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Article Summary: This article provides the minutes of the 1944 Annual Meeting plus reports on newspaper and photography collections, the library, and the museum

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The Annual Meeting

GENERAL SUMMARY

The Annual Meeting of Nebraska State Historical Society in conjunction with the Native Sons and Daughters of Nebraska was held in Unicameral Hall at the State Capitol and in the Cornhusker Hotel, Saturday, September 30. The chief responsibility for arranging the program was assumed by the Acting Superintendent, J. L. Sellers, under the direction of the President, J. E. Lawrence. The cooperation of the staff and the Executive Board helped greatly in arranging and carrying out the details of the meeting.

The literary program of the morning was presided over by President Lawrence, due to the transportation difficulties of Mr. A. B. Wood who arrived during the reading of the first paper. The program consisted of two able papers. The first was "Development of Rural Electrification" by C. A. Sorensen. The second, which appears in this magazine, was "Conservation of Nebraska's Agricultural Resources" by Abner K. Chestem.

The luncheon program prepared by the Nebraska Native Sons and Daughters was presided over by the President, Mrs. Carol White Mortensen. Mr. E. C. Boehmer led the group in spirited singing. Speeches were given on the general theme of "Post War Problems" by Lowell S. Devoe, Mrs. O. W. Hahn and Lt. Margaret Servine.

The afternoon program was presided over by Lloyd C. Thomas, of Station KGFV (Kearney). Music was rendered by the Lincoln Women's Chorus. The chairman introduced the topic for discussion, "Can the Citizen Discover the Truth by Reading the Public Press". This was ably expounded by Raymond C. McConnell, Jr., of the *State Journal*, Arthur C. Gardner, of the *Crete News*, Guy Ludi, of the *Wahoo Democrat*, and A. B. Wood of the *Gering Courier*. The meeting was spirited and profitable. The winner of the \$100 prize for the best story on a pioneer Nebraskan was announced. Mrs. Delores Gunnerson

of Aurora won the award with her entry, "Buckskin Charley", the life story of Charles White, early settler and picturesque character of Hamilton County. At the business meeting of the Native Sons and Daughters a memorial to Dr. A. E. Sheldon was read by Mrs. Amy Bruner Almy. In the election of officers C. A. Sorensen was named president, Hazel H. Abel, vice-president, Horace Davis, 2nd vice-president, Ora A. Clement, secretary, and Max Meyer, treasurer.

The annual dinner at the Hotel Cornhusker was presided over by President J. E. Lawrence, Chancellor Benjamin F. Schwartz offered the invocation and music was supplied by Wayne Van Horne. The main feature of the program was the address "The Social Homesteader" by Professor E. E. Dale. The audience will long remember Mr. Dale's stories and especially his *ad lib.* instruction on how to read a family album.

The report of the annual meeting would be incomplete without the announcement of the chief business transactions of the board of the society. At the morning business meeting the members of the Board whose term expired, J. E. Lawrence, A. J. Weaver, and A. B. Wood were re-elected. To fill the unexpired term of the late Henry M. Eaton, Gould Dietz of Omaha was elected. An amendment which authorizes the enlargement of the Executive Board by three additional elected members was introduced and approved.

President Lawrence discussed the condition and the work of the Society. He presented the unusual opportunity and responsibility that lie immediately ahead with the prospect of a new building. He directed attention to the inspiration of an approaching centennial, the universal interest in history stimulated by the present war and unusual national and world problems.

Perhaps of greatest interest and importance to the Society was the announcement of a selection by the Executive Board of a new superintendent and secretary. The Board voted to appoint Lt. James C. Olson of the Army Air Corps to take over the responsibilities of the superintendency as soon as he is released from the service. Dr. Olson received his doctorate in history at the University of Nebraska and is known throughout the state as the author of "J. Sterling Morton". Perhaps no other person

is so thoroughly grounded in the territorial and early statehood history of Nebraska as is Dr. Olson.

In the meantime the Board arranged for Professor J. L. Sellers of the University of Nebraska to carry on the work as Acting Superintendent and Editor.

MINUTES OF BUSINESS MEETING

September 30, 1944

The meeting was called to order by President Lawrence. The order of business printed on the program was followed. Brief summaries of the several lines of endeavor were given by the Acting Secretary and Director A. T. Hill. Since these reports are printed in full in this issue of *Nebraska History* there is no attempt to summarize them here.

President Lawrence announced the action of the Executive Board in selecting Lieutenant James C. Olson for Superintendent of the Society and J. L. Sellers as Acting Superintendent until Lieutenant Olson is released from the service. The President also announced the intention of transferring the cash funds of the Society to the State Treasurer. He discussed the present outlook for the Society and the necessity of making plans for the territorial centennial for Nebraska which is but ten years ahead.

The President announced the estimates for the biennial legislative requests for 1945-47. He indicated the urgent need because of advanced costs had compelled the officers to advance their requests to \$47,280 compared to current appropriation of \$38,000.

Under the item of new business the Acting Secretary submitted an amendment to Art. IV of the Constitution and moved its adoption. The amendment changes the thirteen members of the Board to sixteen and the nine elective members to twelve and the three to be elected annually to four.

The first paragraph as proposed would read:

The government of the Society and the custody of its property shall be vested in a board of sixteen members, the governor, the chief justice of the supreme court,

the president of the state press association, the chancellor of the state university, and twelve members who shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Society. . . . At each annual meeting (after the adoption of this amendment) four shall be elected for the full term of three years. Only annual or life members shall be chosen for directors.

After the article shall become effective the Board will fill these positions temporarily by adding three members who shall serve until the Society shall fill the positions at regular elections.

C. A. Sorensen seconded the resolution and it was adopted by unanimous vote.

The election of four Directors was necessary to fill vacancies on the Board. The terms of J. E. Lawrence, A. J. Weaver and A. J. Wood expired, and the vacancy due to the death of H. M. Eaton made up the four places.

A. T. Hill nominated the three members whose terms expired. The President called for other nominations, but none were offered. Gilmore of York seconded by Nuquist moved to instruct the Secretary to cast the unanimous vote of the Society for the three Directors. The resolution carried without dissent and it was so ordered.

For the unexpired term the Acting Secretary nominated Mr. Gould Dietz of Omaha. He was unanimously elected.

This completed the business and the Society proceeded with its literary program of the morning.

Respectfully submitted,

J. L. SELLERS
Acting Secretary

NEWSPAPER AND PHOTOGRAPH DEPARTMENT

Newspapers

The newspaper library handled the customary number of calls during the past year. Considerable use was made of the files by various state departments in checking publication of legal notices throughout the state. Officials of the United War Fund in Nebraska made rather extensive use of current papers in compiling information on contributions to the fund in the different counties of the state. Individuals hunting birth notices and other personal items, and students seeking information on a variety of subjects make up the bulk of those using the newspaper library from year to year.

One example of special use of the newspaper collection might be mentioned here. Two representatives from the Omaha office of the U. S. Army Engineer Corps spent a month in the basement newspaper library compiling information on rainfall and flood conditions over a period of about fifty years. The purpose of this survey was to collect definite data upon which to base a long term program of flood control for the Missouri River and its tributaries. In the course of the study, over 1200 bound volumes of newspapers were consulted.

To the Society's collections during the year came a large number of bound volumes and single issues of newspapers and miscellaneous publications, contributed by seven separate donors. The outstanding gift was the complete bound files of the *Omaha Bee* and *Bee-News*, 1871 - 1937, presented by the Municipal University of Omaha. An interesting item given by Mr. Frank Hammond of Fremont was a copy of the first issue of the first newspaper in Fremont, the *Tribune*, July 24, 1868. Other donations came from R. E. Dale, Lincoln, the Nebraska School for the Deaf at Omaha, the Nebraska Union Farmer, C. C. Reed and E. T. Temple, Shelton, Mrs. Belle C. Rugg, Long Beach, California, and Miss Ruth Sheldon, Washington, D. C.

A total of 375 newspapers are received regularly through exchange as follows:

Nebraska Weeklies, Semi-Weeklies and Monthlies	337
Nebraska Dailies	24
Out of State publications	14

During the year 447 volumes of newspapers and other publications were bound in the Society's bindery.

A number of Nebraska papers suspended publication in 1943-44 while others were consolidated. A list of these was compiled as far as noted, together with the date of suspension or change.

<i>Adams Weekly Globe</i>	October 28, 1943
<i>Bradshaw Monitor</i>	August 26, 1943
<i>Brock Bulletin</i>	March 23, 1944
<i>Bruning Banner</i>	August 24, 1944
<i>Campbell Citizen</i>	February 24, 1944
<i>Chadron Chronicle and Chadron Journal</i> consolidated	
to form the <i>Chadron Record</i>	December 2, 1943
<i>Chambers Sun</i>	December 30, 1943
<i>Cody Round-Up</i>	October 25, 1943
<i>Haigler News</i>	March 4, 1944
<i>Harrington Herald</i>	January 27, 1944
<i>Hebron Register and Hebron Journal</i> , consolidated	
to form <i>Hebron Journal-Register</i>	February 2, 1944
<i>Lewellen Times</i>	October 21, 1943
<i>Long Pine Journal</i>	August 31, 1943
<i>Omaha Farm Credit News</i>	February — 1944
<i>Pawnee Chief</i> , purchased by <i>Pawnee Republican</i>	July 26, 1944
<i>Pilger Stanton County News</i> consolidated with	
<i>Stanton Register</i>	September 30, 1943
<i>Red Cloud Weekly Advertiser</i>	June 25, 1943

Photographs

The photograph department received as gifts approximately 1,000 negatives and photographs. The largest gift, about 900 negatives, was received through John Carnahan of the State Child Welfare Department. The work of a federal employment project in 1933-36, these negatives cover construction work, roads, dams, public buildings and the like. Other gifts of photographs came from Edwin B. Dean, Lincoln, M. I. McCreight, DuBois, Pennsylvania, Merrill J. Mattes, Scottsbluff, Leslie D. Ricker, White Cloud, Michigan, Mrs. Bell C. Rugg, Long Beach,

California, Ruth Sheldon, Washington, D. C., Elmo Scott Watson, Chicago, and from Boys Town.

The Society's collection of photographs and negatives now numbers approximately 47,300. During the year 191 photographs and 85 lantern slides were loaned for publication and exhibition purposes.

LIBRARY REPORT

During the past year the Society received as gifts 184 books and bound volumes of magazines, 145 pamphlets, 16 typed manuscripts, about 100 letters, 60 different war posters and an indeterminate number of booklets, leaflets, programs and other miscellaneous material. These gifts, many of which constitute valuable additions to our library, came from 44 separate donors.

Thirty-eight volumes were purchased for the library at a cost of \$94.44. These were principally on the West and Plains Region. Some, as for example, the two volume set, Gold Rush, The Journals, Drawings and Other Papers of J. Goldborough Bruff, were books just published. Many of the books bought, however, had been published previously and are now out of print, so were obtained from dealers as they had not been secured at the time of publication.

Copies of Nebraska Session Laws, Senate Journals, Supreme Court Reports, and Department Reports were received and cataloged. If unbound, file copies were bound.

Our own bindery repaired or rebound 220 books and bound 281 pamphlets, and volumes of periodicals.

In the last year, 109 periodicals—quarterlies, monthlies, and weeklies—were obtained through exchange, donations and paid subscriptions. Through exchange the library received publications from 36 state historical societies or departments of history. Pamphlets and unbound books received numbered 175. There were 587 books, pamphlets and bound volumes of periodicals cataloged, making a total of 6,490 cataloged books in the Society's library at the State Capitol.

Approximately 44,500 index cards on Nebraska newspapers from 1854 to 1870 had been made in previous years. In the last

year, these cards were all alphabetized and organized in a general subject file making this material available for public use.

Over 200 requests for information by mail and over 900 made by telephone and visitors in the library were answered. These covered a wide scope of subjects. Many could be answered with little search, but others required reference to various sources.

Accessions to the manuscript collection numbered approximately 250 items, about half of which consisted of letters. Biographical sketches, family histories and short research papers made up the balance. Among the more interesting and valuable items might be mentioned the records of the Pawnee Mission Church organized at Bellevue in 1836 under the leadership of Samuel Allis and John Dunbar, Presbyterian missionaries to the Pawnee. Another interesting accession is a collection of material on woman suffrage, notable for letters signed by such feminist leaders as Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Emmeline Pankhurst and others.

MUSEUM REPORT

A. T. Hill, Director

Donations and Attendance

The close of another war year finds the Historical Society Museum carrying on its important work of collecting and preserving historical relics and maintaining exhibits that furnish educational recreation to the public. Much work has been done in the rearrangement of many existing exhibits and in the addition of new ones. Limitation of space and equipment is a serious problem but an effort is made to place on display the best and most interesting of the new articles constantly coming in.

In the past year donations totaling 1750 items were received from 107 separate donors.

The museum attendance, although somewhat below last year, was very satisfactory and a great deal of interest was shown. The chief reason for the decline in attendance was the conversion of the Lincoln Air Base from a Mechanics' Training School to a classification and reassignment center for the 2nd Army Air Force. Service men coming to Lincoln now, stay only about two

weeks and as a result many of them find no opportunity to visit the places of interest in the city.

Attendance figures for the year September, 1943 - September, 1944.

Total number of visitors (estimated)	81,318
Visitors signing museum register	27,533
Registrants from states other than Nebraska	8,510
Registrants from foreign countries	98

States having the largest number of registrants

Kansas	816
Iowa	479
Illinois	726
California	526
Missouri	539
New York	461

Field Work

In 1943-44 Museum Director A. T. Hill made a number of field trips, including visits to some of the leading museums of the country. Numerous trips covering hundreds of miles were also made to gather up articles donated to the museum and to photograph historic sites. On all these occasions, except one to Nebraska City to check Historical Society museum material at Arbor Lodge, Director Hill drove his own car, and turned in no expense account for mileage or hotel bills.

The visits to leading historical and archeological museums is a phase of field work of particular importance and value. Museums at Chicago, Detroit and Los Angeles were visited to gather information as to new and different methods of displaying exhibits, new techniques in preparing specimens, and the latest types of museum cases and other equipment. All such information and ideas can be put to use when the new Historical Building becomes a reality and the Museum at last has adequate space and facilities. The Director will then be able to plan effective exhibits of archeological and historical interest, arranged and displayed attractively and according to the best modern methods.

Archeological Division

A separate membership and exchange list is maintained in the archeological division. Following is the membership and financial report.

From September 1943 - September 1944:

Members	402
Exchanges	16
Membership dues received	\$ 13.01
Sale of archeological publications	\$ 11.50
Archeological division to date has collected and turned into miscellaneous cash fund....	
	\$483.86

No work in archeological excavations was carried on the past year and none will be until after the war. Then, manpower for excavating sites will again be available, and also the trained supervisory personnel needed to help carry on the work in an effective and scientific manner.

Some laboratory work was done in the course of the year in identification and classification of archeological specimens from the store of material collected in former expeditions.

It might be well to add here a summary of archeological holdings and record of work done over a period of years.

Archeological sites explored	388
Maps made of sites	576
Archeological photographs cataloged	6,750
Total archeological and museum items cataloged..	702,200