



## Annual Reports

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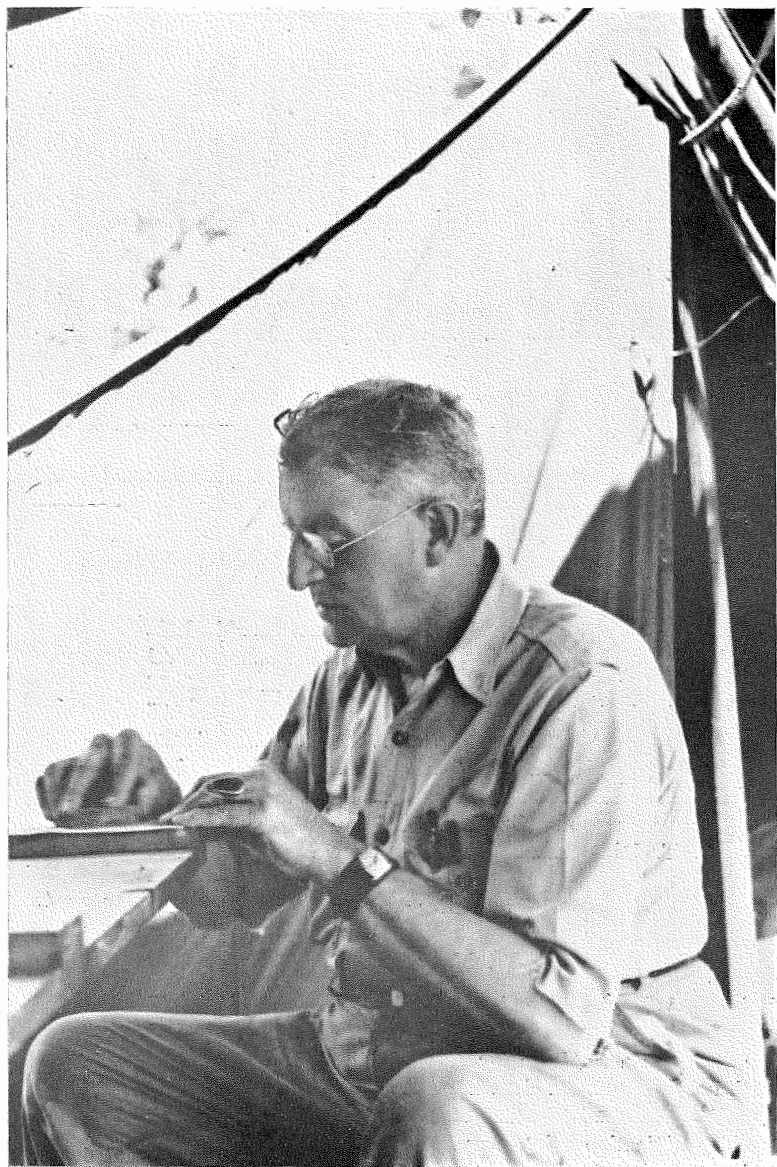
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A. T. HILL IN THE ARCHEOLOGICAL TENT

## Historical Society Museum

A. T. HILL, DIRECTOR

The Museum has closed a successful year. In spite of the war, the estimated attendance showed a slight increase over that of the preceding year. The falling off in the number of civilian visitors was more than made up by the presence of men in the uniform of the armed services. These came chiefly, of course, from the personnel of the Lincoln Air Base, and on Sundays especially these rooms are thronged with service men.

Considerable rearrangement of displays has been made and new items added in order to build up stronger exhibits. Particular emphasis has been laid on relics of past wars—guns, swords, uniforms, flags, medals. All these are of special interest to the soldier. He looks with a professional eye at the guns and other equipment used in the Revolution, in the Civil War, the Plains Indian conflicts, the Spanish-American War and World War I. In a very forceful way these mute relics link him with his country's heroic past.

But it is not only the military displays that interest the soldier. The pioneer implements, household equipment and clothing; the Indian weapons, tools, dress and ceremonial articles; the many fine exhibits of pottery and other artifacts in the archeological section—all these claim their share of his attention, as they do that of other museum visitors.

It has been the consistent aim of the Museum Director to prepare displays which would be interesting and instructive to everyone. Because of wholly inadequate space, a choice had to be made at the beginning (when in 1934 the Museum moved into its present quarters) between showing a comparatively few articles with proper spacing and appropriate background or showing a large number of exhibits crowded into every available foot of space. The latter course was decided upon, and time has proved its wisdom. Visitors find hours of entertainment and leave with the feeling that there is still more to see if they had time.

Now that a new Historical Building seems definitely assured, long-term plans can be laid for working out effective displays arranged according to modern museum methods. Displays that will show by pictorial representation, by models, and by actual specimens, the evolution of dwellings in Nebraska, of transportation, of agricultural and household tools and implements, of Indian handicraft, and a host of other things. By the utilization of dioramas and small-scale models, the possibilities along this line are almost unlimited. But that is the Nebraska Historical Society Museum of the future.

The attendance during the past year was marked by one interesting feature—The number registering from states other than Nebraska. Of course only a small proportion of visitors sign the register, but a check

of these was made and below are listed the states having the largest representation.

Kansas	-	-	-	-	696
Iowa	-	-	-	-	617
New York	-	-	-	-	558
California	-	-	-	-	556
Missouri	-	-	-	-	456
Ohio	-	-	-	-	387

From foreign countries the register shows a total of thirty names.

The attendance for the past twelve months is estimated at 252,000. Of these, 26,100 signed the Museum register.

Accessions during the year were 1,021 articles from sixty separate donors. This brings the number of catalogued items up to 19,163. The Museum collections are constantly growing in volume and in interest.

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## Archeological Report

A. T. HILL

It gives me great pleasure to submit herewith the report of the Archeological Division of the Nebraska State Historical Society for the year 1942-1943. At this time the Archeological Division consists of 408 members from 24 different states. The larger number of these are young people, many of whom are now serving in the armed forces, and they do not have much time for archeology, their favorite study. Several of our members who have not joined the fighting forces are doing a very fine job of field work and reporting their findings. We are filing these and will investigate the sites as soon as possible. We are now making peace-time plans to work these sites when our boys return home.

While we were having the heavy rains this spring we were fortunate in receiving several reports on interesting sites which were being washed by flood waters. Some of these we were able to visit, thus securing rare photographs and maps before they were completely destroyed.

Trying to keep up with our archeological associates, we have done considerable driving to the more important sites. In this way we are able to keep in touch with Nebraska's wonderful archeological field and make discoveries which we think are interesting and worth while. We have found that in prehistoric times (500-700 years ago) the best corn in the state was grown in the Loup Valley in the vicinity of Genoa. Also during that period the sunflower was cultivated in the same vicinity and their seeds were larger than those grown in other parts of the state. A few miles west of Lincoln we located a very ancient Indian village where they

cultivated the common pigweed, which had a seed about five times as large as the common redroot or pigweed that we see growing now. We excavated an ancient food cache in this site which contained several bushels of these seeds.

During the past year we made several trips through the state to gather up small archeological collections. These we have placed on exhibit in our archeological rooms. We try to make the displays more educational and interesting for the soldiers and civilians who visit our museum. We have received many compliments on the displays and a great many visitors inquire for publications pertaining to the study of archeology.

While on these trips I visited several collectors and checked their archeological specimens. I feel sure we will be able to obtain some of these fine collections when we have a new building. I have received promises of financial aid to carry on the archeological field work after the war.

Since our last annual meeting I have visited splendid museums in California, Michigan and Illinois, and have accumulated many ideas which can be used to good advantage when the Historical Society moves into its own building.

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To us the Constitution is not merely a document. It is, as Edmund Burke said of Society, "a noble compact between the dead, the living, and the unborn." It has been the living gift of generations long dead. It has made vital through the form of a Republic those Christian principles of democracy which declare all men to be equal; to have been endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights. It has opened to mankind the Great Plains of a true freedom. It has given us strength, and given us vision. It is our part, in gratitude to our forefathers, in obligation to our children, to keep it living, and keep it free.

— *Arthur F. Mullen,*  
in "Western Democrat."

## Public Information Department

RUTH S. WATSON

Each year more than two thousand inquiries are answered by the staff of the Nebraska State Historical Society. They come by mail, by telephone and by personal call at the Society's rooms in the State Capitol. Some can be answered immediately by persons familiar with the general facts of Nebraska history, others require hours and sometimes days of searching. Three members of the Historical Society staff are engaged in answering such requests, while all other staff members give part of their time to this work.

During the school year numerous requests are received from teachers and students on many phases of Nebraska history. In response we send what printed matter we have for distribution. If this is not adequate, we may send books as a loan or typed extracts from books. In addition to this service to the schools of our own state, we daily send printed material on Nebraska to students in other states. Within the last year such requests were answered from practically every state in the Union and from Hawaii.

One subject regarding which we have frequent inquiries both from Nebraska and other states is the Capitol—when built, its size, the height of its tower, information regarding certain panels and inscriptions. Other questions concern the Freeman homestead, Arbor Lodge, Fort Kearny, what star in the flag represents Nebraska, when Nebraska was admitted to the Union. Requests from other states often are about our State flower, bird, flag, and seal. Frequently attorneys ask us for notarized copies of legal notices appearing in the newspapers in our files. These papers and other files in our library are used for securing birth notices, for checking on family history, for study not only of events of different periods but the spirit and personal reactions of the people living in those periods. We find that the Lincoln and Omaha *City Directories* (of which we have files as early as 1868 for Omaha and 1876 for Lincoln), and the *State Gazetteers* from 1879 and on, often furnish a means of verifying facts regarding persons and places. *The State Gazetteer* has been especially valuable as a handy reference to check for towns which have now disappeared.

The large collection of maps belonging to the Society also supplies much desired information, while the *Land Office Records*, *Lincoln Voters' Registers*, and *Census Records* are valuable source material.

More uncommon requests are for the name of a Count living in Knox County; about an attempted robbery of the state treasury in the 1880s; for information regarding Carl Haffe, formerly of Omaha, said to have been King of the Ilocanos; for special bibliographical data on the writings of Willa Cather.

Sometimes we have an SOS from a speaker who is scheduled to deliver an address that evening and desires special information—usually regarding a locality, a particular town, or some individual. On such occasions we drop other work and rally to take care (usually with success) of these rush orders.

At the present time we are receiving requests for information regarding our State with the explanation that, when it is possible to travel again, the person writing plans to visit Nebraska. Such inquiries are usually about places of historic interest, parks, forts, and scenic attractions.

Although answering these requests for information involves much time and labor, the wide variety of subjects explored and the consciousness of giving real assistance makes this phase of the work especially interesting and satisfying.

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## Manuscript Department

MYRTLE D. BERRY

Although there were no especially large or outstanding accessions during the past year, a considerable body of interesting and worth-while material has been added to the manuscript files. Approximately four hundred separate pieces of various types of manuscript and documentary material were received.

In addition to current accessions, a number of interesting and valuable items were selected from the holdings of unorganized manuscript material stored in the reserve library in the basement. This material is in process of being indexed and filed.

Among the year's accessions might be mentioned several old military bounty land grants to tracts in Nebraska Territory, dated 1860 and bearing the signature of James Buchanan; soldiers' discharge papers, civil commissions and the like. A number of miscellaneous items came to the files from W. E. (Pussyfoot) Johnson, the famous temperance crusader. Some of the more unique pieces among these were broadside addresses of welcome, printed in English or in the language of the particular country or locality; and passports bearing interesting visas from all parts of the globe where Mr. Johnson traveled and lectured in the cause of prohibition.

Other material added to the files comprised letters, pioneer reminiscences, brief research papers, pamphlets, leaflets and news releases covering a great diversity of subjects and adding to the reference value of the manuscript department. To render it still more valuable in this field, a beginning has been made toward better arrangement and coordination

of related material in the files, and many supplementary index cards are being prepared.

During the year about fourteen theses have been bound for better protection and for convenience in using, and several theses and shorter manuscripts in frequent demand have been copied in order that they might be available for use in our library and to send out occasionally on loan.

It is hoped that this department can be made a vital and important part of the reference and research work of the Society, as well as a repository for preservation of valuable historical material.

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## Historical Library

GRACE BARBEE

October 1942 — September 1943

### Library Holdings

Books and Pamphlets in State Capitol — approximately.....	118,500
At University of Nebraska .....	18,000
	136,500
Total .....	136,500
Catalogued during year .....	700

### Gifts

### Items

From Hon. George W. Norris — Books from office library.....	380
From the Library at Fort Robinson — Reports and Records.....	614
From Mr. N. C. Abbott — Magazines.....	42
From South Dakota Historical Society — Pamphlets.....	7
From Mrs. F. D. Snyder — <i>The Literary Digest</i> , 1917.....	44
From Various Sources: Books, pamphlets and magazines.....	30
Magazines received in exchange or as publicity.....	123
Magazines discontinued for duration of the war.....	6

The splendid gift of Senator Norris came from his own private library in the Senate Building. Of very special value to this Society is the set of the complete *Writings of George Washington, from the Original Manuscript Sources*. Its thirty-seven rich volumes cover the years 1745-1799 — to December 13. Prepared under direction of the George Washington Bicentennial Commission of the United States; edited by John Fitzpatrick; published by authority of Congress.

Included in this library list are many volumes of *The Congressional Record*; *Foreign Relations of the United States* for 1914-1927 inclusive;



*Annual Reports* of the American Historical Association, 1919-1928; of the Smithsonian Institution and the National Museum; *Ceremonies* commemorating the death of La Fayette, Lincoln, Garfield, McKinley and Coolidge. Addresses delivered at the acceptance of statues: Will Rogers, Washington, Robert E. Lee. Works on Irrigation, Water Resources, the Tri-County Project, Little Waters, Public Lands, The Western Range, Shelterbelt Planting, The Future of the Great Plains, and many others of equal value in research.

The gift from the Post library at Fort Robinson includes that invaluable source material for history of the Civil War period—nearly 200 large volumes of the *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies and Navies*. There are over 300 volumes of *Government Reports* and records; *War Department Reports: General Orders, Messages and Documents*—all very useful for reference and research, and completing a gift highly prized. Miscellaneous publications include a set of *Encyclopedia Americana*, some volumes of *Britannica*, and a variety of other books.

The Abbott gift includes *Harper's Magazine* for 1942-43; *Reader's Digest* for the same years; the *Nebraska Law Review*.

The Historical Exchanges are usually quarterly publications from forty-three states and various other historical societies in New York, Iowa, Illinois and Missouri. The library shelves also carry magazines from Mexico, Canada, London, and Washington, D. C.

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## A Tribute Richly Deserved

By unanimous vote at its last annual meeting, the Nebraska State Historical Society conferred an honorary Life Membership upon the Honorable George W. Norris of McCook, former United States Senator, jurist and eminent statesman, in appreciation of his generous gift of three hundred and fifty valuable books and pamphlets; for innumerable acts of friendly cooperation with this Society in its contacts with the federal government; and as a token of recognition of the devoted and distinguished service he has rendered to the state and the nation through forty years of active, fruitful public life.

## Photograph Department

MARTHA M. TURNER

August 1, 1942 — September 1, 1943

Photographs and Negatives on file .....	45,281
Photographs and Negatives stored in boxes, ready for filing. Estimated at .....	600
Photographs loaned for publication, publicity, thesis records or study problems. This includes lantern-slides .....	314

These collections are carefully boxed, with the history of each enclosed, until such time as an assistant can be provided to index and file them properly for use by the public.

### Gifts Received

- R. M. Turner**, Lincoln: Lincoln in 1871; Pacific House, on Ninth Street; Bain Real Estate near present Journal office; Humphrey Brothers Hardware; Stage Company stable; post office; Sweet and Brock Building; Six houses built by Church; High School; Godfrey's Lumber and Coal Company; Farquhar Clothing Store; H. W. Merrill's homestead house.
- R. E. Dale**, Lincoln: Twenty-four photographs of distinguished men in early Nebraska days. From collection of Senator Dale, father of R. E. Dale.
- Mrs. Paul V. Swearingen**, daughter of Ole Buck, well known journalist in Nebraska, a printing mark used by Fust and Schoeffer, printers, successors to Gutenberg, in 1457. Mr. Buck had carried and prized this token for many years.
- George A. Jenkins**, Lincoln: Photos of flour mill in Jefferson County in 1867.
- Zerne P. Haning**, Lincoln: A box of photos and negatives, many not identified as to subject.
- Mrs. A. T. Spring**, Denver: Fourteen prints of the floor plans of stage stations along the Oregon Trail, the originals drawn by Casper Collins, and used in illustrating a biography of Mr. Collins published by Mrs. Spring.
- Cora McD. Wilson**, Middlebury, Vermont: Three pages from *Leslie's Magazine* (1876 and 1877) illustrating *Across the Continent—Leslie's Excursion to the Pacific*.

- Mrs. Chester W. Hock, Havelock:** Fifty-four photographs and stereoscopic views of Lincoln and her people in early days. Taken by E. G. Clements. Identification of these would add immeasurably to their historical value.

## Newspaper Department

MARTHA M. TURNER, LIBRARIAN

August 1, 1942 — September 1, 1943

The librarian has had no assistant in this office, and has kept no record of the number of calls and interruptions. Politicians, seeking voting records; people wishing to check on birth dates; students looking for historical records, make up the average requests for newspapers of the state.

The papers, after being bound, are kept in the basement library. Mr. Samuel McCoy has had charge of this department, which occupies three separate rooms: the bindery, the vault where the Lincoln and Omaha dailies are kept, and a larger space for the weekly papers. Mr. McCoy has handled this work carefully and efficiently. It includes the binding of all newspapers and books, besides the research required on requests coming to the office. His report will be found elsewhere.

### Newspapers Received Regularly

Weeklies, Semi-Weeklies or Monthlies .....	353
Dailies .....	24
Foreign (Out of State) .....	14
Total .....	391

### Newspapers Discontinued or Combined with Other Publications

<i>Arcadia Arcadian</i> . Sold to <i>Ord Quiz</i> - - - -	Feb. 25, 1943
<i>Aurora News</i> and <i>Aurora Republican-Register</i> . Combined to form the <i>Aurora News-Register</i> - -	Nov. 20, 1942
<i>Alliance News</i> : Suspended - - - - -	Apr. 29, 1943
<i>Belden Progress</i> : Suspended. Subscription list sold to <i>Laurel Advocate</i> - - - - -	Aug. 27, 1942
Bridgeport, <i>Morrill County Sun</i> : Suspended - -	May 19, 1942
<i>Brainard Clipper</i> : Suspended - - - - -	Mar. 25, 1943
<i>Cedar Rapids Leader-Outlook</i> : Sold to <i>Albion News</i>	Mar. 25, 1943
<i>Chester Herald</i> : Suspended - - - - -	Feb. 25, 1943
<i>Crawford Northwest Nebraska News</i> : Suspended -	Dec. 10, 1942
<i>Dalton Delegate</i> : Suspended - - - - -	Aug. 28, 1942

Davenport, <i>People's Journal</i> : Suspended	- - -	July 30, 1942
Decatur Herald: Suspended when the plant was destroyed by fire	- - - - -	Dec. 12, 1942
Fairbury, <i>Dairy Goat Journal</i> : Moved to Columbia, Missouri	- - - - -	Sept. 1942
Friend Telegraph: Suspended	- - - - -	Aug. 28, 1942
Grand Island Herald (Daily): Suspended	- - -	Sept. 9, 1942
Gretna Breeze was purchased by the publisher of the <i>Papillion Times</i> . The two papers will be managed by the personnel of the <i>Springfield Monitor</i> . Not suspended	- - - - -	Jan. 1, 1943
Hershey Citizen: Suspended	- - - - -	Apr. 30, 1942
Holdrege Progress: Suspended, and name changed to <i>Irrigation Farmer</i>	- - - - -	Apr. 30, 1943
Johnson News: Suspended	- - - - -	Aug. 27, 1942
Kenesaw, <i>Adams County Voice</i> : Suspended	- - -	Aug. 20, 1942
Lincoln, <i>Nebraska Selector</i> : Suspended	- - -	Dec. 1942
Lincoln, <i>Nebraska Scholar</i> : Suspended	- - -	March, 1942
Lincoln, <i>Cornhusker Countryman</i> (U. of N.): Suspended	- - - - -	May, 1942
Lincoln, <i>Nebraska Educational Bulletin</i> : Suspended	- - -	May, 1942
Mead, <i>Nebraska Ordnance Plant</i> : Suspended	- - -	July 31, 1943
McCook Junction, <i>Blue Valley Journal</i> : Suspended	- - -	Dec. 31, 1942
Mason City Transcript: Suspended	- - - - -	Mar. 13, 1943
McCook Republican: Suspended	- - - - -	July 23, 1943
Madrid Herald: Suspended	- - - - -	June 17, 1943
North Loup Loyalist: Sold to <i>Ord Quiz</i>	- - -	Mar. 18, 1943
Petersburg Index: Suspended	- - - - -	Jan. 8, 1943
Rushville, <i>Midwest Ranch and Farm</i> : Suspended	- - -	Oct. 29, 1942
Scottsbluff Farm Journal: Suspended	- - - - -	Oct. 20, 1942
Shubert Citizen: Suspended	- - - - -	Sept. 10, 1942
Snyder Banner: Suspended	- - - - -	Nov. 5, 1942
Sutton Register: Suspended	- - - - -	Dec. 28, 1942
Talmadge Tribune: Suspended	- - - - -	Oct. 29, 1942
Tekamah, <i>Burt County Herald</i> : Suspended	- - -	Aug. 20, 1942
Valentine, <i>Monitor</i> changed name October 22, 1942, to <i>Cow Country Courier</i> . Suspended publication	- - -	Sept. 2, 1943
Wood River Sunbeam: Suspended	- - - - -	Nov. 19, 1942
Wolbach Messenger: Suspended	- - - - -	June 10, 1943
Wayne News: Suspended. Sold to <i>Wayne Herald</i>	- - -	Mar. 31, 1943

### Newspaper Gifts

**Edward A. Becker**, Lincoln: One small section of the *Ulster County Gazette* dated New York, January 4, 1800; also a copy of the *New York Herald*, April 15, 1865.

## Newspapers in Basement Library

SAMUEL MCCOY

September 13, 1943

In the year from September 1, 1942, to August 31, 1943, we bound 596 books of newspapers. Of this number Mr. Wixson and Mr. Gies bound 68 during the period from November 6 to December 9. No newspapers were bound between August 19 and November 6, 1942. During that time I was doing the research and miscellaneous work formerly handled by Mr. H. S. Robinson. I returned to the bindery December 21, and from that date to September 1, 1943, 528 books of newspapers were bound. Part of this time (about two weeks) five persons were in the bindery. Also, about 60 books for the office were bound or repaired.

Since January 18, 1943, I have also looked after the Newspaper Library, containing about 25,000 volumes. From January 18 until September 1 approximately four hundred persons have used about 1,200 books. Information on a great variety of subjects was sought. Proof of publication of legal notices in the settlement of estates and in the perfecting of land titles was obtained in a number of cases. A large number of patrons sought facts needed in securing birth certificates. Many searched for details of family history essential to complete the family tree.

Correspondents of the *London Times* and of some New York newspapers were among those using the Newspaper Library to study conditions in Nebraska in former times, especially the years after the first World War. Most of these research workers were looking not only for facts about economic conditions, but for an insight into the mental and spiritual attitude of the people of Nebraska during the war period and the years immediately following.

A number of writers, looking for early Nebraska data to be used in projected books and magazine articles, searched many volumes of our newspapers.

These are only a few of the varied lines of research carried on here, and there is no doubt that a great deal of valuable information was secured that could be obtained only in our Newspaper Library.

## WPA Statewide War Program Project

RUTH S. WATSON

On January 12, 1943, as part of the nationwide discontinuance of the Work Projects Administration, fifteen workers were mustered out at a farewell gathering in the office of the Superintendent of the State Historical Society. These were the last of a shifting total of hundreds of workers in varied fields who had been assigned to the Society by the federal government over a period of nine years. Their assistance had been granted to help arrange, bind, classify, index and catalog various items that had accumulated over a sixty-year period, and which the Society had been unable to handle for want of sufficient employees. The combined efforts of these workers made available to the public a vast mass of material previously inaccessible. They also helped many inquirers in Nebraska and other states to secure much needed information on various phases of Nebraska history.

The small group employed during the last six months of federal cooperation was a unit of a statewide project engaged in numerous phases of work connected with World War II. Our unit was engaged in collecting and indexing posters of that war. Books and pamphlets on the war itself and all its related activities were collected, bound if necessary, and cataloged. Inquiries by mail were answered, and visitors at the Society's rooms were assisted in their search for information.

Newspapers were clipped for all war activities, the clippings sorted by topics and mounted. Special attention was directed to securing and clipping all newspaper references to any Nebraskans in the service. These clippings were then mounted alphabetically on 8 x 10 cards. Each Nebraskan in the service has a card or cards on which all such clippings are mounted. At the time the project was discontinued cards had been prepared for over 12,000 individuals. The assembling of clippings is being continued by the staff of the Nebraska State Historical Society.

As the number of workers employed in the last months was small, the activities which could be pursued were limited. Nevertheless, much material was assembled and processed in the lines undertaken.