



*Nebraska History* posts materials online for your personal use. Please remember that the contents of *Nebraska History* are copyrighted by the Nebraska State Historical Society (except for materials credited to other institutions). The NSHS retains its copyrights even to materials it posts on the web.

For permission to re-use materials or for photo ordering information, please see:

<http://www.nebraskahistory.org/magazine/permission.htm>

Nebraska State Historical Society members receive four issues of *Nebraska History* and four issues of *Nebraska History News* annually. For membership information, see:

<http://nebraskahistory.org/admin/members/index.htm>

## Article Title: Sectionalism in Nebraska: When Kansas Considered Annexing Southern Nebraska, 1856-1860

Full Citation: David H Price, "Sectionalism in Nebraska: When Kansas Considered Annexing Southern Nebraska, 1856-1860," *Nebraska History* 53 (1972): 446-462

URL of article: <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/full-text/NH1972Sectionalism.pdf>

Date: 4/13/2015

Article Summary: Nebraska residents who lived south of the Platte considered the river impassible and the distribution of federal patronage unfair. Discussion of annexation resulted in prolonged political discord.

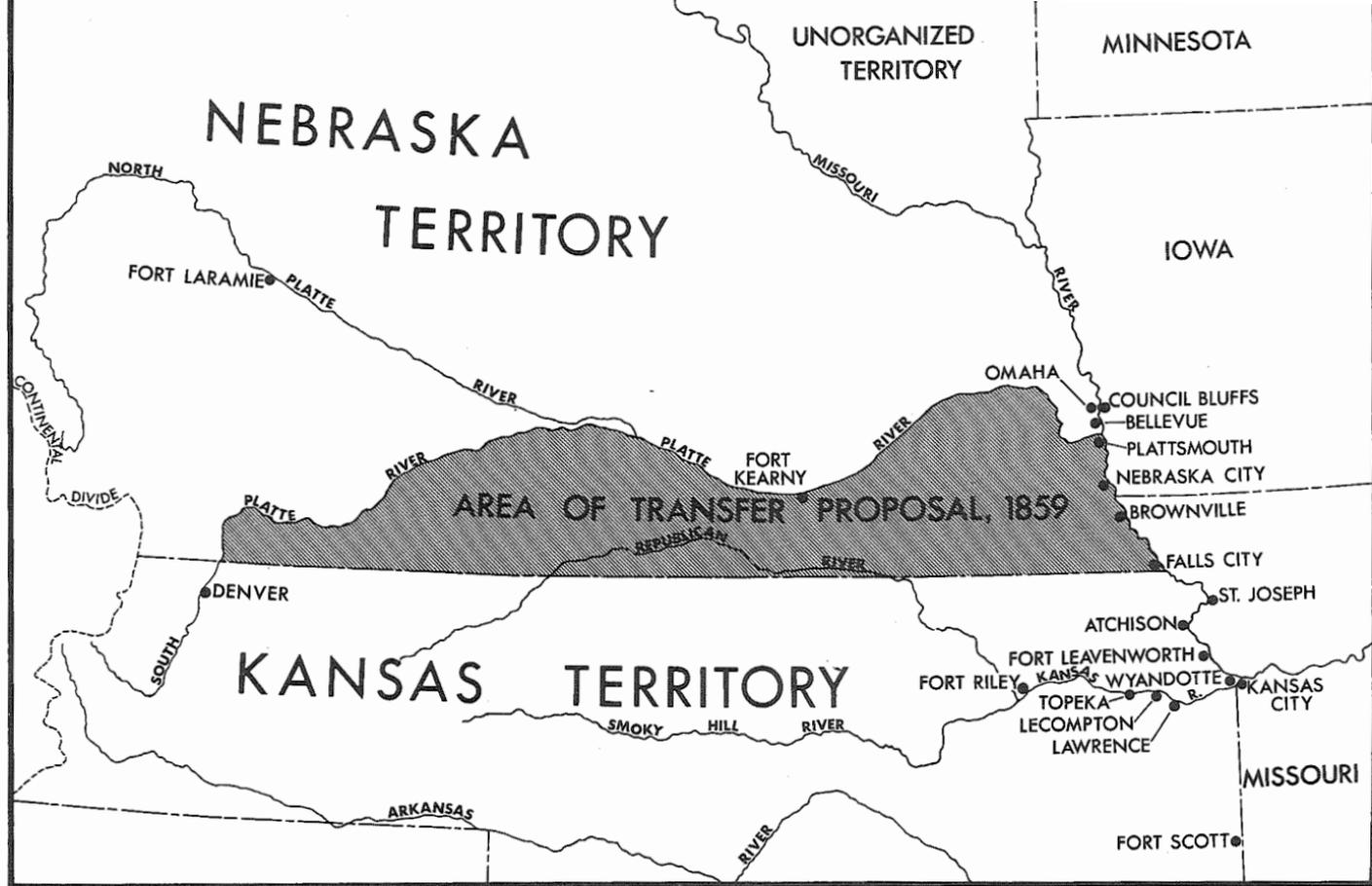
### Cataloging Information:

Names: Thomas B Cuming, J Sterling Morton, Samuel G Daily, Mills S Reeves, William H Taylor, S O Thatcher

Nebraska Place Names: Omaha, North Platte

Keywords: *Nebraska News*, *Nebraska Advertiser*, [Nebraska] capital, J Sterling Morton

Photographs / Images: Nebraska Territory-Kansas Territory map showing the area of transfer proposal, 1859; acting Territorial Governor Thomas B Cuming; Bird B Chapman, territorial delegate



*Dissident citizens in southern Nebraska Territory joined with interested Kansans in attempting to annex the area south of the Platte River to Kansas.*

## SECTIONALISM IN NEBRASKA: WHEN KANSAS CONSIDERED ANNEXING SOUTHERN NEBRASKA, 1856-1860

By DAVID H. PRICE

Sectionalism was a significant force in the turbulent whirlpool that was Nebraska politics in the late 1850's. Division along sectional lines was established early in the period by the flagrant display of obvious political favoritism by 25-year-old acting Governor Thomas B. Cuming and others toward the settlements north of the Platte River. Cuming was one of a group of men who secured the location of the first territorial capital for Omaha City. The capital controversy of 1854 was the first of several political power plays attempted by the North Platte group and was one of the most irritating to southern Nebraskans. It was anything but subtle. Governor Cuming's adherents, through districting of the territory and alleged bribery, successfully cut the more populous South Platte region out of the political picture.

Understandably, these stratagems thoroughly enraged the residents of southern Nebraska. Mass meetings sprung up throughout the region and the real and imagined abuses of Cuming and the Omaha clique were protested and denounced. The struggle was joined. The forward edge of the "battle" area for both contesting regions was the Platte River, which cut Omaha and its satellite towns from Plattsmouth, Nebraska City, Brownville, Falls City, and other towns south of the river line. The conflict slumbered at times as the hardships of Nebraska pioneer life drew attention to things other than political intrigue, but tensions mounted as time wore on. The late 1850's

witnessed a series of events unparalleled in Nebraska's history, events that culminated in a movement that very nearly split the territory asunder. It all began when South Carolinian Francis Burt, first governor of Nebraska Territory, died at the age of 47 on October 18, 1854, two days after taking the oath of office. Secretary Thomas B. Cuming then became acting governor. These events almost altered the political face of the West and could well have rendered the Nebraska of today an impossibility.<sup>1</sup>

Early in 1856 J. Sterling Morton, 23-year-old member of the Territorial House of Representatives from Otoe County and a leader in the conflict, proposed a memorial to the United States Congress advocating annexation of the South Platte region to Kansas. The House of Representatives refused to consider the proposal, but its real significance lies in the arguments advanced by Morton on behalf of his constituents. Morton's memorial stated that annexation would bring political harmony and would redound to the good of all concerned. He then asserted that the Platte River was a natural boundary line, almost impossible to ford, ferry, or bridge, and as such presented a natural obstacle to communication between the two sections. The memorial closed with the suggestion that annexation would forever seal the fate of Kansas by insuring her place among the free states.<sup>2</sup> Whether or not he realized it at the time, young Morton had outlined much of the ideological basis for future dissension. Political discord and the impassability of the Platte River were issues to be echoed throughout the annexation movement.

Events in Omaha further deteriorated the political bonds between the North and South Platte contestants. In January, 1858, the fourth session of the legislature divided into two warring factions over the location of the capital. The majority of members, including some from the South Platte region, adjourned to Florence to continue the business of legislation. The Florence secession awakened the South Platte press to the annexation issue. The *Nebraska News*, published in Nebraska City, had been vocal during the disturbance at Omaha City. The citizenry became aroused. The January 2 issue of the *News* reprinted from the *Rockport (Missouri) Banner* a column entitled "Nebraska Correspondence" which contained the following item: "Our Legislature is now in session, and will no

doubt pass a bill removing the Capitol from Omaha to the south side of the Platte River. If this is not done this session, people residing south of the river will petition Congress to annex them to Kansas." The correspondence was datelined "Nebraska City, N. T., Dec. 15."<sup>3</sup>

The very next issue of the *News* published an anonymous letter from "Citizen" clearly portraying the grievances of South Platte. Citizen described the impassability of the Platte River, the bitter sectional feud, and the political favoritism shown by the national government toward North Platte aspirations. He elaborated upon the latter by presenting objections to the planned construction of a road from Omaha City to Fort Kearny, as a road could be built for far less money with Nebraska City as its eastern terminus. He cited the reduced overland distance of about 50 miles involved in the latter route, as well as the reduction of about 50 miles of Missouri River steamboat travel. Citizen denounced the unfavorable reports about southern Nebraska allegedly being distributed by North Platte plotters conspiring for the coveted Pacific railroad route through their section. As evidence of continuing abuses he stated that the newly appointed governor, William A. Richardson, was an Omaha City property owner. The author climaxed his dramatic letter with a persuasive appeal to the settlers to memorialize Congress requesting the annexation of the South Platte area to Kansas Territory without delay. He quietly allayed fears that annexation would result in a new slave state by expressing faith that the doctrine of popular sovereignty would prevail in the formulation of the constitution required for entry into the Union. For those wary of becoming involved with the troubles of bleeding Kansas, he expressed confidence that bloodshed would soon cease after her admission into the Union as a free state. Citizen refused to address the question of the increased taxes necessary to support statehood. Instead, he suggested that those who refused to comply could move across the Platte River.<sup>4</sup>

The January 16 issue of the *News* placed its position solidly within the annexation camp. The paper predicted that the Florence secession would bring the inevitable political dismemberment of Nebraska as a territory. The *News* further forecast that Kansas would be admitted to the Union with a portion of her northern area cut off. It was suggested that South Platte

should be attached to the northern area of Kansas and that the two parts be admitted as one state. The *News* blatantly declared that separation from North Platte to be "our only hope — our salvation."<sup>5</sup>

The rising tide of sentiment in South Platte for annexation spilled over into Kansas. Cyrus K. Holliday introduced a resolution into the Kansas Territorial Legislature on January 27, 1858, asking for the annexation of the South Platte area.<sup>6</sup> Soon thereafter the legislature adopted a similar resolution and memorialized Congress to that effect.<sup>7</sup> The only opposition to the issue seemed to center in southern Kansas.<sup>8</sup> Apparently the movement enjoyed considerable popular support on both sides of the Kansas-Nebraska line.

The extent of the popular sentiment for annexation in early 1858 is most readily appraised by examining the press coverage it received. The *Nebraska News*, spurred on by the Florence secession, supported annexation actively. The *Nebraska Advertiser* at Brownville, although a South Platte organ, paid no attention to the movement until early March, 1858, when it reported that the Kansans had memorialized Congress to annex southern Nebraska. The *Advertiser* described the whole affair as a "silly project" and declared that it failed to see any good reason for annexation. While depicting the idea as a frivolous endeavor, it did concede that there might be some benefit in forming a new political entity between the Platte and Kansas rivers.<sup>9</sup> A subsequent issue of the *Advertiser* restated its negative view and laid the blame for all the agitation on "Kansas shriekers," who supposedly advocated settling the slavery question in Kansas by annexing South Platte, an area that for all practical purposes was devoid of slavery. The *Advertiser* went further and questioned the popular support for the movement; it doubted that even 100 people in South Platte favored the idea. Petitions favoring annexation, supposedly in circulation in the South Platte region, had not been seen in Brownville.<sup>10</sup> An Omaha newspaper, the *Nebraskian*, expressed disbelief at the movement and questioned the sincerity of the *News* in pressing the issue. The *News* answered that public sentiment was virtually unanimous for annexation and emphasized the seriousness of the matter as far as South Platte was concerned.<sup>11</sup> The *News* and the *Advertiser* continued their editorial coverage until

the end of March, when the movement seemed to lose much of its energy. In the growing season the emphasis turned quickly toward agriculture and away from sectional politics.

The approach of winter, however, ushered in revival of the annexation issue, and its echoes reached into the halls of Congress itself. J. Sterling Morton received word from Washington, D.C., that certain prominent officials were considering the annexation scheme as a way to answer the Kansas question. Morton was requested to use his influence through his *News* to renew its pressure in favor of the measure. The admission of Kansas with the South Platte region attached was seen as a possibility for the next session of Congress.<sup>12</sup>

The *News* pressed the attack without delay. The December 11 edition favored state organization and saw annexation as the quickest way to achieve it.<sup>13</sup> Unanimous support was claimed in the South Platte counties. Meetings were held in Nebraska City and resolutions were drafted. The *News* played up the prospect of statehood to the utmost, claiming that if annexation took place the population of the combined area would facilitate an early entry into the Union. Editorials declared that congressional land grants for a Pacific railroad would be issued any day and that as a state the South Platte region could not be ignored as a choice route for the rails. The sale of public lands would mean financial prosperity for the region. Large federal land grants would be received for educational facilities. The fear that the large territorial debt amassed by Kansas would be assumed in part by the South Platte was set aside. The *News* further asserted that taxation under state organization would be no higher than that now being paid. A general call for an early meeting of a South Platte convention was issued.<sup>14</sup> Similar movements were afoot throughout southern Nebraska. A mass meeting was held at Brownville on December 7. Pro-annexation resolutions were adopted and plans were made to elect delegates to the proposed South Platte convention. Robert W. Furnas was appointed Nemaha County's delegate<sup>15</sup> when his *Advertiser* reversed its position. It now supported annexation with all the flaming conviction of the *News*. The promise of early statehood was too much to resist. Few thoughts were wasted on the legal government at Omaha City. The South Platte was on a secession course and apparently few persons in that region had the courage to dissent.<sup>16</sup>



*Secretary Thomas B. Cuming was twice appointed acting territorial governor of Nebraska.*

Some objections to the annexation movement did arise south of the Platte River. The *Advertiser* published the opinions of several “loyalists.” Samuel G. Daily, an adroit Republican politician and member of the Territorial Legislature from Nemaha County, opposed the movement but admitted some inclination toward a plan to form a new territory. Daily’s primary fear was the loss of political representation. Although South Platte’s representation in the Nebraska Territorial Legislature was less than desirable, he thought it would be much worse if it were annexed to Kansas. Daily also argued the probability of having to assume some of the Kansas debt and expressed fears that the movement was a pro-slavery plot at both local and national levels. The *Advertiser* also carried a letter from I. G. Jeffers, who opposed annexation on the grounds that the Platte Rivèr was not as impassable as the people were led to believe. Jeffers, too, cited the danger of increased financial burden. His argument concluded in an expression of concern for the involvement of South Platte with the problems of bleeding Kansas.<sup>17</sup> The *News* printed no objections to the movement but scolded some unidentified persons for changing sides in the matter.<sup>18</sup> A traveler in the

South Platte region in December, 1858, found the settlers' attitudes to be generally favorable to annexation.<sup>19</sup> On December 23, 1858, Marcus J. Parrott of Kansas introduced a bill into the Kansas House of Representatives proposing the extension of Kansas' northern boundary to the Platte River.<sup>20</sup> Though the bill was never acted upon, it probably did act as a stimulus for intensified activity within the South Platte region.

January 1, 1859, was the occasion for a mass meeting at Nebraska City. Those in attendance prepared a lengthy paper setting forth the standard grievances of South Platte and asserting the "unanimity" of public opinion behind their movement. The statement was concluded by the adoption of a resolution citing the unlimited potential of an enlarged Kansas that included South Platte.<sup>21</sup>

The full South Platte convention was held at Brownville on January 5 as scheduled. Most of the key political figures of the region were in attendance. Samuel G. Daily, who only two weeks before had opposed annexation, now found himself appointed to serve on the committee to draw up the resolutions ultimately adopted by the delegates.<sup>22</sup> The convention's memorial as forwarded to Congress requested the passage of an enabling act, as soon as practicable, that would make it possible for the South Platte to be annexed to Kansas. The reasons for the request were listed and included in a statement describing the similarity of soil and climate of the two regions and the impassability of the Platte River as a divisive obstacle to harmony in Nebraska Territory. Strangely enough, the political troubles, undoubtedly the crux of the whole issue, were not alluded to. The memorialists closed by stating that they felt their actions were justified and constitutional.<sup>23</sup>

The hue and cry for annexation in the South Platte region gave rise to several challenges to the unanimity of support so avidly proclaimed by the movement's leaders. One group of dissenters also met at Nebraska City on January 1 and adopted resolutions opposing the dismemberment of Nebraska. The *Advertiser* attempted to squelch any rally of support behind the dissenters by pointing out the "poor" attendance at the meeting and by criticizing them for not participating in the interchange of ideas with annexationists at the meeting nearby.<sup>24</sup> But the fact that such a protest meeting was being held and that it attracted people from miles away, despite the freezing blasts of

a Nebraska January, seems to provide evidence that opposition to annexation was more extensive than either the *News* or *Advertiser* chose to report.

As the annexation movement picked up momentum, the resistance seemed to come alive in other parts of the territory. A cry for a full territorial convention was issued. Plattsmouth, in Cass County, was the scene of such a meeting in mid-January, but it attracted only a few persons. The only other county represented was Otoe, which sent three delegates.<sup>25</sup> The annexationists, of course, had the advantage of favorable press coverage from Kansas, a development which may have discouraged some Nebraskans. It appeared at this point that unless concerted action could be mustered, the annexationists might succeed.

Reports of pro-Kansas mass meetings finally alerted the Omaha City press. On January 13 the *Omaha Times* countered with information first published by the *People's Press* (Nebraska City), the only newspaper south of the Platte River opposing annexation. The *Press* articles declared that the masses south of the Platte were against annexation.<sup>26</sup> One week later the *Times* called for the people of the North Platte area to express their opinions on the matter. Another convention was scheduled to be held in Plattsmouth on January 27.<sup>27</sup> This second convention resulted in Congress being petitioned in a vigorous protest against the separatist movement.<sup>28</sup> Mass meetings were held in rapid succession during the next few weeks in most counties north of the Platte River.<sup>29</sup> The slumbering North Platte region had been jolted into reality by a movement that could no longer be dismissed lightly.

The most eloquent expression of North Platte opinion appeared as a formal memorial which was sent to Congress. The memorialists expressed concern that a bill proposing the annexation of the counties south of the Platte to Kansas was being considered by that national assembly. Specifically, the idea of the future state of Nebraska losing one-half its population, one-half its valuable land area, and one-half its representation in the House of Representatives was unacceptable to the petitioners. The memorial pointed out the difficulties that could befall southern counties should such a course be adopted. The previously debated arguments of higher taxes, loss of political power, and the effectiveness of communication

across the Platte River were clearly stated. The memorialists expressed doubt that a majority desired annexation. They conceded the right of Congress to change the territorial boundaries but insisted that it must not do so without due consideration for the will of the people.<sup>30</sup> To the south, however, the Kansas Legislature adopted resolutions beseeching Congress to "attach that portion of Nebraska lying and being situated south of the Platte River to the Territory of Kansas." These resolutions were forwarded to President James Buchanan under the signature of the governor of Kansas on January 25, 1859.<sup>31</sup>

Congress was the scene of considerable debate as the various petitions and memorials reached Washington. Nebraska Territorial Delegate Fenner Ferguson argued before the Senate Committee on Territories that the Platte River was not an obstacle and could easily be ferried. He read letters from two prominent residents of Cass and Otoe counties stating that most persons living south of the Platte were against annexation. Ferguson questioned the political motives of the annexationists.<sup>32</sup> The *Advertiser* reported that pro-annexation lobbyists in Washington were also working diligently.<sup>33</sup> The prognosis was not good for the annexationists, however. Washington observers sent word that there was little hope for positive congressional action in their behalf.<sup>34</sup>

The bill to annex the counties south of the Platte to Kansas was never brought out of the Committee on Territories. The direct appeal to Congress had failed. In the latter part of February the *News* and *Advertiser* fell strangely silent. Their pleas having fallen on deaf ears in Congress, the friends of annexation were undoubtedly planning their next move, a move that would culminate in a last desperate attempt to throw off the political bonds that tied them to the North Platte section. The month of May again brought plans of the annexationists into public view. A mass meeting was held at Nebraska City on May 2, 1859. From this point forward there could be no doubt as to the course of events. The resolutions adopted spelled out the objectives and methods to be embraced. One section declared:

The pestiferous Platte should be the northern boundary of a great agricultural and commercial state; that we, the citizens of Nebraska are invited to participate in the formation of a constitution . . . ; that it is the inalienable right of every people in the

formation of a state government preparatory to admission into the Union to define the boundaries of said state.<sup>35</sup>

An election to be held in each of the South Platte counties was called to select delegates to the constitutional convention to be held at Wyandotte, Kansas, on July 5. Party politics was not to play a part, and the opposition was free to choose its own delegates.<sup>36</sup>

The elections were well-planned and conducted by leading political figures. Even though the elections were poorly attended in Nemaha County, the *Brownville Advertiser* still declared sentiment to be overwhelmingly in favor of the movement.<sup>37</sup> The *Nebraska City News* announced that all counties concerned had elected delegates and that the light vote in Otoe County was of little consequence. The *News* claimed that of approximately 1,100 Otoe County voters, 900 had signed a petition for annexation.<sup>38</sup> South Platte sentiment in favor of annexation at this time was apparently one of "remarkable strength" and "approximate unanimity," according to J. Sterling Morton and Albert Watkins in their *Illustrated History of Nebraska*.<sup>39</sup>

"Behind-the-scenes" plotters in Kansas again showed their receptiveness to the northward extension of that territory's boundaries. The resolutions adopted by the South Platte meeting at Nebraska City on May 2 had indicated that an invitation had been extended to send delegates to Kansas to help draft a constitution. There is no evidence to show how they managed such a move; but a letter from Governor Samuel Medary's son Sam A., who was private secretary to the South Platte leaders, indicated that previous correspondence had taken place. His advice to Nebraskans wishing to secede contained the following paragraph:

I would suggest that you proceed to elect your delegates to the convention quietly, as it would only create an unnecessary issue in Southern Kansas at this time were it freely spoken of . . . Members of the Convention will be more free to act if they are not compelled to pledge themselves before their election.<sup>40</sup>

The reasons for southern Kansans' opposition to the annexation movement were real and were clearly articulated later during the debates at Wyandotte.<sup>41</sup> The fact that favorable sentiment in Kansas was so widespread, however, must have made it seem to the southern Nebraskans that success was at last within their grasp.<sup>42</sup>

The twelve elected delegates from southern Nebraska were



*Bird B. Chapman, founder of the Omaha Nebraskian, was territorial delegate in Washington, D.C., between 1855 and 1857.*

seated as honorary members at the Kansas Constitutional Convention on July 12, 1859.<sup>43</sup> Three days later they were allowed to speak. Mills S. Reeves of Otoe County, the first Nebraskan to address the convention, proposed that the convention define the boundaries of Kansas as it saw fit and then insert a memorial to Congress requesting the annexation of the South Platte region. He pointed out the southern Nebraskans were not trying to hamper the early admission of Kansas to the Union; rather, they were laying their futures upon the just consideration of the assembled delegates.

Reeves delivered an eloquent plea for a favorable response from the convention. He cited the standard South Platte grievances — the impassability of the Platte River, the capital controversy, and unfair federal patronage for residents of the North Platte region. He discussed the vast amounts of national and territorial funds that had been spent for internal improvements in the northern settlements; nothing had been spent in the southern settlements, he charged. He denounced the incompetent judicial officers appointed by the Washington government for service in South Platte. As to the prospect of

possible Pacific rail routes, he declared that the addition of southern Nebraska would greatly strengthen Kansas by weakening the Omaha City position. Reeves noted the additional river front available to Kansas and also offered for consideration the Nebraskans' gift of fertile lands along the Platte River. The coal and salt deposits of the South Platte area were presented as further proof of the wealth of the region.

Reeves, although a Democrat, allayed fears that South Platte was solidly Democratic. He recalled the recent election of several Republican legislators in Nebraska. He assailed the allegation that Nebraska had accumulated a large territorial debt. Reeves closed with a dramatic appeal for acceptance of the scheme and warned that it might not be possible later.<sup>44</sup>

William H. Taylor stepped to the rostrum to continue the arguments for annexation of southern Nebraska counties. Taylor, a Republican, repeated the substance of Reeves' remarks on the growth and development of the Republican party in Nebraska and expressed confidence that those of similar inclinations would look favorably on the annexation of a strongly Republican area to Kansas. Reeves had concentrated his remarks on the positive reasons for annexation. Taylor attacked the objections to the measure, such as fears of higher taxation, decreased railroad prospects, delay in statehood, and probable weakening of Nebraska. He concluded in a state of near exhaustion, asserting that the time was ripe and that the opportunity could never repeat itself.<sup>45</sup>

It soon became obvious that the Kansans were not favorably disposed toward the Nebraskans' scheme. On Saturday, July 16, William C. McDowell of Leavenworth offered a proposal to extend the northern boundary of Kansas to the Platte River.<sup>46</sup> He spoke eloquently on behalf of it but was immediately challenged by S. O. Thacher of Douglas County, Kansas. Thacher passionately denounced annexation on the grounds that it would surely make the new state Democratic. He likened the whole matter to the Trojan Horse of antiquity and expressed fears that Kansas would reap a reward of questionable merit should such a gift be accepted. He pointed to the unanimous opposition in southern Kansas and revealed dire apprehensions that the proposed constitution would go down in defeat before a vote of the people if the addition of southern Nebraska were approved.<sup>47</sup>

Delegate Taylor countered Thacher's accusation that the proposal was a Democratic plot. He declared that to some Nebraskans annexation to Kansas was thought of as a Black Republican conspiracy. Taylor again reminded the delegates of the election of 1858 as proof of Republican ascendancy in the Nebraska Legislature.<sup>48</sup> The debates continued for most of the day. Arguments for and against annexation were stated and restated.<sup>49</sup> Much of the agitation was caused by partisan politics, one party not being willing to make any concession to the other party. Available evidence indicates that the annexation movement was non-partisan in nature, but the Nebraska delegates were unable to convince the Kansas convention of the sincerity of their motives.

The annexation resolution was called to question on July 22, after final debates from both sides. It was defeated by a vote of twenty-nine to nineteen.<sup>50</sup> The Nebraska delegates returned home in bitter disappointment. The failure of the Wyandotte convention to accept the South Platte proposal can be attributed in large part to the fear of becoming involved in another controversial issue just prior to statehood and to the fear that the constitution would not be ratified by the people if such a measure were included. Uncertainty as to the railroad and commercial effects of annexation also plagued the delegates. And last but certainly not least in importance, the spectre of party politics that cast its shadow over the entire proceedings made passage of the proposal a practical impossibility.

The matter was closed, but the sting of the Kansans' rejection was mirrored in the South Platte press. The *News* was particularly vindictive in its assessment of the defeat.<sup>51</sup> Paradoxically, the North Platte press began to favor separation of the two regions, although quite probably the purpose of its advocacy was to rub salt into the wounds of the southerners and was not an honest expression of serious support.<sup>52</sup> Certain Kansans continued to preach extension of their northern boundaries for some months, but the Nebraskans had ceased to be interested.<sup>53</sup> The leaders of the annexation movement seemed to find no real problem in returning to their influential political positions in Nebraska, positions they had never really lost anyway. Robert W. Furnas, who had been an ardent annexation strategist, spoke in the Nebraska Territorial Legislature of a new feeling of unity between North and South Platte partisans:

It is needless to disguise the fact that an intense jealousy has been the result in times past. But we are happy to know, and state that this feeling is rapidly dying away; a better feeling is beginning to pervade the ranks of our people; a feeling of brotherhood which embraces the residents of all portions of the Territory. Let nothing be done by this Legislature to check the growth of this new and better feeling.<sup>54</sup>

It should not be supposed that the new sentiment referred to by Furnas settled over Nebraska Territory as a warm cloud of brotherly love, quieting passions in both disputing areas. There were still volatile political issues to be considered. The question of the location of the capital was far from settled and would continue to spark the sectional feud for the next decade. The immediate effect of the annexation experience seems to have brought only a brief respite in sectional troubles. It may also have encouraged a short-lived glimmer of interest in statehood, but for Nebraska that status was still eight years and a Civil War away.

## NOTES

1. J. Sterling Morton and Albert Watkins, *Illustrated History of Nebraska* (3 vols.; Lincoln: Jacob North & Company, 1907), I, 173-187, 396. See also, Walker D. Wyman, "Omaha: Frontier Depot and Prodigy of Council Bluffs," *Nebraska History Magazine*, XVII, No. 3 (July-Sept., 1936), 145-146.
2. Nebraska Territory, House, 2nd Sess., Jan. 17, 1856, *Journal*, 120-121.
3. *Nebraska News*, (Nebraska City), Jan. 2, 1858, 1.
4. *Ibid.*, Jan. 9, 1858, 2.
5. *Ibid.*, Jan. 16, 1858, 2.
6. Daniel W. Wilder, *Annals of Kansas* (Topeka: George W. Martin, Kansas Publishing House, 1875), 161.
7. Kansas Territory, *Laws of Kansas* (1859), 651, cited in Morton and Watkins, *Illustrated History of Nebraska*, I, 404.
8. Sam A. Medary to W. H. Taylor and M. W. Reynolds, May 16, 1859, printed in Morton and Watkins, *Illustrated History of Nebraska*, I, 405-406.
9. *Nebraska Advertiser* (Brownville), Mar. 4, 1858, 2.
10. *Ibid.*, Mar. 18, 1858, 2.
11. *Omaha Nebraskan*, n.d., cited in *Nebraska News*, Feb. 27, 1858, 2.
12. Albert Watkins to J. Sterling Morton, Nov. 23, 1858, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, J. Sterling Morton Papers, microfilm ed., roll 2. Hereinafter cited as Morton Papers.
13. *Nebraska City News*, Dec. 11, 1858, 2. (*Nebraska News* before May 15, 1858).
14. *Ibid.*, Dec. 18, 1858, 2.
15. *Nebraska Advertiser*, Dec. 9, 1858, 2.
16. *Ibid.*, Dec. 2, 1858, 2.
17. *Ibid.*, Dec. 23, 1858, 1-2.
18. *Nebraska City News*, Dec. 25, 1858, 2.
19. J.J. Haden to J. Sterling Morton, Dec. 20, 1858, 2, Morton Papers, roll 2.

20. U.S. Congress, House, 35th Cong., 2d Sess., Dec. 23, 1858, *Congressional Globe*, pt. 1, 201.
21. *Nebraska Advertiser*, Jan. 6, 1859, 2.
22. *Ibid.*, 1. See also Morton and Watkins, *Illustrated History of Nebraska*, I, 399-400, 400n.
23. U.S., Congress, Senate, "Memorial of the Citizens of Nebraska Territory Residing South of the Platte River in Convention Assembled at Brownville, January 5, 1859," *Territorial Papers of The U.S. Senate, Nebraska Territory, Feb. 12, 1853 - Jan. 9, 1867*, RG46, National Archives and Records Service, microfilm edition, roll 16. Hereinafter cited as *Territorial Papers*.
24. *Nebraska Advertiser*, Jan. 18, 1859, 2.
25. *Ibid.*, Jan. 27, 1859, 2. Cass County harbored considerable anti-annexation sentiment. *Nebraska Advertiser*, Jan. 20, 1859, 2, conceded a slim majority to the opposition. *The Cass County Sentinel*, (Plattsmouth), however, had supported annexation for some months. *Nebraska News*, Mar. 6, 1858, 2.
26. *Omaha Times*, Jan. 13, 1859, 2. Morton and Watkins, *Illustrated History of Nebraska*, I, 399.
27. *Ibid.*, Jan. 20, 1859, 3.
28. U.S. Congress, Senate, "Petition of Citizens of Cass County, Nebraska Territory, Protesting Against Proposed Dismemberment of Any Part of Nebraska Territory to Kansas," Jan. 26, 1859, *Territorial Papers*, roll 16.
29. *Omaha Times*, Jan. 20, 1859, 3; Jan. 27, 1859, 3; Feb. 3, 1859, 2; Feb. 24, 1859, 3.
30. *Ibid.*, Feb. 10, 1859, 1.
31. U.S. Congress, House, Letter on Annexation of Territory from Governor of Kansas, Feb. 9, 1859, transmitting a resolution of the legislative assembly of that territory relative to the annexation of that part of the Territory of Nebraska lying south of the Platte River to the Territory of Kansas, 35th Cong., 2d Sess., 1859, *House Misc. Docs.*, Vol. I, No. 50.
32. *Nebraska City News*, Feb. 19, 1859, 2.
33. *Nebraska Advertiser*, Feb. 17, 1859, 2. See also T.J. Mackey, C.F. Holly, and J.B. Bennett to president pro-tem of U.S. Senate praying for annexation of South Platte region to Kansas, Jan. 28, 1859, *Territorial Papers*, roll 16.
34. Bird B. Chapman to J. Sterling Morton, Feb. 14, 1859, Morton Papers, roll 2. *Nebraska City News*, Feb. 19, 1859, p. 2
35. Resolutions of the convention held at Nebraska City on May 2, 1859; excerpts quoted in Morton and Watkins, *Illustrated History of Nebraska*, I, 400.
36. *Nebraska City News*, May 7, 1859, 2.
37. *Nebraska Advertiser*, June 9, 1859, 2.
38. *Nebraska City News*, June 11, 1859, 2.
39. Morton and Watkins, *Illustrated History of Nebraska*, I, 401.
40. Sam A. Medary to W. H. Taylor and M. W. Reynolds, May 16, 1859, printed in Morton and Watkins, *Illustrated History of Nebraska*, I, 405-406.
41. Kansas Legislature, *Kansas Constitutional Convention, A Reprint of the Proceedings and Debates of the Convention Which Framed the Constitution of Kansas at Wyandotte in July, 1859*, (Topeka: Kansas State Printing Plant, 1920), 243. Hereinafter cited as *Proceedings of the Kansas Convention*. W. R. Griffith, a delegate from southern Kansas summed up the opposition sentiment of that section. The major reasons for opposition were: Annexation (1) would not advance railroad and commercial interests of Kansas, (2) would imperil early admission to the Union, (3) would be unjust to northern Nebraska, (4) would upset the balance of free and slave states causing its defeat, and (5) would possibly cause loss of a portion of southern Kansas.

42. Morton and Watkins indicate that certain Kansas newspapers, notably the *Leavenworth Herald* and *Topeka Tribune*, advocated South Platte annexation. Morton and Watkins, *Illustrated History of Nebraska*, I, 400.
43. *Proceedings of the Kansas Convention*, July 12, 1859, 95.
44. *Ibid.*, July 15, 1859, 205-212.
45. *Ibid.*, 212-219.
46. *Ibid.*, July 16, 1859, 229.
47. *Ibid.*, 237-239.
48. *Ibid.*, 239-240.
49. *Ibid.*, 225-261.
50. *Ibid.*, July 22, 1859, 384-396.
51. *Nebraska City News*, Aug. 6, 1859, 2.
52. *Omaha Nebraskian*, Oct. 27, 1860, excerpt quoted in Morton and Watkins, *Illustrated History of Nebraska*, I, 406.
53. Morton and Watkins, *Illustrated History of Nebraska*, I, 405.
54. Nebraska Territory, Council, Robert W. Furnas speaking against the passage of H. F. 75, "A bill for an act appropriating \$1,000 to erect a bridge across Black Bird Creek on the Omaha reservation," 6th Sess., Jan. 3, 1860, *Journal*, 135-136.