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HOWARD KENNEDY  
1729 SOUTH 26TH STREET  
LINCOLN, NEB.

Loaned by Mrs. Ethelwynne Kennedy Grigor  
of Omaha, Neb.

The Free School Advocate, the first number of which was issued Dec. 21, 1859, is believed to be the product of the earliest efforts in the direction of school journalism in Nebraska.

Editorials, essays, verse, fiction, news items, commendations, etc. were contributed by various pupils of the Omaha High School and these were copied laboriously, in long hand by the pupil editors. The paper was issued weekly and was read aloud on stated occasions as part of the school exercises.

The copies which have been preserved are rather interesting both as an evidence of the educational methods and attainments of that pioneer community and also as reflecting to some extent the social and political atmosphere of the time and place.

The public school system of the city of Omaha was inaugurated on November 10, 1859, pursuant to an act of the territorial legislature of 1858.

The first school board was comprised of Alfred D. Jones, John H. Kellom and Dr. Gilbert C. Monell (grand father of the present United States Senator Gilbert Monell Hitchcock).

The first superintendent of schools was Howard Kennedy, brought from New York State "to teach the higher studies and superintend the subordinate teachers in the different schools"

No school house had been built as yet, so Mr. Kennedy opened school in the old State House on Ninth Street between Douglas and Tarnam. There were five subordinate teachers, four of whom were employed in the school conducted in the State House and one taught primary classes in a small building near the intersection of Thirteenth and Douglas Streets.