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## Article Title: The Nebraska State Historical Society in 1972

Full Citation: Marvin F Kivett, "The Nebraska State Historical Society in 1972," *Nebraska History* 53 (1972): 491-520

URL of article: <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/full-text/NH1972NSHS.pdf>

Date: 4/13/2015

Article Summary: The Society carried out a comprehensive survey of Nebraska sites of historical, archeological, and architectural merit in 1971-1972.

### Cataloging Information:

Names: Robert W Furnas, James C Olson, William E Lass, Merrill J Mattes

NSHS sites: George W Norris Home; Neligh Mills, Chimney Rock, Fort Robinson

Keywords: National Register of Historic Places, historic markers, Lincoln Junior League, mobile museums

Photographs / Images: A R Owens and James A Rawley; historical marker recalling the death of White Buffalo Girl on the Ponca Trail of Tears; mobile museum; spring meeting, June 10, 1972 (5 views); annual workshop for historical organizations; presentation of the Sellers Award to Thomas R Walsh by M S Hevelone; Nebraska American Revolution Bicentennial Commission meeting; Kennard House; Syford House; Fort Robinson Maintenance Building (2 views); Fort Robinson Museum; 1887 duplex adobe at Fort Robinson; reconstructed Fort Robinson guardhouse and adjutant's office; Neligh Mills; Lincoln Junior League volunteers providing tours; portable exhibits for groups; archeological investigation of an early fur trading post in Fontentelle Forest; Indian storage pits located by the Highway Archeological Salvage Program; State Archivist James Potter; Archives Aide James Kelley; county courthouse records in need of preservation

## THE NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY IN 1972

By MARVIN F. KIVETT, *Director*

Presented at the Annual Meeting in Lincoln, October 7, 1972

Ninety-four years ago on September 25, 1878, twenty-four Nebraskans responded to a letter from former governor Robert W. Furnas to assemble in Lincoln "to effect the organization of a 'state Historical society'." Work to organize continued the next evening when a constitution and bylaws were adopted and officers elected. Among other business by 1879 was that of the approval of an expenditure of an amount not to exceed sixteen dollars to make a bookcase and twenty dollars were appropriated to defray incidental expenses of the secretary's office for the year. Robert W. Furnas, Nemaha County, was elected president; Dr. George L. Miller, Douglas County, became the first vice president; and Professor Samuel Aughey served as secretary. Listed as objectives of the constitution were:

1. The general object of this society shall be to encourage historical research and enquiry, spread historical information, especially within the state of Nebraska, and to embrace alike aboriginal and modern history.
2. The particular objects of this society shall be: First, The establishment of a library of books and publications appropriate to such an institution, with convenient works of reference, and also a cabinet of antiquities, relics, etc.: Second, The collection into a safe and permanent depository, of manuscripts, documents, papers, and tracts

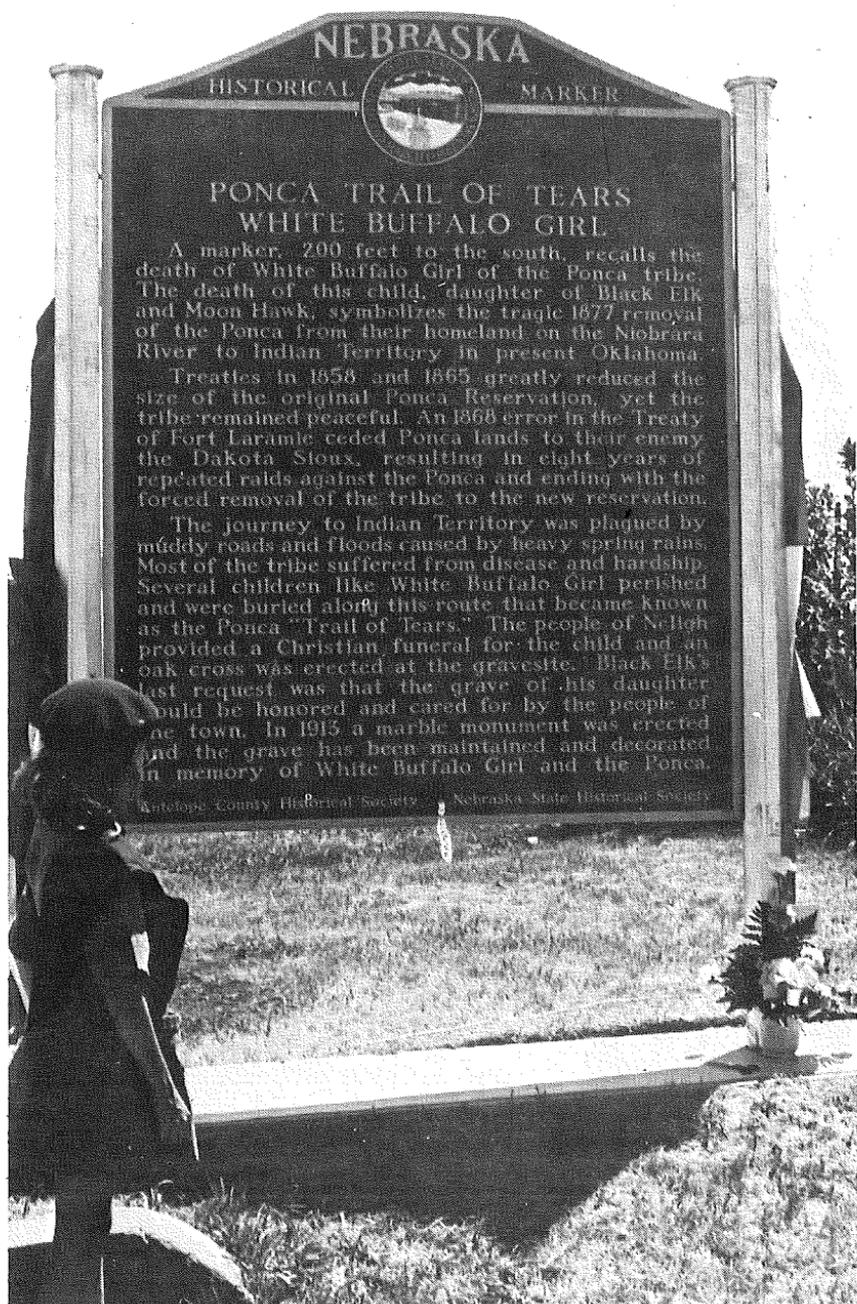


*Outgoing President A. R. Owens to the right with the newly elected President James A. Rawley.*

possessing historical value and worthy of preservation; Third, to encourage investigation of aboriginal remains, and more particularly to provide for the complete and scientific exploration and survey of such aboriginal monuments as exist within the limits of this state.

Through the years and particularly this year our "cabinet" has been filled, but we have held to the objectives of the Society as drafted in 1878. Fortunately we have been aided in this work by an increasing number of local and county historical organizations. This, combined with a gradual awareness by all citizens of the need to preserve our history, has made our task much easier and promises much for the future. Particularly encouraging is the recognition of history on the national level as one of our important resources. This has resulted in the passage of legislation to aid in the interpretation and preservation of the elements that make up this history. Nebraskans have joined in this effort as evidenced by the number of county histories produced, new museums founded, and buildings which have escaped the bulldozers. It is evident, however, that this effort is not yet sufficient when nationally recognized structures and sites continue to be destroyed in the name of "progress."

A major effort during the year has been directed toward a comprehensive survey and evaluation of sites of historical, archeological, and architectural merit in Nebraska as defined by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. There has been an increased interest in this program and emphasis has been given to the enrollment of sites or structures on the National Register of Historic Places. During the past year 31 nominations were made with 21 acted on and approved for the Register. A total of 63 National Register sites has now been approved for Nebraska. Many of the local or county organizations have given new emphasis in their programs to the preservation and restoration of specific structures and sites. This activity ranges geographically from the Pawnee City Historical Society and Table Rock Historical Society of southeastern Nebraska to that carried on in the west by the Cheyenne County Society and the North Platte Valley Association in Scotts Bluff County. An increasing number have won limited tax support. Our most recent count indicates approximately 130 non-profit historical organizations in the state. These have



*Markers were erected throughout the state.*

been of great service to your State Society and we hope that we have been of service to them. On October 6 we held our Third Annual Workshop for County and Local Historical Organizations, which has as its goal the bringing together of people who have similar interests and problems. We hope that by this mutual exchange of information that we will all achieve our common goal of increased emphasis on our history.

The Society's *Historical News Letter* has been increasingly devoted to an exchange of activities by county and local organizations. *Nebraska History*, now in its 53rd year, has expanded. Last year Volume 52 numbered a total of 492 pages as compared to 315 pages in 1962. We recognize that the number of pages is not necessarily a measurement of worth. We have, however, sought to bring a variety of studies on our history to the membership. The "Out of Old Nebraska" column appears regularly each week in a large segment of the Nebraska press.

Last April, with the cooperation of the University of Nebraska Press and the distinguished author Dr. James C. Olson, the Society Foundation was pleased to republish the outstand-

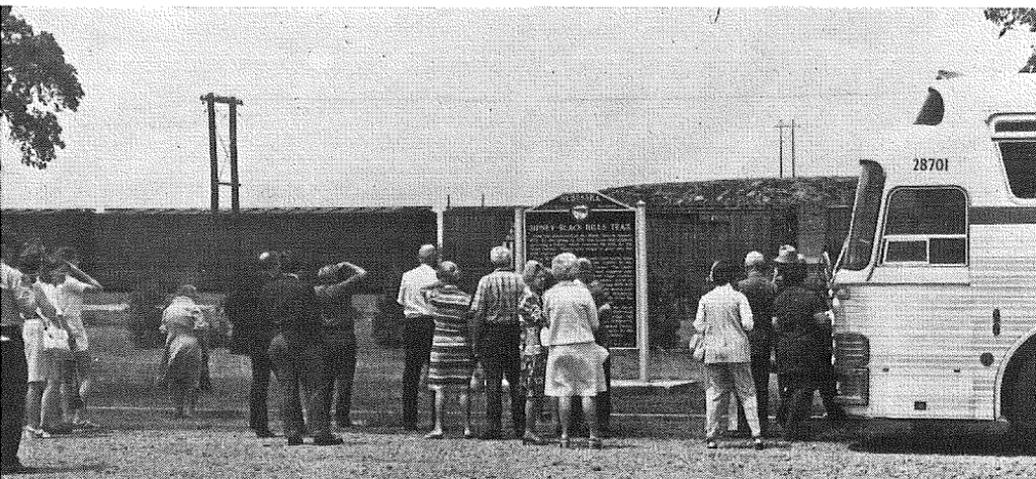


*The Mobile Museum program attracts thousands of visitors.*



**SPRING MEETING  
JUNE 10, 1972**

*Many of you attended the annual Spring sessions hosted by the Cheyenne County Society in Sidney. We heard lectures, viewed historic sites, dedicated markers, and viewed the scenery in the Panhandle of Nebraska.*





ing study, *J. Sterling Morton, Pioneer Statesman, Founder of Arbor Day*, originally issued in 1942 and long out of print. This was particularly appropriate with the 1972 centennial of Arbor Day and the close association of J. Sterling Morton and Dr. Olson with the Society. Volume XXVI of the *Publications* series, titled "From the Missouri to the Great Salt Lake, An Account of Overland Freighting," is in the final stages of printing and will be available within the next few months. This will represent a most comprehensive study of the important freighting business west from Missouri River towns in Kansas and Nebraska. The author, Professor William E. Lass of Mankato State College, Minnesota, carried out the study under a Woods Charitable Fund grant administered by the Society. This is the second of the studies to be published, with the first being the nationally acclaimed "The Great Platte River Road" by Merrill J. Mattes. It should be noted that funds for the publication of these studies as well as much of the educational material available to schools come from support provided by the Society Foundation without direct tax support.

The annual Spring Meeting held on June 10 at Sidney and sponsored by the Cheyenne County Historical Society was most successful, largely due to the efficient organizational work on the local level. A major contribution from such regional meetings is the opportunity provided for a review of the local history. Certainly there are many areas of Nebraska that are deserving of further interpretation and recognition.

The historic markers program continues to be an important aid in our effort to interpret our history to the tourist as well as the local traveler. Without the outstanding cooperation of the Department of Roads as well as many local historical organizations this program would not be possible. There are presently some 140 markers erected on highways from the west to the east. The Department of Roads has made a special effort to have such markers in the I-80 rest areas. In recent years provisions have been made for these in their original construction plans, particularly in the rest stops from Ogallala west. A related cooperative program has been the placement of a mobile museum in the I-80 rest area near Grand Island and a second near Maxwell. A third has operated near Chimney Rock with the cooperation of the City of Bayard. This last year these mobile units were visited by 40,359 persons who received a



*The annual workshop for historical organizations was well attended.*



*Foundation President M. S. Hevelone presents the James L. Sellers Memorial Award to recipient Thomas R. Walsh at the annual meeting in Lincoln.*

brief presentation of our history with special exhibits oriented to the immediate area.

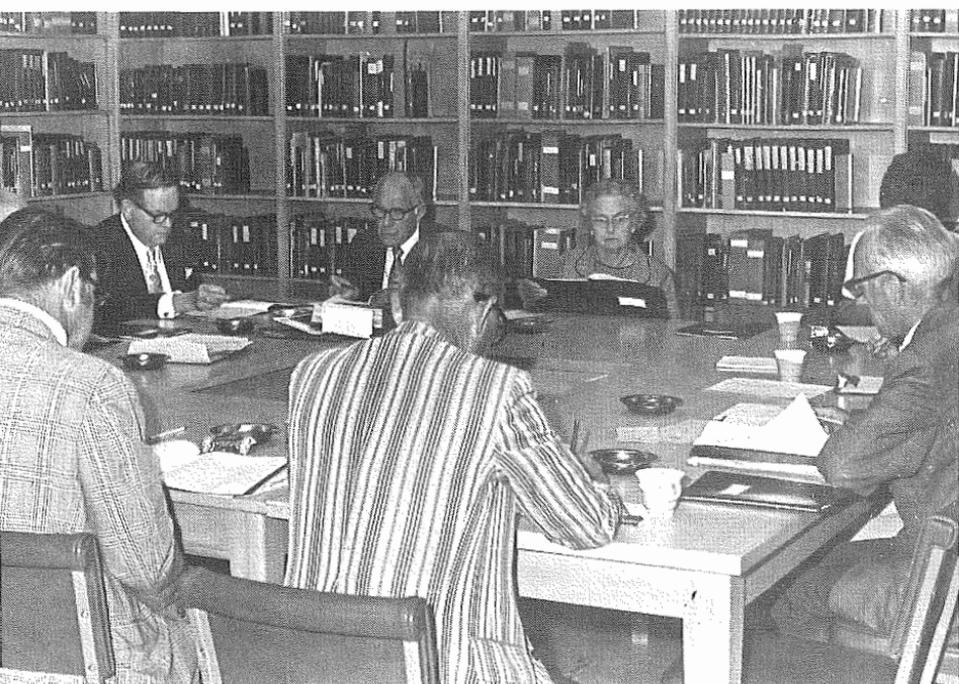
During the year various staff members attended approximately 250 meetings in the state, all dealing with some phase of historical interest. Staff members also attended national professional meetings ranging from the Plains Archeological Conference held in Canada to historic preservation meetings in Washington. Manuscripts have been completed by Gayle Carlson, Highway Salvage Archeologist, on highway salvage work throughout the state and by Richard Jensen, Curator of Anthropology, on survey and excavation work carried out in Cheyenne and adjacent counties last year. It is expected that these studies will be published in the *Publications in Anthropology* series during the coming year.

The Director continued to serve on a number of commissions and advisory boards ranging from the Hall of Fame Commission to the Nebraska American Revolution Bicentennial Commission. Of special interest this last year was service as a member of the Arbor Day Centennial Commission.

Your Society operates with four major administrative programs including the State Archives, Administration, Library, and Museum. The museum is further divided with an administrative head for the Lincoln and headquarters unit, one for branch museums operation, and one for research in anthropology. Only a few highlights from each of these operations will be presented.

### LINCOLN MUSEUM OPERATIONS

The headquarters of the museum operations is supervised by Wendell Frantz, who reports 72,595 visitors this past year. This figure includes 23,249 served by the education department. Guided tours were given to 6,365 people in 189 groups. Volunteers from the Lincoln Junior League gave tours and puppet shows to 3,118 people. Other educational activities included the school visitation by a Lincoln Junior League volunteer who visited local schools on request displaying a collection of items from the museum's historical and ethnographic collections and telling about Nebraska's history. The Education Section responded to 2,546 mail requests for information. One hundred and thirty-seven of these teachers'



*The Society assisted in setting up the Nebraska American Revolution Bicentennial Commission.*

packets of educational material were sent out and 1,187 requests for information were answered with free literature. A leaflet on Arbor Day was added as No. 15 of the Educational Series.

The art department staff made 64 exhibits, of which 34 were used in the Lincoln museum, eight were installed at the Fort Robinson Museum, and three went into the Mobile Museums. One exhibit was made for loan to Education Unit No. 7 at Columbus. This was a display on Indian homes, made to fit in a suitcase-sized portable display case which will be loaned to area teachers. Eleven loan panels were made. These were used at the Seward Fourth of July Celebration, the Polk County Centennial Celebration, and now are available to other Nebraska groups for display. A "Places to See Nebraska History" display was used at the Arbor Day Centennial observance at Nebraska City. This display is now in use by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development Tourism Division. Seven panels containing historic Indian and pioneer artifacts were installed in the Governor's Mansion.

Artifacts catalogued into the history collections totalled

3,520. These were given by 130 donors, 89 new and 41 who had donated items previously. Loans of artifact materials were made 33 times involving 370 specific items. The Society's collection of archeological materials from Barn Butte, 25GD1, was loaned for graduate student research purposes. The staff photographer made 1,160 negatives, 2,747 prints, 98 slides, and 39 4 x 5 color transparencies. He also developed 118 film packets and rolls taken by other staff members.

### BRANCH MUSEUMS

During the 1971-1972 year the Society created a new division known as Branch Museums under the immediate supervision of Carl Jones, Curator.

This division includes all museum-type activity outside of the City of Lincoln, which includes the branch at Fort Robinson established in 1956, the George W. Norris home at McCook which started in 1969, and the Neligh Mills at Neligh which was purchased in 1970 and was opened to the public on a limited basis during the present year. The Branch Museums Division is also in charge of three exhibit trailers. Other duties have been the consideration of other sites for development and the planning and development of sites the Society already owns, such as Chimney Rock and the Mud Springs station on the old Oregon Trail between Fort Sidney and the Courthouse and Jail House Rock area. Because of the nature of the operations, this report has been broken into several parts. This part deals with operations of the coordinator, Curator of Branch Museums in Lincoln, and a section for each of the branches currently in operation, starting with the oldest one, Fort Robinson Museum.

During the past year the curator of branch museums has travelled some 17,000 miles supervising the branch operations. Since December, 1971, this division has handled 272 letters and 90 research inquiries.

Following the close of the 1971 tourist season, Steven Bell, our Curator at the George W. Norris Home, resigned to continue his education, and he was replaced by Daryl Bonow. The Norris house operated its normal season of 60 hours a week during the summer months, and a weekend schedule of 2:00-6:00 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays during September, October, April, and



*Society historic properties receive constant maintenance (Kennard House, above, and Syford House, below. Both are located in Lincoln).*



May. During this period some new signs were placed on nearby highways to encourage people to stop.

On June 30 we had the sad occasion of the death of Mrs. Norris, the widow of the Senator. She had lived a full life of 98 years. It was her devotion to Senator Norris and the interest of her daughters that made it possible for the Nebraska State Historical Society to receive the Norris home. She was very helpful in informing the Society about the many things that went on in this historic home.

Restoration has continued at the Neligh Mills, and we have added two high school students to the staff who have begun the long and arduous task of cleaning the mill building and equipment and making the area ready for visitors. The restoration has included work on the small frame office as well as the brick mill structure. It is expected that this development will be ready for general visitation in 1973.

The Historical Society has owned the site of Chimney Rock since 1941 as a result of a gift from Roszel and Frank Durnal. Additional land was given in 1956 by Norman and Donna Brown for a total area of approximately 83 acres. During the present year we have cooperated with the National Park Service and the City of Bayard in maintaining the site. Over the years visitors to the site have worn a trail from the parking area to Chimney Rock, and plans are now underway to provide additional signs and markings at the parking area and on the trail. The Chimney Rock Trailer, located in the nearby Bayard City Park on Nebraska Highway 92, had a total of 13,684 visitors.

In 1939 the Scherer family gave the Nebraska State Historical Society a small plot of ground including the major building remains of the Mud Springs Pony Express and Overland Stage Station. Since that time, with the exception of a marker and the work done by the Mud Springs Women's Club, we have accomplished very little with development until June, 1972, when the tour from the Spring Meeting at Sidney visited the site and stimulated new interest. The Society is now developing plans to provide increased emphasis for this important historic site.

Under the immediate supervision of Curator Vance Nelson, your Society has continued with the development of buildings



*Many buildings at Fort Robinson have had inadequate maintenance while under the control of federal and state departments. Major restoration efforts are required, as with the Maintenance Building pictured here.*

and exhibits at Fort Robinson. Work continued this year on the 1887 adobe duplex officers' quarters which will be furnished and opened to the public in 1973. The exterior and first floor of the Museum Building were painted, and six new exhibits were prepared for the museum. Eight faded drawings were traced and inked and returned to the exhibit buildings. A surrey and army ambulance were put on exhibit in the Wheelwright Shop. The size of the Library at the Fort has been greatly increased by adding duplicate copies of western history books from the Emil Kopac Collection. Attendance has been good, with 34,244 counted in the museum building and 13,342 visitors recorded in the other buildings operated by the Society.

The three mobile museum trailers were used again, two at Interstate 80 rest areas and one at Chimney Rock. Attendance for the period July, 1971, to June 30, 1972, was as follows: Grand Island west-bound 21,797; Maxwell-Brady east-bound 14,878; and Chimney Rock 13,684.

### ARCHEOLOGY

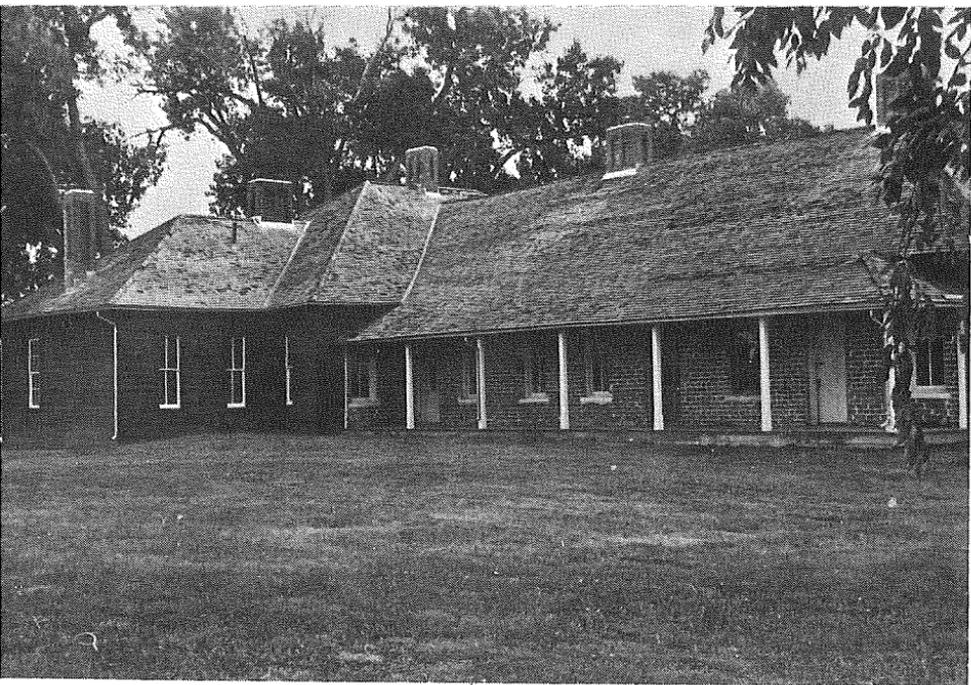
The Highway Archeological Salvage program, under the immediate supervision of Archeologist Gayle Carlson, is a cooperative project with the Department of Roads. It has as its goal the recording and salvaging of materials relating to Nebraska history.

Most of the 1972 field season was spent on routine surveys of proposed highway construction projects. Surveys were conducted throughout the state on 69 projects in 40 different counties. As a result of these survey trips 45 new archeological sites were discovered and a number of previously known sites were re-examined. The remains of the territorial town of DeSoto, Washington County, were investigated on one of these trips. Some testing of sites within the right-of-way of Interstate 80 in western Nebraska was also carried out.

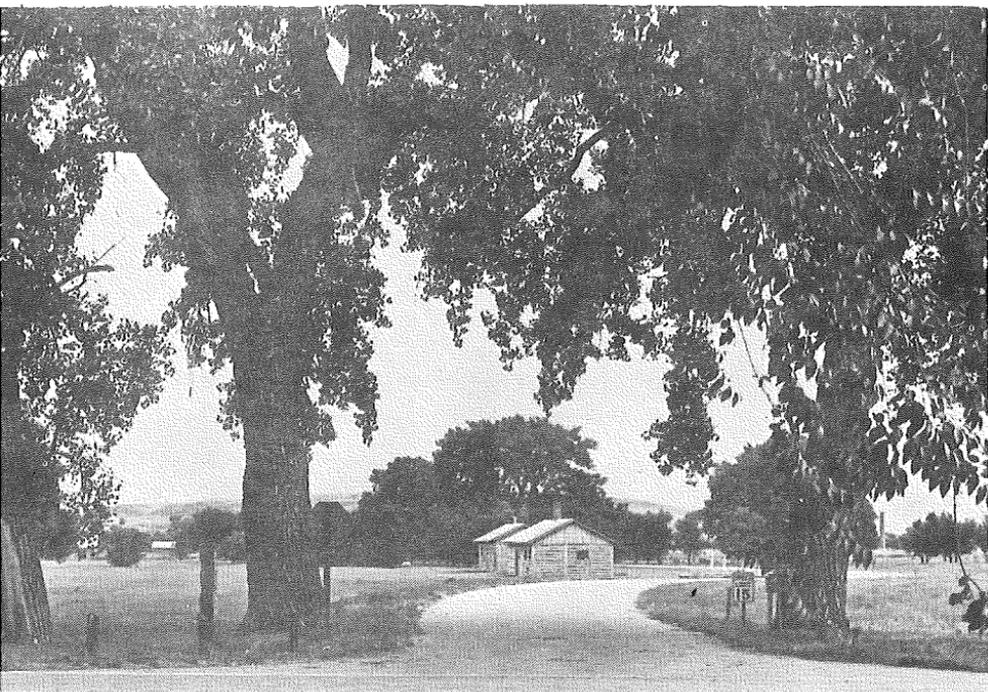
In April some excavation was required at the Gray Site, 25CX1, north of Schuyler in Colfax County. Four large trash-filled pits were excavated at this early Pawnee village site. This work concluded the highway salvage investigations at this site, most of which were conducted during the previous summer.



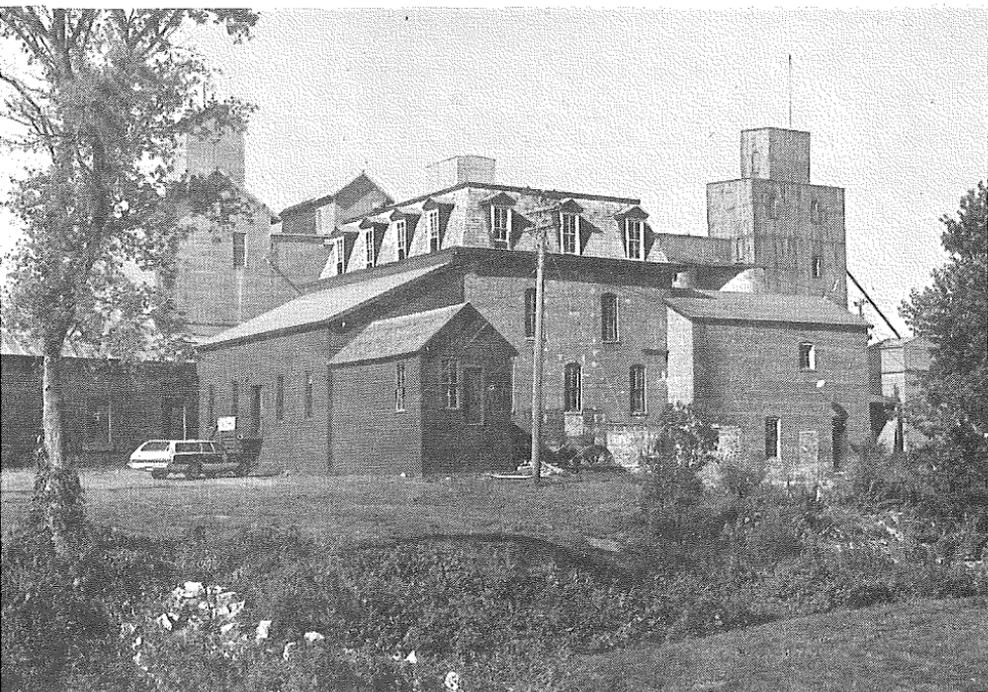
*Thousands of visitors tour the Society Fort Robinson Museum housed in the 1905 Post Headquarters.*



*Society restoration work on this 1887 duplex adobe at Fort Robinson is nearing completion.*



*The reconstructed 1874 Fort Robinson guardhouse and adjutant's office are closely associated with Chief Crazy Horse.*



*Restoration is nearing completion at the Neligh Mills.*

During August and September a few days were spent on salvage work at the Logan Creek Site, 25BT3, south of Oakland in Burt County. The widening of Highway 77 was affecting this early stratified site that was occupied between about 6,000 and 8,000 years ago. West of the highway evidence of the former occupations was uncovered at various levels to the depth of about 9 feet below the surface. Animal bone, charcoal, shell, stone, and the remains of hearths were uncovered during the construction work.

During July and August of 1972 the anthropology section, under the immediate supervision of Richard Jensen, carried out limited archeological investigations at an early historic site. It is located in Fontenelle Forest, a wilderness area and nature center just south of Omaha. The assistance and cooperation of the staff and directors of the forest contributed in no small way to the success of the project. The site was first brought to our attention by Mr. Ed Sterba, president of the Sarpy County Historical Society.

The major excavation at the site exposed the collapsed chimney and the foundation of a building estimated to have been 22 feet wide and at least 45 feet long. A wide variety of artifacts was found. The most abundant class of specimens consisted of personal and household items such as fragments of china, bottles, small kitchen utensils, furniture, hardware, buttons, and pipes. Another major class included items typical of the fur trade business. These consisted of glass trade beads, iron arrow points, costume jewelry, and bale seals. These specimens indicate that the site was probably occupied during the 1820's and 1830's.

The evidence presently available suggests that this site could have been the Missouri Fur Company trading post established about 1823. A year later it was purchased by Lucien Fontenelle in company with several other fur traders and by 1828 he and Andrew Dripps, another prominent trader, were co-owners of the post. From about 1831 until it was abandoned ten years later it was the site of the Indian Agency for the Upper Missouri under Major John Dougherty. Two of the many famous visitors to this outpost were Prince Maximilian and his artist, Karl Bodmer, in 1833. Bodmer's painting of the post is now part of the Northern Natural Gas Company Collection housed at Joslyn Art Museum.



*Lincoln Junior League volunteers provide guided educational tours.*

## STATE OF NEBRASKA ARCHIVES

During 1971-1972 the State Archives has continued under State Archivist James Potter to accession increasing amounts of official records and manuscript collections relating to all aspects of Nebraska's history. As the storage problem in county offices and state agencies intensifies, the State Archives will be called on more frequently to appraise and accession historically significant public records. Unfortunately, the lack of storage within our own facilities which has been evident for several years is now at the critical stage. In the very near future a suspension of most accessioning becomes a distinct possibility in both the Archives and Manuscript Divisions. Although increased emphasis has been given to microfilming by governmental subdivisions as well as within the State Archives, the requirements for permanent preservation of physical records will not decrease within the foreseeable future.

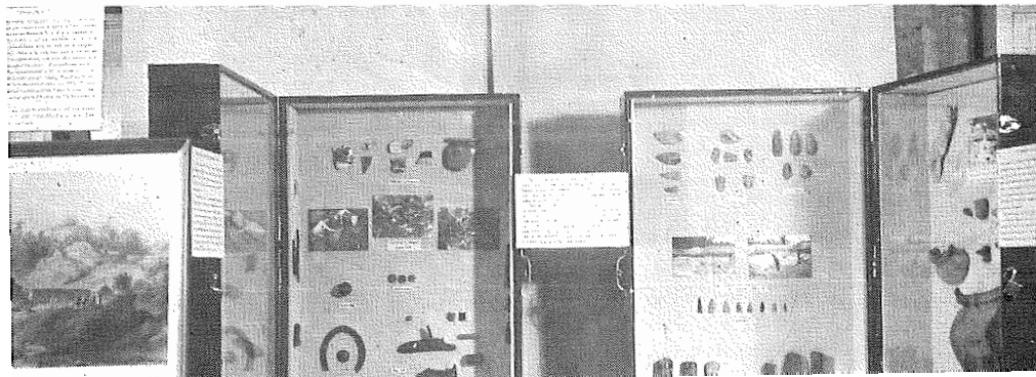
The Manuscript Division, under the supervision of Manuscript Curator Donald Snoddy, has processed several important collections during the year including the Roy M. Towl papers, 1898-1967; the Charles Wooster papers, 1861-1920; the Otto

Liebers papers, 1914-1969; records of the Milldale Ranch Co., 1882-present; and records of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, now known as the Organization of American Historians, 1908-present. Accessions of the Manuscript Division have included letters and broadsides of frontiersman W.F. "Doc" Carver, 1886-1927; Civil War letters of Colonel John B. Reid; records of the Lincoln Church Women United, 1920-1969; scrapbooks of Senator Hugh Butler relating to his senatorial career in the 1950's; and papers and research materials of the Rev. Michael Shine, former Society Board member, who compiled a considerable amount of data about the fur trade, Plains Indians, and general Nebraska history.

The survey of local historical and biographical sources begun in 1969 has continued, and the Manuscript Division has initiated a program of publicizing major areas of interest in order to alert potential donors. During the last year, we have been seeking letters, diaries, and photographs of Nebraskans who served during World War I. Notices in the Society News Letter and other publications led to the donation or loan for microfilming of several important collections in this area. Of interest were the papers of Dean Robertson of Lincoln, which provided a detailed and vivid account of his service as a member of the 6th Regiment, U.S. Marines in France, 1918-1919.

State Archivist James Potter and Assistant Archivist David Johnson have appraised and inventoried records in 18 state agencies and county courthouses during the year. In many cases historically important records were accessioned into the Archives for permanent preservation, and in others, assistance was

*Portable exhibits are provided to schools and other groups.*



provided for the disposal of records which had no further legal, fiscal, or historical value. In conjunction with the Records Management Division of the Department of State, several hundred requests for records action were processed from offices of state and local government. The Archives has continued to offer storage for security microfilm generated by county government and any future expansion of archival storage should include a vault designed specifically for this purpose. As of June 30, 1972, some 1,759 rolls of security microfilm had been received for storage. As this represents the accumulation from only ten counties, we can expect a significant increase in this area as more offices turn to microfilming as a preservation tool.

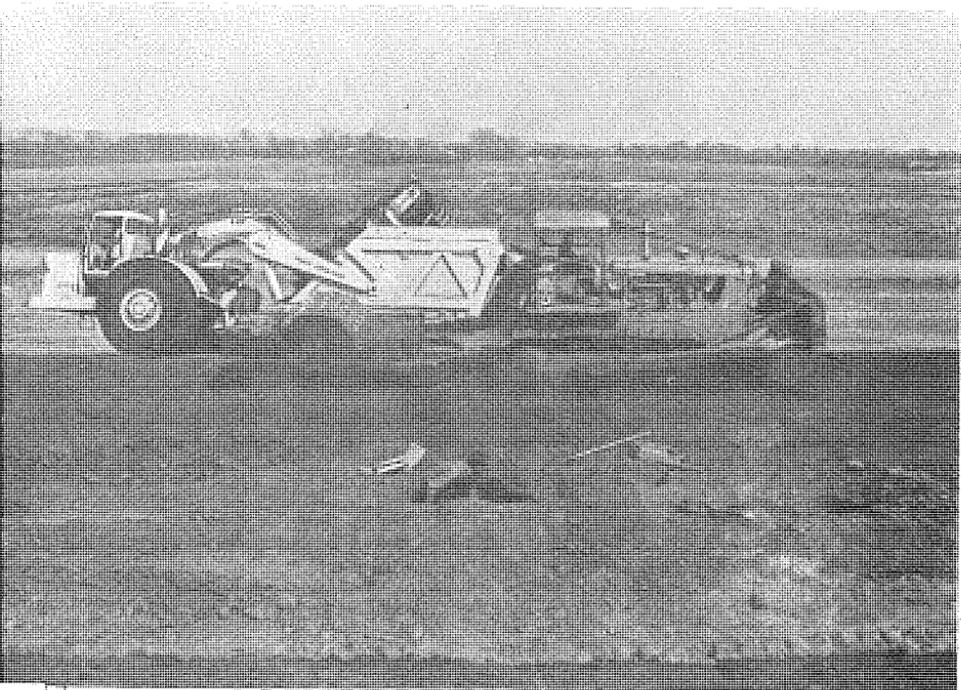
Among the major accessions of the State Archives have been the original manuscript bills and journals of the Nebraska Legislature, 1854-1971, which were transferred with the cooperation of the offices of the Secretary of State and the Clerk of the Legislature; records of the Adjutant General, 1861-1925, including Civil War, Spanish-American War and World War I files; records of the Nebraska Water Pollution Control Council, 1958-1971; records of the Nebraska Orthopedic Hospital, 1905-1971; records of the State Auditor, 1873-1967; and records of the Governor's Office, 1867-1967. Also received were various records from Burt, Saunders, Jefferson, and Thurston counties dating from 1858.

Major research within the Archives and Manuscript Divisions has utilized the Senator Hugh Butler papers in a study of Alaskan Statehood; records of the Nebraska Women's Suffrage Association in relation to women's suffrage in the state; the U.S. Land Office Tract Books in an analysis of settlement patterns; the William Werkmeister papers for a study of German-American political behavior, 1916-1920; and the George D. Meiklejohn papers in relation to populism and national expansion, 1897-1901. Additional collections were used in research for a history of the Democratic Party in Nebraska. Newspapers on microfilm received their usual heavy reference use as historical sources and as legal documents for genealogy and verification of births, deaths, and marriages.

Fiscal year 1971-1972 saw the installation of a new Recordak MRD-2 microfilm camera in the Microfilm Division. This replaced the original camera which had been in use since 1952



*Archeological investigations revealed the remains of an early fur trading post in Fontenelle Forest. Limestone foundations remain.*

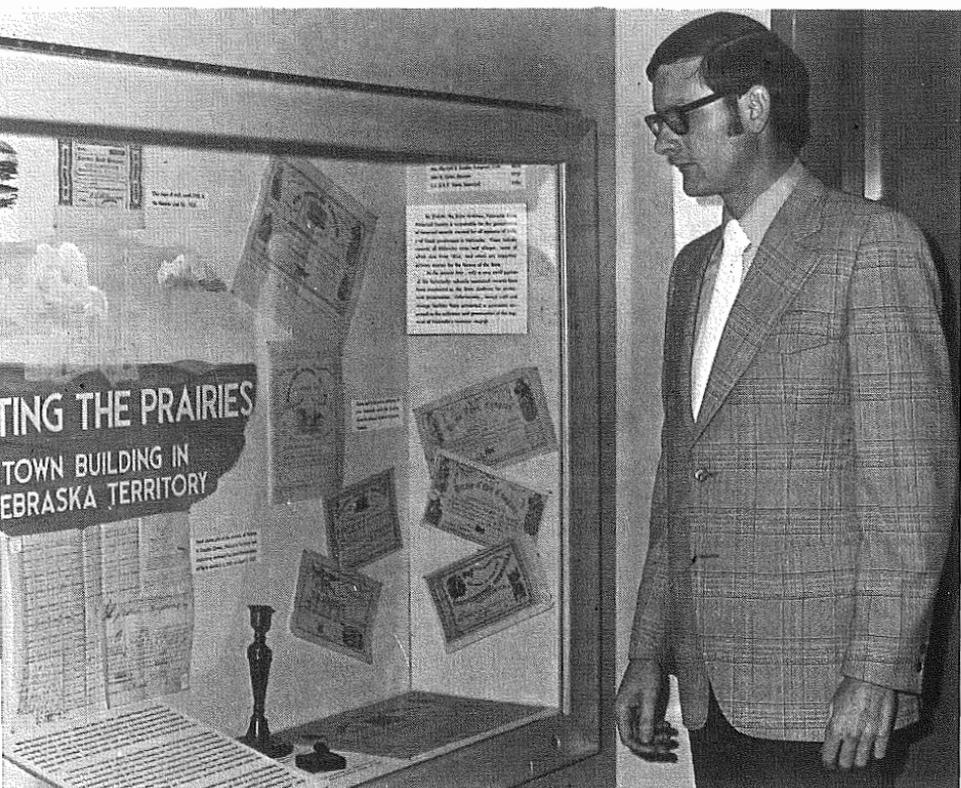


*The Highway Archeological Salvage program aids in the reconstruction of our history. In the foreground are Indian storage pits.*

and which had undergone frequent failures in recent years. The design of the new camera permits the microfilming of two pages of newsprint with each single exposure, thus increasing the volume of newspapers which can be placed on a single roll of microfilm. This fact has resulted in the production of fewer total rolls of film during the year at no sacrifice in the quantity of Nebraska newspapers which have been preserved through the microfilming process.

Sales of Society microfilm were less than in previous years, but our contracts with commercial processors remain in effect and service has continued to be excellent. As county and local historical groups acquire facilities for use of microfilm and as planning proceeds for upcoming centennial and historical activities, we can expect an increase in the demand for Nebraska newspapers on microfilm. Among the major titles which were placed on film and which are now available for use in the building or for purchase are the *McCook Tribune*, 1883-1936; *Norfolk Daily News*, 1896-1960; *Fremont Tribune*, 1887-1968; *Grant County Tribune*, 1890-1969; and the *Gresham Gazette*, 1896-1969. Major special filming projects of the Division have included the original tract books of the U.S. General Land Office, showing pre-emptions, homesteads, and timber claims; records of nine Nebraska churches; and various county records and manuscript collections.

Of importance was the availability of funds to enable the continued conversion of our negative backlog microfilm into positive work copies. A considerable number of negatives were converted to Diazo copies through the courtesy of Mrs. Bonnie Svoboda, state director of Records Management; additional reels were converted to silver positive copies by commercial suppliers. In all some 1,708 reels of master negatives were placed in storage outside the Society building. We are hopeful that the next two years will see the conclusion of this project and the storage of all negatives off premises. Another goal which was partially realized was purchase of a portion of the *Morning Omaha World-Herald* on microfilm, 1889-1925. This enables more efficient use of this important title and allowed the removal of the physical files from the stacks area to prepare for future accumulations of Nebraska newspapers. The Division also purchased some 50 rolls of microfilm from the National Archives relating to military affairs in Nebraska and the Plains,



*James Potter, State Archivist, views an exhibit of documents.*

1849-1925. The Division now has a very complete collection of official military, Indian, and Land Office files on microfilm, which will facilitate research in these areas.

At the present time only small portions of the historical records of state and local government in Nebraska have been appraised and inventoried, and still fewer have been transferred to the State Archives for permanent preservation. Some are adequately stored at the agency of origin but are inaccessible to researchers. Many others of significant historical value are destined to remain in unsuitable vaults, attics, and warehouses where they will continue to deteriorate. This is particularly true in county government which has long been troubled by lack of adequate storage space and funds for administration of record materials.

At the present time county records represent the most critical area with respect to accession and preservation. State government, though decentralized, remains largely in Lincoln

where the Archives can more easily respond to requests for records action. Then, too, state government has more readily accepted and participated in the Records Management Program so that we can have some assurance that no records will be destroyed prior to review by the State Archivist. Unfortunately, the response of county offices to records management has varied greatly. Some give excellent cooperation and others do not appear to have interest in an effective records management-archival program.

Therefore, it still appears that much of the initiative toward an effective program of appraisal, accession, and preservation of county records must come from the State Archives. We cannot afford to wait until sheer volume or natural disaster forces county offices to clean out vaults and storage areas. Unfortunately, it will be difficult for us to take this active approach within the present level of staff and facilities. One partial alternative is staff representation at the various regional and state-wide county and municipal officials meetings in order to more fully disseminate information and discuss the archival role as it relates to records of local governmental subdivisions. Perhaps county officials can be made more aware of the function of an archival program and how it can be of benefit to them.

The Manuscript Division should continue an active program of soliciting papers and records from the private sector. Although emphasis is often given to political figures and other prominent persons, attention should also be directed toward the records of businesses, churches, and similar organizations. We should continue to publicize specific areas of interest in order to enhance public awareness of the functions of the Manuscript Division and the types of materials it seeks to preserve.

A functioning oral history program is also an important goal. Each year is marked by the death of many individuals who have intimate and often unique knowledge of some aspect of Nebraska history. Interviews conducted on a local and statewide basis would do much to preserve this data and such a program should ideally be coordinated by the Manuscript Division.

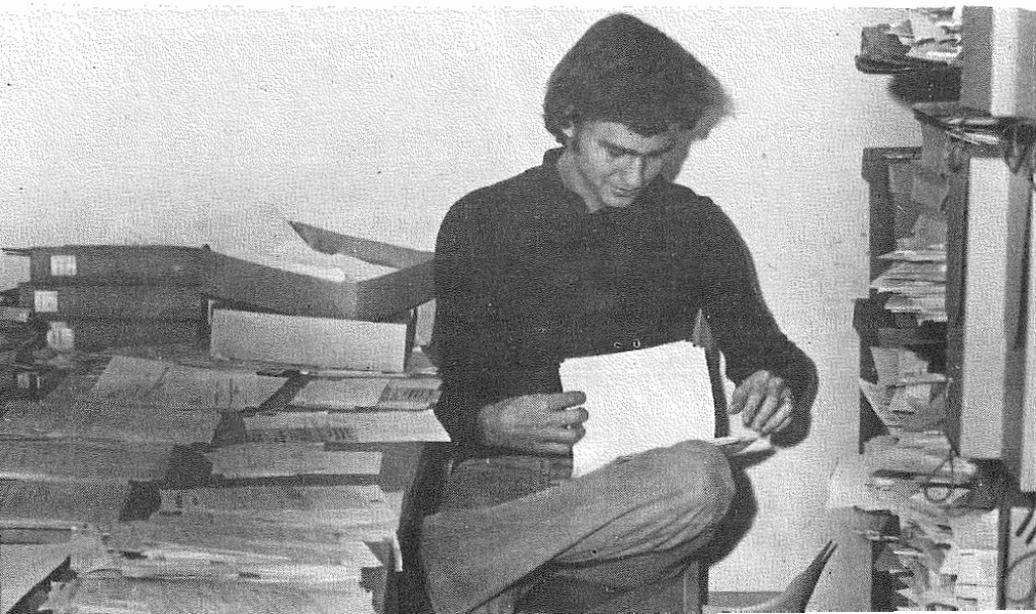
Most of the existing problem areas within the State Archives, Manuscript Division, and Microfilm Division can be traced to the need for more staff and increased storage facilities. These two requirements are closely related, and only in conjunction

would their fulfillment provide a realistic solution. In the past few years considerable progress has been made toward solving such internal problems as the negative microfilm backlog, separation of archival and manuscript collections, and acquisition of necessary equipment. Records Management is now a reality in Nebraska. However, unless our needs are more fully met in terms of staff and facilities, the State Archives will not be able to adequately fulfill legal and cultural responsibilities for preservation and public service.

### LIBRARY

During this report year the Society Library, under the direction of Louise Small, has continued to give the same steady service to patrons by letter, by telephone calls, and in person, which has characterized the Library's activity since Nebraska's Centennial Year inspired additional interest in the history of the state. In some areas, a leveling off of the phenomenal growth rate of the past may indicate that we have reached a large number of our potential patrons. However, in other areas, we are only just being discovered by both Nebraskans and patrons from other states and foreign countries.

*Archives Aide James Kelley assists in the processing of records in the Archives.*



In our report for year 1970-1971, we pointed out that our outstanding collection of photographs and pictures was attracting increasing national and international attention. Mrs. Opal Jacobsen and her staff have given the fine service that brings patrons back again and again. An increase of more than 50 percent in the number of letters received in the photographic section is evidence of the increased interest in our unique collections. The increase in the number of pictures distributed from 665 in 1970-1971 to 2,412 in 1971-1972 shows that our credit line is appearing with increasing frequency in national and international publications.

The Newspaper Index continues to be a very useful tool, as our two indexers struggle to keep pace with the ever-increasing news made in Nebraska. Patrons are learning to rely on this index as a useful source of material on many subjects.

The work of classifying and cataloging the library of the late Emil Kopac has proceeded more slowly than we could have wished, but it has proceeded. The Branch Library at Fort Robinson has been enriched by several hundred volumes with more to be added. Not previously mentioned as part of this collection are the books of interest to antique collectors; e.g., material on old automobiles, railroad locomotives, guns, and steam engines.

In August, 1971, we were visited by Mr. Noel R. Barton, Research Specialist of the Latter Day Saints Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City. Mr. Barton was surveying the genealogical resources of this area prior to planning a program of microfilming them for use by the Genealogical Society Library. In March, Librarian Louise Small participated in a genealogical workshop held at the Winter Quarters Stake of the Latter Day Saints Church in Omaha. Our original federal land records, records of Nebraska Civil War veterans, and copies of all available census returns for Nebraska constitute a collection of invaluable genealogical resources.

The spring issue of the *Nebraska Library Association Quarterly* published an article by Mrs. Small describing the resources of the Library and its relationship to other areas of the Nebraska State Historical Society. We were glad to have this opportunity to acquaint the librarians of Nebraska with our unique resources. These resources are often recognized locally by the



*Many of the records in county courthouses must receive attention if they are to be preserved.*

referral to us of queries received by the Bennett Martin Library and Love Memorial Library at the University of Nebraska. We are always proud to demonstrate the holdings of our unique library collection.

### NEEDS OF THE SOCIETY

A commonly expressed need by most organizations is greater public support; in our case this can best be expressed in our membership. Our membership increases each year and some 67 members selected this year to become Contributing Members, bringing the total in this category to 514. It is interesting to note that 114 of the memberships in this category live outside of Nebraska and include individuals from Europe as well as from other states. Despite a 100 percent increase in the cost of Life Memberships, we are pleased to have added 26 new Life Members.

Throughout this report there has been evidence of the support provided by the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation. The Foundation is headed by President M. S. Hevelone with some fifty trustees representing all areas of the

state. The financial report reflects some progress at this time, but it should be much greater if we are to meet certain of the Society needs that cannot be met from tax funds. As most of you know, many complex restrictions on private foundations are imposed by the Tax Reform Act of 1969. The State Historical Society Foundation has been classified as a "Public Foundation" by the Internal Revenue Service and is not subject to these restrictions. These restrictions have led a number of private foundations to conclude that they will dissolve. In many cases the aim and goals of the private foundation can be continued by transferring the assets on dissolution to the Society Foundation. The name of the foundation and family members can continue to be memorialized.

We have an excellent physical plant but we are long overdue for expansion as evidenced in the reports of the various departments. We are pleased to report that the last legislature took note of this problem and appropriated the amount of \$20,000 toward planning for added space. It might be appropriate at this point to inform the membership that your Board has considered this matter for many years. Consideration is being given to the possibility that the museum department might be located at a site other than our present location in an effort to provide parking space and serve a greater number of the traveling public. Under this proposal the present building would be utilized to house the Headquarters, Library, and State Archives. Thousands of potential visitors to the museum pass by each year on I-80 or even by the building without finding space to park. I am sure that those of you who have attempted to visit the Society have experienced the same problem. Your Board has taken no formal action on the matter but it is our opinion that such a solution must be considered.

The progress which we believe has been made during the past year would not be possible without the dedicated support provided by your Executive Board headed by President A. R. Owens. Ray has provided distinguished service since 1945. I want also to pay tribute to the Society staff. These are the people who take pride in the Society and work for the improvement of our programs. Each year our membership increases, and with this increased support our goals set forth in 1878 can be fully realized.