

Nebraska Stock Growers Association

Organized for the Protection of Nebraska Stockmen—A Growing Organization of Immense Value to Its Members.

By Lloyd C. Thomas

The Nebraska Stock Growers association is a Nebraska institution and from its plan and lead have been organized many other similar institutions throughout the west. It was first organized in 1895, when cattle thieves were thicker than cattle owners in western Nebraska and there was great need of co-operation among the stockmen.

Cattle and horse stealing at that time was a fine art and from the way



R. M. HAMPTON, PRESIDENT.

in which stock was stolen it appeared that the thieves had an organization of their own. The first organization was perfected at Alliance and was merely a local one. But as its purpose became known and the good results accomplished were seen applications poured in and the scope of its work was gradually extended. The membership at first was only about forty members.

For the first few years it was hard to convict the thieves for they were so thick and had so many sympathizers that the courts were afraid of them and prosecutions failed, because the courts would continue the cases from time to time, or juries favorable to the thieves would be secured. But as the organization increased in strength and numbers and some of the thieves were sent to the penitentiary, things looked better for the stockmen.

Articles of Incorporation were filed in 1900, the first officers being S. P. Delatour, president; A. M. Mollath, vice president, and J. R. VanBoskyk, secretary. The Executive committee consisted of W. H. Corbin, A. S. Reed, Ed Coumbe, John M. Adams, W. G. Comstock, L. J. Schill, R. Lisco C. A. Johnson, Ed Ross, Thos. Lynch, James H. Cook, R. M. Allen and L. W. Bickel.

Since that time the association has grown until there are now 260 members and over \$500,000 has been saved to its members since the time of organization. Since the last annual meeting held July 5-6-7, 18,000 has been received from strays and turned into the association, from which it is returned to members.

The following extracts from the Articles of Incorporation show who may be members and what the fees are:

"No person shall be a member of this association except a stock grower, defined by the following, viz: A person owning or controlling live stock, and engaged in the business of breeding or growing the same for profit. To become a member of this association all persons must be proposed by a member. Each proposition must be accompanied by the fee of admission hereinafter specified, together with the number of such animals owned or controlled by such person, or his firm or company, with all the brands and marks of such stock. ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

"The admission fee shall be two dollars and fifty cents, which shall accompany each application, and no one shall become a member without such payment. The annual dues shall be two dollars and fifty cents. ♦ ♦ ♦ All members shall be subject, not oftener than once per annum, to assessment, not more than two and one-half cents per head on all cattle, horses, mules, asses and other live stock of which each person may at that time be the owner.

"Whenever it shall come to the knowledge of any member of this association that any person is engaged in stealing or killing stock of any kind or other violations of law in relation thereto, he shall immediately notify the Executive committee, who are hereby empowered to act in such a manner as will, if possible, bring such persons to justice and recover the property."

A record book is kept by the secretary of all brands used by members of the association. The association has brand inspectors at Sioux City, South Omaha, St. Joseph, Kansas City, Chicago, Denver and the Indian agencies. All cattle going to these places are inspected and record kept of the brands.

It is advised by the association that all strays be turned in with regular shipments and turned over to the brand inspector of the association at the point of delivery. The inspector then sends in the money received, together with record of brand, etc., to the secretary of the association who forwards it to the owner of the stray.

The following extracts from House Roll No. 137, passed by the Nebraska Legislature of 1903, at the request of the association, show that this new law goes a long way towards effectively eliminating thieving.

Providing for the inspection of horses and cattle before shipment out of counties, for the appointment of an inspector by county boards, fixing his term of office, duties, compensation and bond, for fees for inspection and the disposition of the same, for the creation of a special fund for paying expenditures, for a provided for a penalty for violation of this act.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Nebraska.

Sec. 1. Whenever in any county in this state one hundred or more residents of such county who are each owners of cattle and horses shall petition the board of county commissioners, or board of supervisors in counties under township organization,

of their county for the appointment of an inspector of stock shipments from said county it shall be the duty of the said board to fix a time for hearing said petition and to give notice thereof by publication in a newspaper published in such county for two weeks immediately preceding the time of hearing, and if upon said hearing, upon due proof, the board shall find that such petition is signed by one hundred or more residents of such county who are each the owners of cattle and horses, it shall then be the duty of the board to appoint some suitable, competent person as such inspector for said county.

Sec. 3. The inspector appointed in any county under this act shall hold his office for two years from the date of his appointment, and until his successor is duly appointed and qualified. He may appoint deputy inspectors to assist in the work when needed and such deputies when engaged in their duties shall have the same powers and the same pay as the chief inspector.

Sec. 5. The chief inspector of stock shipments shall receive for his services for inspection of stock shipments the sum of four cents per head for cattle inspected and ten cents per head for horses inspected, to be paid by the owner of the stock inspected.

Sec. 6. It shall be the duty of every owner or shipper of horses and cattle in said county intending to ship cattle or horses out of said county to notify the inspector of stock shipments before the shipment thereof in ample time to enable said inspector to properly inspect the same.

Said notice shall be in writing and must state the time and place of proposed shipment and the probable number to be shipped.

Any person or persons, firm, railroad or other company or corporation who shall ship any cattle or horses out of the county without first having had the same inspected as in this Act provided and without having a proper certificate of such inspection, or who shall make, forge or use any false or fraudulent certificate of inspection shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and shall upon conviction thereof be punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) or by imprisonment in the county jail not to exceed one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment in the discretion of the court.

Sec. 7. It shall be the duty of the inspector of stock shipments either in person or by deputy whenever he shall have knowledge in any way of the intended shipment of horses or cattle out of his county, to immediately repair to the proposed place of shipment and make a careful inspection of said horses or cattle. He shall, after having inspected the same, make out a certificate of inspection, which shall be in writing and shall be executed in triplicate and shall contain the name of the owner or shipper of said stock, the number and kind, the place from where shipped and the time thereof, the proposed destination of the stock, together with all the marks brands thereon, and shall be

signed by the inspector, the original of which he shall retain in his office, a copy of which shall be delivered to the agent of the railroad company from which the shipment origi-

nated before the shipment is made, and a copy of which shall be immediately delivered to the owner or shipper of said stock and when properly made out and signed as hereinbefore provided, shall entitle the owner or shipper of said stock to remove the same from the county and shall entitle any railroad company to receive the same for shipment out of the county.

Sec. 8. The owner or shipper of any horses or cattle shipped under the provisions of this act shall pay the inspector an inspection fee of four cents per head for all cattle not billed to an open market, and 10c per head for horses so inspected at the time of inspection, and prior to the issuance of the certificate of inspection.

All such fees shall be retained by the inspector or deputy inspectors for his or their services.

Sec. 9. Provided, that Chicago, Kansas City, South St. Joseph, South Omaha and Sioux City shall be classed as open markets as long as they maintain brand inspection under the supervision of the Nebraska Stockgrowers Association.

Sec. 10. Provided, that where cattle are shipped to an open market no brand inspector shall be required at point of loading, and further provided

that where cattle are billed to an open market, it shall be a misdemeanor and violation of this law for the railroad company to allow the owner, shipper or party in charge to charge billing without first having secured from the inspector of the county from which the cattle originated, or from the Nebraska Stock Growers association inspector of South Omaha, a certificate of brands.

The yearly meetings are held at Alliance and are always attended by members from all over the state. The association has always waded out very zealously for the interests of its members and it is urged in the strongest terms that every stock raiser should become a member. It is only by co-operation that the interests of the stockgrowers can be rightly protected and no man will refuse to make application for membership when the benefits are presented to him. The expense is very low and the benefits derived great.

All applications for membership should be made to Chas. C. Janson, Secretary, Ellsworth, Nebraska. This gentleman is always pleased to give any desired information regarding the work of the association.

Martin Bros. & Co.

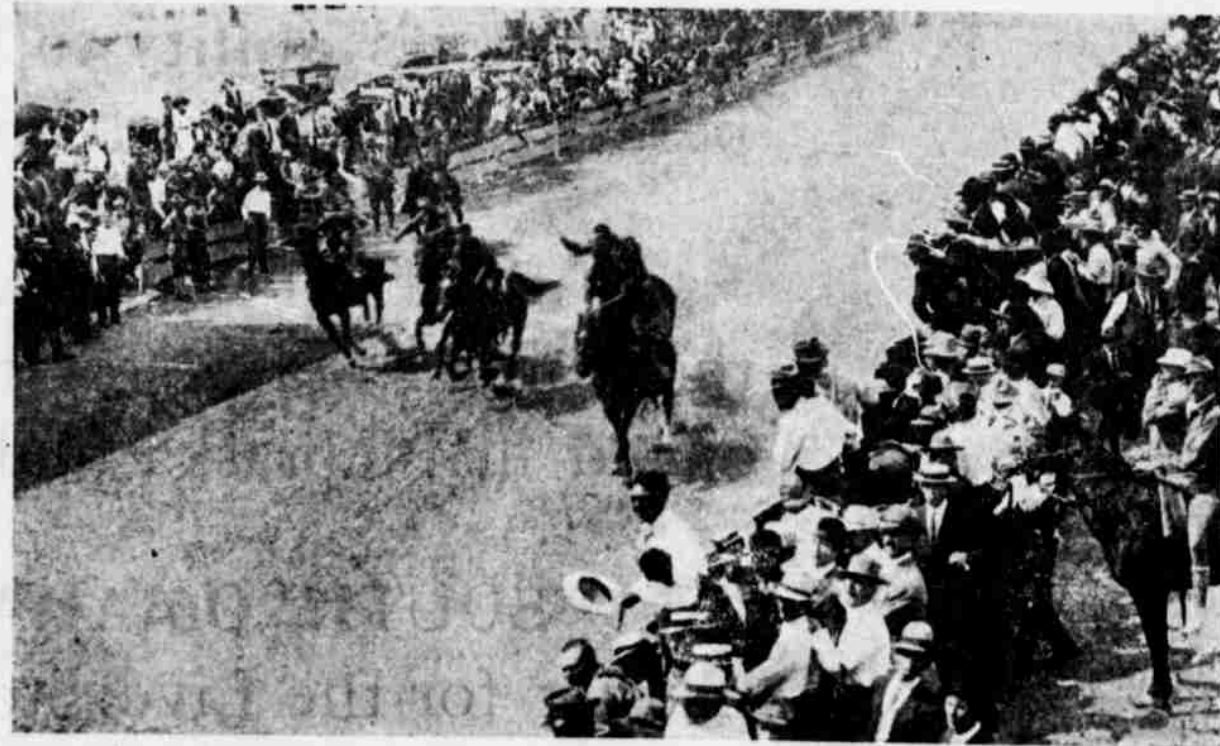
Live Stock Commission Merchants

South Omaha, Nebr.

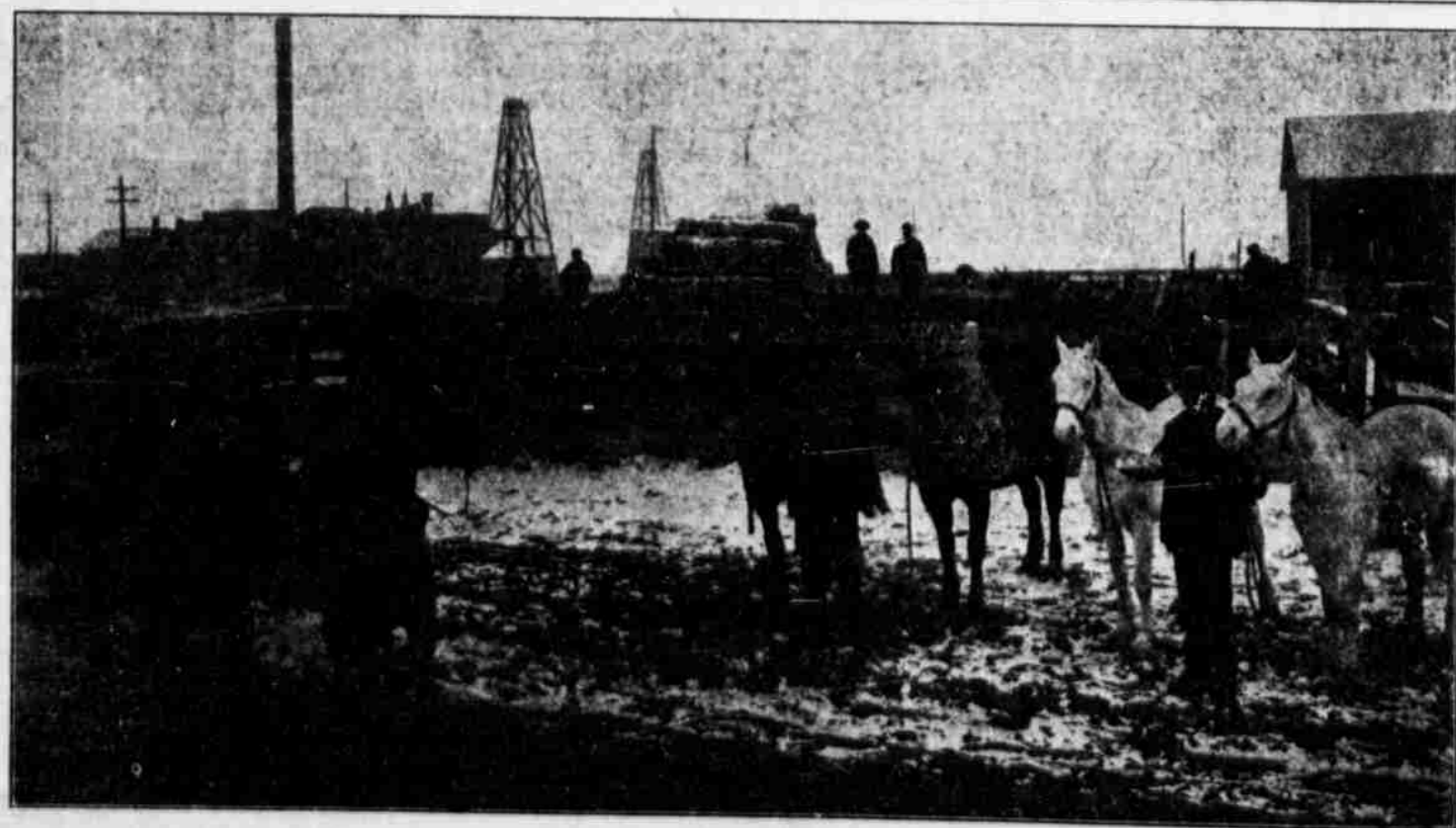
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