suitable place must be provided for the safekeeping of all their irreplaceable treasures.

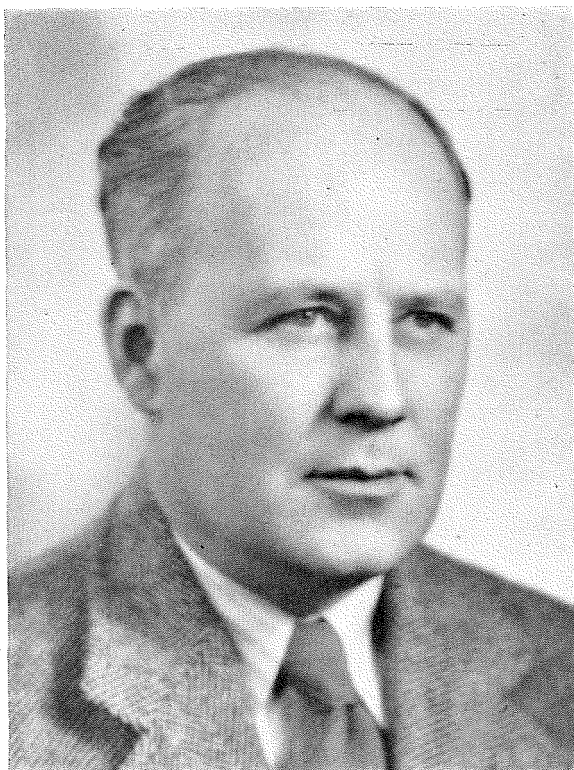
The last Legislature set the stage so that the winning of this war will definitely preserve Nebraska history. A law was passed providing for the replacement of the losses to the Permanent School Fund. It also provides for a building for your Society to the extent of a half-million dollars. No wrong would be committed if this sum were doubled.

The time will soon arrive for the Nebraska State Historical Society to take advantage of these funds to build a home for itself and its belongings. The most ideal site in Lincoln awaits this building. I sincerely hope that the new Historical Building will be beautiful, spacious, lasting: a utility building of multiple floors and conveniences, not a cramped artistic monument.

Nebraska history is the history of free, courageous men and women, operating a free enterprise under the impulses of rugged individualism. Nebraska freedom is the brand of freedom that produces personality, ability, character. Nebraska ability and character have repeatedly been called to highest positions throughout the United States.

In conclusion: The priceless materials collected through the years of devotion to Nebraska history are piled up in the basement of the capitol. A sturdy and spacious architecture to accommodate these, planned for usefulness, would correctly reflect Nebraska character and culture. The memory of Nebraska pioneers demands an Historical Building. The vast historical collection makes such a building imperative.

The Nebraska Historical Society is a State institution worthy of its place beside all other State institutions, and must be given opportunity to deliver its valued contribution to society. The long service, the able, devoted and inspiring efforts of Dr. Sheldon on behalf of your Society will be properly crowned by this achievement.



HON. JOSEPH C. REAVIS

Ninety Years of Nebraska Settlement

HON. JOSEPH C. REAVIS, FALLS CITY

The beginnings of other nations have been more or less legendary and obscure. Their histories fade back into fable and mythology. As a rule, they have emerged from a dim twilight with vague shadows, mythological heroes, and phantom gods. We are told that Rome had its beginning when Romulus and Remus were suckled by wolves on the banks of the Tiber River, but there certainly was none of this business on the banks of the Missouri River, the Platte, the Niobrara, or the Republican when Nebraska was born.

The history of Nebraska—that is, of its people, which after all, is the only interesting part of any history—goes back about ninety years from this date, and certainly those people who first came into the state could not foresee the great advancement that civilization would make in the short period of time that has now elapsed. Upon the time-clock of nations, centuries are but hours, and in the last century I do not think that I would be out of bounds in saying that humanity has made greater progress than in all of the six thousand years of recorded history that preceded. In everything that makes life rich and valuable and worth living—health, comfort, beauty, and happiness—the common laborer enjoys more than kings could purchase with their treasures a century ago. The mind is bewildered by the contemplation of the marvelous achievements of the past ninety years. If time and space signified now what they did in 1853, the United States probably could not exist under one government. It would be impossible to maintain unity of purpose or identity of interest between communities separated by such natural barriers as Oregon and Florida. But time and distance are arbitrary terms, one depending on the transmission of thoughts, the other on the transit of ourselves, our commodities, our manufactures and harvests. Distance has been annihilated and our continent shrunk to a span. London, New York, Melbourne, and Moscow are next-door neighbors.

Nebraska, as we all know, was part of the Louisiana Purchase, the biggest real-estate deal in history, but it was not until John Jacob Astor sent his exploring party into the West that we find any account of Nebraska. The Astor Exploration was not one of conquest but was prompted solely by commercial and business motives. It contemplated the establishment of fur-trading stations, and that the country would gradually be built up by emigrants who would lay the foundations and beginnings of a civil society. At that time Thomas Jefferson was living in retirement in Monticello. He gave encouragement to the enterprise which would establish settlements upon the Pacific Coast, yet he felt and said that "they should be of our people, of our blood, of our kindred, and who should establish for themselves the right of self-government, but they were otherwise to be wholly unconnected with the United States of America."

Washington Irving seems to be the historian of the Astor expedition. In his book *Astoria* we find this description of the Great American Desert: "It spreads forth into undulating and treeless plains and desolate sandy wastes, wearisome to the eye from their extent and monotony, and which are supposed by geologists to have formed the ancient floor of the ocean, countless ages since, when its primeval waves beat against the granite bases of the Rocky Mountains." And again he writes: "Such is the nature of this immense wilderness of the Far West, which apparently defies cultivation and the habitation of civilized life."

Irving himself felt that this great expanse of territory would come to no good end, as he forecast that this land would produce a race of mongrel people who would forever separate the civilization of the East from those who would inhabit the Pacific Coast. He said, "But it is feared that a great part of it will form a lawless interval between the abodes of civilized man, like the wastes of the ocean or the deserts of Arabia," and like them be subject to the depredations of the marauder. Here, Irving reasoned, would spring up new and mongrel races, like new formations in geology, the amalgamation of the "debris" and abrasions of former races, civilized and savage; the remains of broken and almost extinguished tribes.

Then, as now, there were statesmen, hair-splitting politicians, penurious legislators, brakemen on the express train of

American destiny. Thomas Benton, a great United States Senator, said in a speech in that body: "The ridge of the Rocky Mountains may be named as a convenient, natural and everlasting boundary. Along this ridge the western limits of the republic should be drawn and the statue of the fabled god 'Terminus' should be erected on its highest peak, never to be thrown down."

In 1846 Senator Winthrop of Massachusetts added the following: "This country will not be straitened for elbow-room in the West for a thousand years, and neither the West nor the country at large has any real interest in retaining Oregon."

In 1843 Senator McDuffie of South Carolina said: "The whole region beyond the Rocky Mountains, and a vast tract between that chain and the Mississippi, is a desert, without value for agricultural purposes, and which no American citizen should be compelled to inhabit unless as a punishment for crime. I wish to God that we did not own it."

Lieutenant Pike, who made an exploration for the United States Army, reported that the immense prairies were incapable of cultivation and would have to be left to "the wandering and uncivilized aborigines of the country."

Major Long in his report said of the prairies that they bear a manifest "resemblance to the desert of Siberia."

Nebraska being the center of the "Great American Desert" which was so undesirable, I think it now proper to analyze ourselves, to reconcile the past, present and future, and to show just what this Nebraska is now doing for the preservation of civilization.

To begin with, the Englishmen who first settled in Plymouth and Jamestown did not remain Englishmen. The new environment soon began to work on them. Here was a big continent, a huge, exciting, dangerous continent, intoxicating to the imagination. Old laws and customs would not work. From the beginning the American wanted as little government as possible; he wanted to be left alone and to do things in his own way. Both Jamestown and Plymouth tried out "Communism" by having everyone produce for the common storehouse. Soon they found that no one wanted to produce for the common store, but as soon as they let each individual keep for his own what his work produced there was an immediate transformation for the better. This is an American trait. It still exists.

Another American trait is the earth-hunger of the common man. There was lots of land, rich land, always a new frontier to settle, and the dangers from Indians, rivers and mountains and the somber prairie could not hold back these eager people. They would not have understood the glittering generalities about the "Four Freedoms." Freedom of Religion and Freedom of Speech they took upon themselves and always were ready to defend these rights. Freedom from Want and Fear were just common natural conditions of human life which the individual has to overcome by his own intestinal fortitude.

This was the type of individual who came into Nebraska at about the time of the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill in 1854. They came because this part of the country was the most exciting in the United States and there was a new frontier to open.

We Nebraskans like to talk about our great production of corn, hogs, and beeves; that we constitute part of the great granary of the world. We like to look back with pride upon the wonderful development of our state and the subjugation of the desert. But the greatest pride this state should have is in the men and women we have produced and will produce and who will control the destinies of this country and other countries as well. It is a strange thing, but it seems that society is reinforced from the bottom. Families die out; great fortunes are squandered. The recruits come from the farm and the ordinary homes of ordinary people, and the evidence is now proving that the men who will control the destiny of the world in the near future were born and reared, some in this State, some in other states comprising the forbidden "Great American Desert." At the present time the military men seem to have the front of the stage, and evidence shows this State and the Middle West well represented with the top-flight commanders. John J. Pershing, the Commander in Chief of the American Forces in World War I, was born and raised in our neighboring State of Missouri and spent part of his early military career as Commandant of the University of Nebraska cadets in Lincoln. Dwight Eisenhower comes from Salina, Kansas, and now is in full charge of the fighting forces in the European and African fronts. Major General Errett Oliver, in charge of American tank and armored forces during

the Tunisian campaign, was born and raised in Falls City, Nebraska, and received his appointment to West Point from that city. And we hear that the Chief of Staff for General Clark's forces now invading Italy, the so-called best mathematical brain in the American Army, is none other than Alfred Grunether of Platte Center, Nebraska.

It is also a known fact that the best troops mentally and physically come from this area known as the Middle West, which a short time ago was looked down upon as an area fit only for those who would be cast into exile for the commission of some crime. Now why should this be?

To answer that question one must rely upon the Historical Societies to obtain the true facts. This constitutes the soundest reason why the Nebraska Legislature should pass the necessary bills to provide for a historical building which will safely house and preserve the records of this State and its people, so that the historians of the future can learn why the Middle West of these United States produced the greatest men and women civilization has known.

Mankind is a victim of his environment. Give a philosopher a handful of soil, the mean annual temperature and rainfall, and he can predict with certainty the chief characteristics of the inhabitants. Taine in his work on the History of English Literature says that "the body and mind of man in every country is deeply rooted in the soil." Did you ever hear of anyone from the tropics who has contributed anything to the world? No, and you never will. Life is too easy there. All you have to do is to lift up your hands, pick off your breakfast, lunch and dinner. There are no obstacles to overcome, no frontiers to conquer. Search throughout history and you will find that those nations and peoples who have contributed most to civilization are those who have had a constant fight to overcome natural barriers and obstacles.

Possibly it is the climate, or the soil, or the strength of the heredity of the Nebraska family tree, which produces such a large proportion of big men from so small a proportion of the Nation's population. Some future historian will consult the historical records and let the world know why. My guess is that it is a combination of all these forces and the further fact that we still maintain the spirit of the frontier. Frontier life has

made the American and the middle-westerner what he is today. The newness, the dangers and hardships have given him courage and independence; the lack of tradition and settled customs has encouraged chance-taking and inventiveness. He believes in individualism and the immeasurable value of the individual soul, and that the prizes of life should go to the industrious and straight-thinking person rather than to the indolent and irresolute.

In closing, Mr. President, I would like to tell the story once told me about Senator Henry Clay. The story goes that Senator Clay and a company of friends were enjoying an outing in the Allegheny Mountains of Pennsylvania. They were on a high promontory overlooking the vast plain that sloped to the west. Standing on this summit, Senator Clay was watching the setting of the sun as it dropped out of sight, touching the mountains with a pink and lilac glow. After he had stood in silence for some time, a lady walked up to him and said, "Senator, a penny for your thoughts." Turning to her with a smile, Senator Clay replied, "Madam, I am listening to the tramp of the coming millions."

Yes, Mr. President, the millions are still to come. The same spirit that abolished this frontier and subjugated the desert is still with us. There are great frontiers yet to open and new battles to be won. At this moment that spirit pauses for a brief time upon the plains of Italy and the jungles of the South Pacific before completing the moral, spiritual and material conquest of the world.

Battle Hymn of Nebraska

VERSES BY WILL MAUPIN, A. L. BIXBY, A. E. SHELDON,
ADAM BREEDE AND JOHN I. LONG.

PRINTED BY FRANK A. HARRISON

We have heard the Nation calling for defenders of the right,
And Nebraska answers gladly to oppose the hosts of might;
She will give her sons by thousands for their God and homes to fight—
Nebraska's marching on!

They go to fight the battles of a people sore oppressed,
Whose homes shall be restored at last, whose wrongs shall be redressed.
In battle lines for liberty from out the golden west
Our boys are marching on.

Now with tears our eyes are dimming for the boys we bid goodbye,
And we wish God's blessing on them, as they spring to meet the cry
Of a hundred million people, who shall watch them do or die,
As they go marching on.

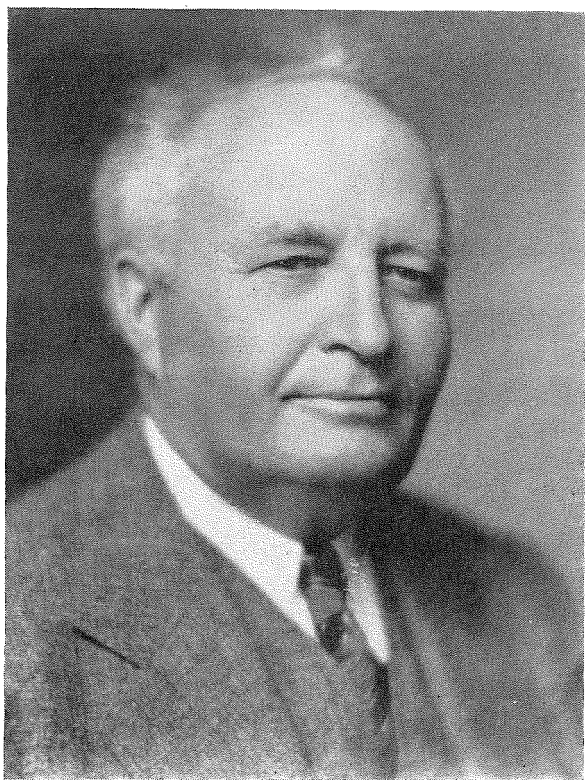
Now cheer our brave Nebraska boys to victory today,
They're fighting for our country in the thickest of the fray,
Come help to lighten burdens, and to speed them on their way,
As they go marching on.

They are marching down the valley of the Sambre and the Seine;
Our heroes brave who rally from the prairie and the plain;
They are standing in the trenches in the shrapnel hail and rain
For the cause which marches on.

They are fighting 'neath a banner that has never known defeat;
They are list'ning to the trumpets that have never blown retreat,
God has filled their souls with ardor, and made jubilant their feet—
Nebraska's marching on.

CHORUS

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
As they go marching on!



HON. C. PETRUS PETERSON

What the Historical Building Should Do For Nebraska

HON. C. PETRUS PETERSON, LINCOLN

One of the real difficulties of contemporary life is the constant necessity of adjusting our ideas to new concepts. For instance, I find it very, very difficult to accept the concept that the nearest route from Lincoln to Tokyo is by way of Alaska. I realize that that fault in my mental equipment is at least partly due to the map-makers who helped to illustrate the geography that I studied in District No. 8, in Polk County. They undertook to picture a globe on a flat piece of paper, and now that the world has shrunk so immensely and men are wearing wings it is necessary to change our thought to fit the geometric axiom that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, and a straight line between Lincoln and Tokyo passes across Alaska.

Now, much of that same situation exists in other fields. The literature of our country has so persistently come from New England that Christmas inevitably is pictured with frosted window panes, sleigh-bells and the snow in the piney forests. I can imagine the feelings of the boys of Nebraska this winter as they try to adjust themselves to the fact that Christmas comes in midsummer in Australia.

We face that same sort of weird perspective in the study of history. History, like the maps, is apt to take its point of departure from where the historian lives. So much of American history (I am not speaking now about the history university professors are teaching at the moment, but about the history we learned in District No. 8 in Polk County) — so much of our history has stemmed from New England that it has become a sort of story about the Pilgrim Fathers and their descendants which ran on very much like the Biblical stories about who begat whom until the entire history of the nation was a record of that little colony or its descendants, with a little association — sometimes welcome, sometimes not — with other people.

I recognize that such a history could be reasonably acceptable to those who are ancestor worshippers and who are able, by one method or another, to find that they can cling to the outer branches of some reasonably acceptable family tree whose trunk presumably stood back on the Atlantic seaboard. But folks like myself, who came out of nowhere, so to speak, and found ourselves out here in Nebraska totally disassociated from this New England history, have found it a bit difficult to adjust our thinking to those theses.

Not so long ago I was asked to speak to the D.A.R. at a meeting in Lincoln. They were much concerned about the problem of educating the children of the immigrants. When it came my turn I had to say that I was there under a misapprehension of fact, because I was one of the same sort of children about whose education they were worrying.

Then, of course, you could get a type of Southern history with the perspective not of Boston, but perhaps of Charleston, South Carolina. That tells the story of the Yankees of the North and the long struggle which culminated in the Civil War.

Or you might get a sort of history, perhaps with a Texas perspective. You remember recently one of their men is reputed to have said, after Pearl Harbor, that if the United States declared war he thought Texas would surely join.

It has become necessary to seek some adjustments in these various perspectives. In recent times we have had historians who have undertaken to do just that, not always acceptably, because in the process they seemed to consider it necessary to do too much "debunking" and sometimes belittling of the things which really are a precious part of American tradition.

Now, history is somewhat like wine: it increases in value with age. The trivial incidents of contemporary life which appear to be of no moment, at the time, if they can be understood and appreciated and sympathetically portrayed by somebody a few centuries later, may take on a real and sometimes a very dominant significance.

The necessity of preservation of these little incidents, of course, is one of the functions of every historical society.

Among the pregnant events of humanity's past record are the migrations of people. These become significant historically

because with them — and perhaps often because of them — human relationships have undergone fundamental changes. I think it is generally accepted now, in view of the present global war, that fundamental changes in the social order, in community life and in social customs, are among the inevitable results. One of the dreads of many people is that, as a result of these changes, we may find ourselves in such close proximity to people of different customs and habits, methods and procedure, that we will not like it.

Now, if I could portray for you something of what I conceive to be an important factor in the early history of this state, I think I could persuade you that we have here a priceless experiment in human relationships that may hold for mankind some memorable lessons and perhaps even a bit of scientific evidence of the possibility that people with these varying customs can get along with one another.

I should like, if I might, to introduce you to a community in this state of which I was a part, in which I was born and grew to manhood. It was a little community out in Polk County, west of Stromsburg and Osceola, stretching off southwest almost to Aurora, dipping down south to the northern portion of York County. The land in that area was acquired by the early settlers partly from the Union Pacific Railroad (which had acquired a checkerboard of sections as a grant in aid of the construction of that transcontinental line), partly by homestead and timber claim, and partly by purchase of school lands.

The people who acquired those farms were, in the main, recent immigrants from Sweden with very limited capital resources, unable to speak the English language except with great difficulty, and they didn't use that language except when necessity required. They undertook to bring with them the customs of their ancestral home to the extent that that was possible. Midsummer was celebrated with as much gusto as the Fourth of July, and Christmas was the high point of the social season of the year. Lutfisk and lingon berries were brought in from the Scandinavian countries. There were Oste Kalas (cheese parties), when the women of the community would bring all their milk supply to the home of one of them, in order that they might join forces in making an adequate supply of cheese for Christmas.

Christmas Eve came, when everyone was in his own home, and Christmas morning at five o'clock the before-dawn Christmas service took place at the little church. If there was any snow on the ground, the old Swedes strapped the sleigh-bells which they had brought or obtained from their native country to the harness of their horses, and the sleigh-bells rang on the prairies of Nebraska as they had always rung in the green forests of the Scandinavian peninsula. Nobody planned any work from then until the end of the first week in January. There were two weeks of festivity. People in that community built their church early, and also their little schoolhouses.

In recent years I have heard much discussion about the public-school problem in Nebraska. I have heard much criticism of these little districts and their inefficient schools; how people insist on keeping the district even if there are only one or two children left to educate, and I can never understand that until I remember District No. 8 in Polk County. Then I understand. Those early traditions persist.

Yet I have never understood how the teachers succeeded in leaping the barrier between themselves, who knew no Swedish, and a group of children who, like myself, came to school without knowing any English. But they managed it.

Now, as I think of that community, I am reminded that a while ago I went back to the old farm (my brother still tills the soil) and walked to the west end of the pasture, and through the fence and up a sidehill on the other side. I came to a depression in that sidehill, and I knew it was the pioneer home of Old Man Levi and his six children. I thought then that some archeologist might well come along one day with spade and shovel and scoop out the caved-in dirt and find the old dirt floor, made hard by the feet of the six little children in the Levi family. They might even find some parts of the old stove, maybe some broken crockery, some rusty utensils; but they would never be able to know what I know about the Levi Family. They were neighbors with those Swedes. They had to learn a little Swedish to get along, and some of the children learned to speak Swedish very fluently.

The archeologist wouldn't know that Levi took in Mr. and Mrs. Smith and their five children; that Smith went to town, got

some bad liquor, and came home and killed his wife. They might discover at the county courthouse that after that event they tried Smith and hung him, leaving Levi with his six children and Smith's five children in the one room of the semi-dugout in the sidehill west of our pasture.

The Social Science student might be interested in knowing that all of that brood of eleven, so far as I have been able to discover (and I know many of them) have become worthwhile citizens, self-respecting, self-supporting; and that some of them are making very valuable contributions to the building of Nebraska. I think that might be worth knowing.

I think of Levi as the Yankee neighbor of the Swedes, then I think of another neighbor named Foy. It was many decades later that I discovered the Foy family were the descendants of one of the outstanding early American families. We didn't like the Foy's either,—they didn't live as we did; but Foy was a perennial member of the school board in District No. 8, and the only visitor we had who made speeches to the children. He was interested in this group of youngsters and in school, where one of the principal difficulties of the teacher was to get the children to speak English at recess. It was so easy when school was out to drop into the language which we spoke, and to change the pronunciation of "chicken" to "shicken" and to get the soft "s" out of such words as "his" and "is." And, as I think back now, I should like to assign to Old Man Foy a very important place in a most interesting drama of American life—the amalgamation of a group of people into an orderly society.

Then off to the north of us we had a bunch of Germans. On the Fourth of July we would gather in some common place, but we always ate at separate tables. We Swedes didn't like the smell of the cabbage the Germans brought. We didn't like what the Poles brought, or the Bohemians either. We ate at separate tables. Oh, we had a little contact with the Germans. We had the Heitzman family. Heitzman was important because he learned something of the veterinarian's science, and we liked some of the Heitzman children. Vera Heitzman was a beautiful girl—blue eyes, rosy cheeks, a couple of big braids of hair hanging below her belt. The Heitzman family was almost acceptable.

The Polish community extended for some twenty miles. And thirty or forty miles beyond them were forty-five or fifty miles of Bohemians; and then came a German community over in Butler County. Then if we went on down south aw ways we would find the ennonites with their funny bonnets and their buttonless clothes. We didn't know then that buttons were associated with military uniforms and that they wanted to get so far away from the military oppression they had known that they wouldn't even wear buttons on their clothes. I can understand it, now that I know that part of the story.

I sometimes think that these little islands of humanity — this little bit of Sweden, this little bit of Poland, this little bit of Germany and of Bohemia, were set down out here on the plains of Nebraska by the decree of an all-wise God to demonstrate to the world the utter futility and stupidity of maintaining the ancient traditions of hostility among people.

My mother used to tell me that in her childhood environment, when somebody came from a neighboring parish it usually ended in a fight. They spoke with a different accent, often wore a different kind of clothes, and there was enough friction so that somebody had to test his physical strength.

When we look across Europe we find that they have progressed some. It is not now, probably, a question of the neighboring parish; but as we look at the map over there, and the global map that we see, and when we consider the rapidity of transportation, those little national boundaries look almost like parish boundaries and, you see, if the people of Nebraska were to follow their national antecedents we ought to be shooting at one another now. That is not quite right; the Swedes are still at peace; but armed — armed and ready.

Now, I think it is of utmost importance that this process by which these peoples in Nebraska have become amalgamated, peacefully, successfully and intelligently, should be adequately interpreted by the historical archives of the state; that we ought not to wait until somebody goes out with spade and shovel to discover the dirt of the floors of the early cabins of Nebraska, but that we should now seek to understand the social processes that took place, to interpret them and to tell the world of the possibilities of human beings forgetting their national antecedents and in-

telligently forming a world based on understanding, appreciation and respect.

Now, what is that process primarily? Why, I think that process was the public school. You see, it is quite impossible to have children continue the traditional hatred of their playfellows that they like, merely because they speak a different language at home or go to a different church.

It is not so many years ago — five or six years ago, I think — when I was asked to translate the articles of incorporation, by-laws and contracts of a Scandinavian fire insurance company of Polk County. For forty years they had conducted their business in the Swedish language. I said to the committee that came to see me: "How in the world have you gotten along for forty years with your contracts in Swedish? What did you do when you got to court?" The spokesman still had a little accent; he said, "Vell, ve don't go to court. Ve pay our bills." "Then," I said, "if you are getting along so well, why change it?" "Vell," he replied, "everything is all mixed up. You see the boys come home with Bohemian, Polish and German girls as their wives, and the girls marry Yankees and whatnot, and it is just all mixed up and ve have to change to the English."

That tells the story, and it is a significant story in human life, a very valuable story for the future. If it is possible for people, perhaps because of their poverty and necessity, to build the kind of social order that has been built in the state of Nebraska in the short space of — say, seventy-five years, shall we despair of the future possibilities? Shall we despair of the possibility of burying some of the archaic notions of hostility and bringing forth a great family of people that at least, reasonably speaking, will minimize their differences and magnify the importance of the qualities which they may accept and develop?

Now, my subject is — and I am just now coming to my subject — my subject is, "What shall this new Historical Society Building do for Nebraska?"

It should like it, Mr. President, if the picture that I have tried to give you of one little group could be amplified to adequate proportions. I know that an equally interesting story can be given you by each one of the other groups: by that German community that I know reasonably well; and the people that live

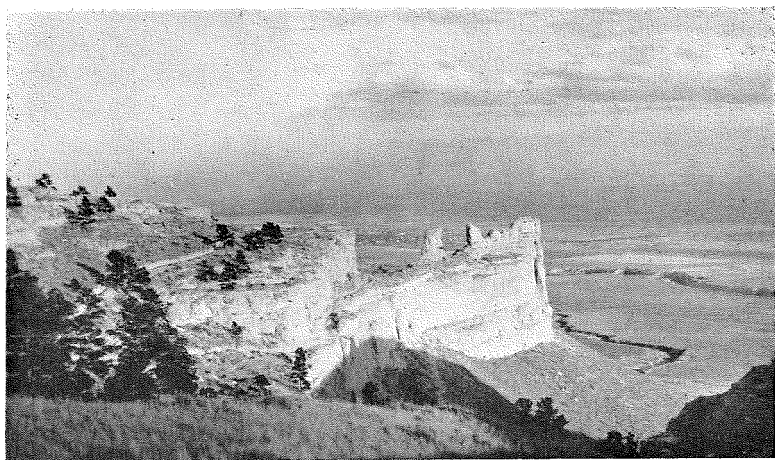
in it, together with the intense hatred that they possess for Hitler and for his wrongdoings in their old ancestral home. I know that a story could be written for the Poles — perhaps shorn of some of the hatred which inevitably would have to exist if they were writing it across the water following their recent experiences. I suspect that the Bohemians could give a story as thrilling. I have loved so much, too, to talk to many of them of their traditions — that long, long struggle for liberty that the Bohemians built into their blood and translated into terms of American life.

I would like to have this Historical Society Building so complete, so comprehensive, so well endowed, that it will be an adequate, many-sided source of information for those who in the ages ahead will try to understand a new race of people that has come into existence and is at this moment coming into existence in our very midst — a new race of Americans, with the interplay of their former national traditions and antecedents which we love to think will bring into the long inheritance of the generations of Nebraskans much of the good qualities of all.

I don't know quite what that new Nebraskan is going to look like. I can't quite imagine him. He will not be English; but it would be well, would it not, if into that future American whom we call a typical Nebraskan there should be found a generous portion of that love of liberty which has characterized the people of Old England? He won't be Irish; but it would be a splendid thing if into the make-up of the future Nebraskan there could be a bit of the fine wit associated with the people of Old Ireland. He won't be Scotch — Lord knows that under present economic procedures he won't be Scotch — but it would be well if there might be knitted into his make-up some of the frugality of the Scottish people. He won't be German; but for myself I hope there will be found a generous portion of that plodding persistence in the search for scientific truth that has characterized the people of Germany as we have known them over the decades. He won't be French; but it would be a splendid thing if there were a sprinkling of the vivacity which we associate with the French in that future American. He won't be Italian; but let us hope there would be a great deal of that love for music and art that we associate with Italians. He won't be Scandinavian; but if there could be in his make-up a little of that strange capac-

ity belonging to the people of that northern peninsula which makes it possible for them to sing even their love songs in a minor key, it would be well.

I don't know what they will be like, but I can imagine them. Tall, strong, clear-eyed, God-fearing, liberty-loving, fine, courageous gods and goddesses marching down the long vista of Nebraska's future resulting from this remarkable social experiment of fusing in a very short space of time the strange mixtures of people who, in other areas of the world, persist in remaining at war. That will be a treasure for the years that are to come, and I can visualize the possibility of its being recognized as a social treasure for the people of the entire world.



A RARE VIEW OF SCOTTS BLUFF
IN THE LAND BELOVED BY A. E. S.

The Musical Program

The program committee was fortunate in securing Mrs. E. E. Squires of Broken Bow as soloist for the four sessions of the day and as leader in the group singing. Members of the Historical Society staff had prepared a booklet of patriotic songs; in these her rich and powerful voice rang out with fervor, her gracious personality was strongly felt.

Honoring Nebraska composers in all her solos, at the afternoon meeting Mrs. Squires presented Jeanne Boyd's brilliant bit of writing, *In Italy*. This spirited, gay song, reminding all of the Italy of happier days, revealed her splendid soprano voice.

The numbers on the evening program were of unusual interest, being the work of Lincoln writers and composers. The fine dramatic power of the artist was shown in the heavy strains of *A Song for Peace*, its words and music by a Nebraska pioneer, Miss Flora Bullock. This, with its insistent refrain, "Lay down your arms!" was indeed impressive. At its conclusion Mrs. Squires presented the composer.

In tribute to Doctor Sheldon the program was closed with an exquisite lyric, *To a Wood Thrush*, written by him many years ago, set to music by Hugh Rangeler for a trio at High School vespers, and arranged for Mrs. Squires by Miss Bullock. Particularly lovely were the harmonies in this number, and its technical difficulties were easily overcome by the versatile artist.

Miss Grace Finch of Lincoln, accompanying Mrs. Squires, added to the perfection of all numbers with her sympathetic interpretation, especially in the interludes of the bird song.

It may be added that Hon. E. E. Squires and his gifted wife have long been members of the State Historical Society and warm personal friends of Dr. and Mrs. Sheldon.

Sixty-Sixth Annual Historical Dinner

Lincoln, Nebraska

October 2, 1943

Presiding: Mr. J. E. Lawrence, State Historical Society
Mrs. Carol Mortensen, Native Sons and Daughters

Mrs. Mortensen: I am sure that those of you who know Judge Carter will agree that I do not greatly resemble him. The Native Sons and Daughters are very regretful that he is not able to be here tonight to preside with Mr. Lawrence.

If you will refer to your program you will find there a little story about the person who will lead us in the singing this evening. She is a lady whom I have known for many years. She has done many, many things for her home town of Broken Bow and for those of us who have called upon her often for help in our musical programs, and I do hope that you will read this sketch about her because she is a real asset to the State and to our musical circles.

I hope that you will rise now and join with Mrs. Squires in singing "The Star Spangled Banner."

... We will please remain standing while the Reverend Dr. Kennedy gives us the invocation.

Dr. Kennedy: Our Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the heritage that is ours as citizens of this nation. And so we are grateful tonight for all those pioneers who in the early times made the sacrifices that gave us this heritage. We pray Thee that we, their children, may measure up to their standards and do for our times what they did for theirs. We thank Thee for this country and that for which it stands. Grant that we may so believe in democracy and freedom that we shall continue to produce the leaders in our world. For these great causes we ask Thee in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mrs. Mortensen: If I had the oratory and wit of the president of the Native Sons and Daughters, I would be telling you

many stories, many little anecdotes, and I am sure that they would be greatly appreciated, because I think throughout Nebraska we all know Judge Carter very well.

It is my pleasure and privilege to introduce a person who really needs no introduction, a person whom I have known probably — I don't know whether I should say many years; but anyway we were in University together and our paths have crossed many times. As I think back some years ago he and Senator Norris were very instrumental in bringing to our section of the country something that we needed very, very badly. It was an irrigation project. And as I remember him, he and Senator Norris were walking along a furrow that they were plowing themselves in turning over the first dirt of this great irrigation project. I have never ceased to be grateful that we had such fine, outstanding men in Nebraska; that we had such a fine senator in Washington; that we were able to get these things so much needed for our section of the country.

So, as I say, these paths of ours having crossed many times, it has been a pleasure in the last couple of years to be associated with the Native Sons and Daughters and to know that he was the president of this State Historical Society — I believe he has been elected for a third term. And we should be very thankful indeed that we have a man at the head of our Society who will do so much to bring about the things we really need in Nebraska; and probably during his regime we will see something completed that he started, and that is the movement for our own Historical Building.

I am very glad now to introduce Mr. Lawrence as the president of the State Historical Society.

Mr. Lawrence. Mrs. Mortensen — Ladies and Gentlemen: I feel that this is the time and place to start with an honest confession. I remember our college days, Carol, but I never had the courage to say to you what I am saying now — that one of the most perfect evenings in the world is that which gives me the privilege of presiding at a dinner with you as my associate. (Laughter.)

You notice on your program that your president is listed for his "Opening Words." There is a rather sinister sound to that: a hint, if I perceive correctly, to make it short and snappy.

You will remember that a year ago we said here in covenant among ourselves that there was a culture, there was a civilization established and perpetuated upon these Plains well worth preserving. I know that I speak for your distinguished Superintendent, for the Executive Board and for thousands of Nebraskans, when I say that our gratitude goes out to our Governor and to the last session of the Legislature for making possible the ultimate realization of those hopes. And so we come here tonight in a war year, with destruction covering so much of the earth, planning for the future; planning to create something infinitely precious to all of us.

The archives of our Society will reveal that approximately four years before Nebraska's statehood a thousand men marched to the banks of the Missouri River: Nebraska's contribution to the Civil War. And throughout this territory people were wondering how the Indians could be held back. Those were disturbed and anxious months.

You heard today that more than a hundred thousand Nebraska boys had entered the armed services of their country. And it has ever been thus. A magnificent, splendid contribution to national growth and development! That is what we propose to preserve.

Now your next number on the program is "A Song of Peace"—the words and music by Miss Flora Bullock, sung by Mrs. Squires and accompanied by our very good friend Miss Grace Finch. . . .

It is a tradition as old as this Society that a number of the guests who are here shall be asked to stand and be introduced. I cannot call on all of you, but I see President Gardner of the State Press Association, and I shall appreciate it if he will rise. . . .

We also have the son of a very distinguished Indian fighter, one of the very early pioneers of this state who is now ninety-eight years old: Major A. L. Green, who made history in Nebraska in the early days; and now his son is here. Tom, will you stand, please? . . .

We have two justices of the Supreme Court. I will ask Judge and Mrs. Rose and Judge and Mrs. Paine to rise, please. . .

And the distinguished Secretary of Agriculture, with his wife—Mr. and Mrs. Rufus M. Howard. . . .

I see Dean Oldfather over there, and Jim Sellers and his wife—if you will stand, please. . . .

And our old friends Mrs. C. F. Ladd, . . . and Tom Allen and his wife. . . .

Former Attorney-General Abe Sorenson. . . . Judge Eberly . . . Frank Robinson of Kearney—is he around? . . .

We have here three members of the Executive Board of the Historical Society, and I ask them to stand for just a moment: Mr. Woods, Mr. Abbott, Mr. Wilson. . . .

Here is a telegram: “Disappointed this morning to learn that I cannot come to your meeting. The Historical Society is giving a notable public service and has laid enduring foundations for the future.”

This has been both a happy and a sad day. I can’t recall a meeting of this Society that has been marked by the absence of Art Weaver. This telegram assures you that his thoughts are with you tonight and with the work of your organization, of which he has been such a loyal and devoted member for many, many years.

It was an inspired fight that resulted in the foundations that have been laid for a Nebraska Historical Building. I feel, Doctor Sheldon, that somewhere in our records we should give a citation to men who perform invaluable service to this state. Such a man is your next speaker.

I said it was an inspired fight. He came to my office and talked about his hopes and his faith that the time had come to commemorate the memory of the pioneers of Nebraska and to preserve their records, and out of Dan Garber’s enthusiasm I took heart. And so I am citing you, Dan, before praising you, for the very magnificent job that you did in securing the passage of those enabling bills that bring to a conclusion—a successful conclusion—a difficult fight. The Garber family goes back into the very beginnings of Nebraska’s history of distinguished service, and it is a great delight to me that you and your wife are here tonight and that you are going to speak to us for a few minutes on the subject assigned.

Senator Garber: . . . Governor Griswold spoke here at luncheon today and said that he arrived in Nebraska as soon as possible, but felt that he got here too late at that. Now I too

settled in Nebraska as soon as possible, but my observation has led me to believe that I came one generation too soon.

As your President has remarked, I represent one of the oldest families in this prairie state — among the first settlers in the Republican Valley. . . .

(Turn to page 229 for text of Senator Garber's address.)

President Lawrence: Thank you, Senator Garber. It is not fair, however, that all of the glory should descend on your shoulders. I want Mrs. Garber — and I believe you have a daughter here also — to stand up so that the people may know you. And if you want to make a rebuttal to any portion of that address, Mrs. Garber, I shall be glad to give you the time. (Laughter.)

Departing from your set program for a moment, you will next hear a poem written by Doctor Sheldon. It will be read to you by Miss Louise Mears, who has been working in the Society's library for several months in the preparation of a biography of Carrol G. Pearse, well known as an educator in Nebraska and later in Wisconsin, whose parents homesteaded in Butler County. . . .

Miss Mears: This book, entitled *Poems and Sketches of Nebraska*, was written by Doctor Sheldon and published in 1908. One of these poems that is, I think, a particular favorite of Nebraskans, is the one with that rather quaint title, "Before So Many People Built Their Houses In Between." I read it to you now. . . .

President Lawrence: Our next speaker came to my office one day and we were talking of the contributions that Nebraska and these Plains states have made to the American people, and he said, "The best that is in this world came out of this region. There is Eisenhower, of Kansas." Do you remember that, Joe?

Now, he has a delightful subject — "Ninety Years of Nebraska Settlement." Ten years short of a century! There was Weaver of Richardson County, the father of Governor Weaver, dark-eyed, black-haired, taken by death early in life, but a great fighter for Nebraska and a great public servant. And there has always been a Reavis in the history of this state distinguishing

himself through public service. You can well imagine, then, my great pleasure in being able to welcome Joe Reavis to this program and to present him to you as your next speaker.

(Turn to page 235 for text of Senator Reavis' address.)

President Lawrence: Thank you, Senator Reavis, for a very interesting and splendid address.

I approach the next assignment with timidity. The last time Senator Peterson and I faced an audience I walked with a cane for a solid month and sat on a pillow every time I sat down. We were debating that question which, I believe, related to the recommendation for Supreme Court reorganization by the same individual you had in mind, Dan. (Laughter.) And I remember particularly that you seemed to be on that occasion a super-starter and thoroughly warmed up. You would have no occasion to remember it, but the first words you spoke in that discussion were these: "You know, young man, there is nothing to this nonsense except the idea of a man with a mesolite conception!" (Laughter.)

It is a great pleasure to have Senator Peterson with us. He has contributed much to this state, to the thought of this state, and represents in such magnificent fashion the people of the state. . . .

(Turn to page 243 for text of Senator Peterson's address.)

President Lawrence: You have set a fine and high goal for that new building, Senator Peterson, and for that we are deeply grateful.

I note that inadvertently I overlooked the opportunity for Mrs. Mortensen to present the new officers of the Native Sons and Daughters. Will you do that now, Mrs. Mortensen?

(Presentation of officers: Mrs. Carol Mortensen, president; Mr. Robert Armstrong and Mrs. Hazel Abel, first and second vice-presidents; Mr. Horace M. Davis, secretary; Mr. Max Meyer, treasurer.)

Mrs. Mortensen: If Mr. Gilmore is in the room I would like to have him rise also. He was our president before Judge Carter, an active and devoted member for many years.

Voice from Audience: You will all be glad to know that while we were sitting here Mr. Gilmore received a telegram from his son, who had been wounded in some foreign country but is

now coming back home. Mr. Gilmore has just taken the train to meet him tonight.*

Mrs. Mortensen: Thank you for giving us that news.

President Lawrence: The solo that Mrs. Squires will now sing for you is an ode "To A Wood Thrush." The words are by your Superintendent, Doctor Sheldon, written some thirty years ago, and recently set to music by Mr. Hugh Rangeler for a vesper service at the Lincoln High School. . . .

I said in the beginning, ladies and gentlemen, that this has been both a happy and a sad day for some of us. It has been sad for many because Doctor Sheldon has not been in his customary good health. You must be president of the Historical Society to fully appreciate through these years the enthusiasm, the honesty and the high purpose with which Doctor Sheldon has endowed his work for this Society. I told him last summer to go home and rest, but like a naughty boy he doesn't always mind. We are hoping that now he will rest and regain his strength. No one—Senator Peterson—no one in this state is better able to interpret that social experiment out here on these Plains, nor understands its significance to a greater degree than Doctor Sheldon.

Senator Peterson: That is right!

President Lawrence: Now he is here tonight, and he is not rising. I am not going to call on him to rise. His daughter, Miss Ruth Sheldon, is at his side, and I say to him on behalf of all of you: God bless you, Doctor Sheldon, and keep you and preserve you in good health.

I thank you all for coming here to make this meeting a success. And now, in honor to the Superintendent of this Society, will you please close the program by rising and paying our respects to Doctor Sheldon.

(The audience rises and is dismissed.)

* In a letter to Dr. Sheldon Mr. Gilmore made this explanation:

"I left the banquet in order to meet a man with whom I was going to Florida to visit my youngest son Robert, who had been stationed in Puerto Rico for eight months and was spending the furlough with his wife and little son (my first grandson whom I had never seen) there in Lakeland." — Ed.

Before So Many People Built Their Houses In Between

There's nothin' like the neighbors that in early
days was seen
Before so many people built their houses in be-
tween;
Them days we use' to neighbor all along the
Denver road —
Camden Forks to Martin's an' on to Kearney
Ford, —
Thompson's Ranch at Walnut Creek an' Mills-
paugh's further on,
Fouse's an' McFadden's — an' another one that's
gone.
We went forty miles to funeral an' sixty to a
dance,
An' everybody eager, like it was their only
chance —
Shakin' hands an' swappin' news an' meetin'
heart to heart,
Before so many houses pushed us all so fur
apart.
The folks acrost the road is kind enough today,
But they're nothin' like the neighbors who lived
twenty miles away;
No! There's nothin' like the neighborin' the
early days has seen
Before so many people built their houses in be-
tween.

— *Addison E. Sheldon.*

The War Livestock Problem In Nebraska

HON. S. R. McKELVIE, VALENTINE

Looking back across the years I recall two slogans: "He who makes two blades of grass grow where one formerly grew is a public benefactor," and "The cow, the sow and the hen are the mortgage-lifters." These sayings were so oft repeated that they became trite. Nevertheless we believed in them profoundly and addressed our efforts accordingly. I am of the belief that it was because we did so that Nebraska became one of the great and leading agricultural states of the nation.

Land that originally was used for the production of flax and wheat gradually was turned to corn and alfalfa. This enabled the diversification of crops and the restoration of fertility. Moreover, they were ideal in the economical scheme of keeping all kinds of livestock, and it was in those early years that we secured our largest production of corn and alfalfa in Nebraska. I doubt if there is one in this hall today who recalls that the largest corn crop in Nebraska was produced in 1896 when the total yield was approximately 290 million bushels. Nebraska, that once stood first among the states in alfalfa, now stands eighth. It is well to recall that our most prosperous years in this state were founded upon a practical diversification of crops and livestock, with the latter representing by far the larger percentage of the state's agricultural income.

We are prone to think of the early 1930s as the hardest crop years this state experienced. Those were hard years, and we shall not forget them, but the pioneers who lived through the early '90s suffered even worse. Basically the reasons were much the same. Loss of crops through drouth meant the loss of feed for livestock. As the herds and flocks were depleted, the more abundant sources of income rapidly declined.

The recovery of Nebraska's agriculture from each period of depression has been marked with the restoration of increasing numbers of livestock, and profitable prices for them. It is so to-

day. Compared with 1941, the hog population increased nearly twofold in 1943, and the value increased nearly five times. All cattle numbers have increased about fifteen percent since 1941, but the value of them has nearly doubled. Similar ratios may be given with reference to other livestock.

The problems that confront us now in livestock? There are many of them. Of course, the weather is an omnipresent problem. We meet it as well as may be through scientific methods and better management. Thus the losses are minimum, and we do not complain too much. Of problems incident to a world-wide war, we seek the best possible adjustments, and proceed to do our best.

Shortages of labor, materials and farm machinery are met with longer hours and closer application to the task. In this respect the Nebraska farmer and rancher, in common with those throughout the nation, should be envied by those in other lines of industry who have been less scrupulous in their efforts and sacrifices. I have said, and I repeat, that given the essentials in labor and materials the American farmer will meet every requirement of food in any emergency. He proved it last year by bringing forth the largest crops and food supplies in the history of the nation. He can and will do it again, but it must be remembered that unnecessary requirements and hardships should not be imposed upon him. It undoubtedly is true that uncertainties due to government action and controls have been the farmers' greatest handicap in this war-time. There has been a vast lack of sympathetic understanding of the agricultural problem.

Despite all this agriculture carries on, and in the end will have been one of the great forces in winning the war.

Address at the Historical Luncheon, October 2, 1943.

The Army Specialized Training Program

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ARTHUR T. LOBDELL

The United States Army began the selection of trainees for this activity in the Middle West in April 1943. The purpose was to provide a continuous flow of high-grade technicians and specialists needed by the Army. A rough division shows that about seventy-five percent of the soldiers are sent to colleges and universities for engineering training, about five percent for medical training (including the doctors, dentists and veterinarians); and the remainder, numbering twenty percent, are in the area-language group for Government purposes.

While in school the soldiers are on active duty in uniform under military discipline, and they receive regular Army pay.

Before introducing some of the trainees from the A. S. T. P. at your State Agricultural College, I will give you a few of the requirements:

Soldiers, regardless of age, are eligible if they scored at least 115 in the Army's General Classification test. (Officers have had to score 110 in order to obtain a commission.)

Soldiers of twenty-two years or over must have successfully completed at least one year in college.

A soldier must have had his basic training (usually of twelve to seventeen weeks) before being considered for specialized training. If accepted for specialized training, a soldier is sent to a specialized training and reassignment center, where each is further tested and, if successful, is given a definite assignment at one of the 209 universities providing specialized training courses.

At the conclusion of his remarks Colonel Lobdell presented four of his trainees who had accepted the luncheon invitation of Native Sons and Daughters. There was Sergeant Jacques Phillipott who introduced his comrades: a young engineer from Ohio, and the brothers Georges and Jacques May who have been called by many organizations to explain a large map they had made, showing in bas-relief the theaters of war in Russia and Continental Europe. Each of these fine upstanding young men addressed the gathering briefly; we are fortunate in having secured (after long persuasion) a resume of the remarks by Pfc. Georges May, who talked with a verve and zest characteristic of his race and delighted his hearers. From other sources we learn that when Dunkerque fell he was a lieutenant in the French Army, where at the same time Sergeant Phillipott was a captain. He spoke, in substance, as follows:



The Army has gone to a great deal of trouble to select out of its millions of soldiers those who have knowledge of some modern language. If that knowledge is a thorough, fluent one, the men are temporarily assigned to an Army Specialized Training Unit, subject to immediate transfer. If that knowledge is something less than thorough and

fluent, the men are given a nine-months course in an A. S. T. Unit in order to refresh and strengthen their ability to read, speak, and write the language — primarily to speak it. In some instances men who speak one or more fairly common foreign languages are assigned to begin basic study of comparatively little-known languages, such as the Japanese.

Why has the Army undertaken this vast program of language instruction? It is not difficult to see the answer. We are engaged in a global war. Our troops are operating and will be operating in countries whose very names were unfamiliar to us just a little while ago. In our relations with the civilian popula-

tion we cannot afford to depend on non-Americans alone. We must have American soldiers who can solve the language difficulties involved in obtaining supplies, information, and other help from foreign populaces.

On the other hand, we have numerous Allies whose languages are not familiar — to put it mildly — to the average Army officer. Our armies are in frequent if not constant liaison with those armies, particularly with the French Army. We must have men who can speak the languages of our Allies to speed us to a common victory.

The Germans understood this well. All through France, before the war, their "tourists" had penetrated into even the most remote villages, winning the confidence of our people, learning not only their language but their dialect and customs. This was our Trojan horse. Cannily, neglecting no detail, our enemy had prepared for conquest.

No less necessary is the need for language men in the policing and administration of conquered territories. Security in the rear, from civilians as well as soldiers, is an axiom of military strategy. We of the United Nations maintain security in occupied territory through just, strong and efficient military government. It is inconceivable that such military government can be carried on without a large number of men who can speak the language of the occupied territory.

Finally, we need men who can speak the enemy's language. We need them to question enemy prisoners, to read captured plans, documents and letters; to break down cryptographed messages; to give instructions to enemy prisoners, etc.

I am thankful to the Nebraska Historical Society and to the Native Sons and Daughters of Nebraska for the opportunity to give my own (necessarily personal) views of the objects of the Army language program. Nebraska will always be one of my favorite states, both because I had the honor of being naturalized in Lincoln just a few days ago, and because of the very warm hospitality extended to me by its citizens. That hospitality has made me feel so much at home that I am not abashed even in an audience composed of Native Sons and Daughters — some of whom, as your Toastmaster recalled a few minutes ago, have spent over eighty years in this state. Had there been a similar

organization in France, undoubtedly my brother and I would have been members of it.

I am sure that the Nebraska State Historical Society will have many glorious pages to add to its archives after this war, and that the deeds of Nebraska's sons and daughters will play an important part in bringing about the victory for which each of us, in his own way, is putting forth his best.

Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur T. Lobdell, Corps of Engineers, has been a resident of Lincoln for twenty-four years. He was with the Nebraska State Department of Roads and Irrigation continuously from the end of World War I until he was called to active duty about two and one-half years ago. Since last April he has been president of the S. T. A. R. board at the Agricultural College campus in Lincoln, from which duty he has recently been transferred to another Army assignment.

Editor's Note: At the afternoon program, the Native Sons and Daughters presented a symposium of three addresses on "Nebraska and Nebraskans in War." The second of these, "World War I," was an extemporaneous address by Robert B. Waring of Geneva which made a very favorable impression upon the audience. We regret our inability to secure it in manuscript form for publication.