



Postscript: Settling an Election Bet, 1912

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Full Citation: David L Bristow, "Postscript: Settling an Election Bet, 1912," *Nebraska History* 95 (2014): 196

Cataloging Information:

Names: Alois "Chicken" Slepicka, Henry A Greer

Nebraska Place Names: Wilber

Photographs / Images: Greer pushing Slepicka in a wheelbarrow, November 9, 1912

Settling an Election Bet, 1912



NSHS RG813-229

In this postcard made to commemorate the event, a smug-looking Alois “Chicken” Slepicka rides a wheelbarrow pushed by Saline County Sheriff Henry A. Greer. The two Democrats were settling a bet: Greer predicted that Democratic nominee John H. Morehead would defeat incumbent Governor Chester Aldrich by at least 20,000 votes. Slepicka disagreed, and when Morehead won by only 12,000 votes it was time for the sheriff to pay up. Starting at the courthouse, Greer wheeled the gloating Slepicka through the streets of Wilber, with a marching band “in their wake to give energy to the pusher in chief,” according to the *Saline County Democrat*.

“It was a warm day but Sheriff Greer acquitted himself heroically with perceptibly no great fatigue except possibly from the loss of a few quarts of perspiration. At various cross streets, a halt was made and Chicken soared aloft in oratorical flights” as he explained the reason for the sheriff’s labors.

The wheelbarrow is adorned with pictures of Woodrow Wilson and John Morehead, both of whom unseated Republican incumbents in their respective races. The future held electoral victories for “Chicken” as well: though the former county clerk was currently out of office, Slepicka would later serve as Wilber’s mayor (1924-32) and as a Nebraska state senator (1935-39).

David L. Bristow, Editor