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In the beginning . . . Controversy part of UNL's past

By Douglas Engh Staff Reporter

first opened its doors for business in

The original 1869 legislature bill establishing the university suffered arguments that the state should be more concerned with high schools than colleges, that church denominations should be responsible for higher education, and that Nebraska had too small a population (100,000) to justify the expense.

Proponents argued that it was never too early to start a university, that many distinguished East Coast colleges started in this way - Harvard and Yale were given as examples - and that Nebraska had a "proud history" of free common schooling. The new university was seen as the logical complement to this history.

Land-Grant College Act of 1862, Ne- growth, but the problems were far from 90,000 acres of public domain to be constructed at this time, University used to finance education in the state. Hall was found to have been hastily But with the problems surrounding built of inferior materials, early statehood, land was not selected land was already claimed.

speculation frightened many into believ- ments and faculty salaries. ing that much of western Nebraska that the land sales would give the state classrooms and finally razed in 1948 to a university without any tax burden.

The endowment, mostly in northeast Nebraska, didn't realize the intended financial security, and was used to not When the University of Nebraska only finance the new university but also the State House, insane asylum, the fall of 1871 it was already a hot seat and penitentiary raising cries of fund for controversy as well as higher learn- mismanagement. Nebraska's first governor David Butler was impeached for this and other charges.



Under the chancellorship of Dr. A.R. With the federal government's Morrill Benton, enrollment showed steady braska was allowed to claim and sell over. As with many state buildings

After six years, extensive work on until 1871, long after most of the prime the foundation and other supporting structures had to be undertaken. These Even so, claims of inflated land expenses cut into program improve-

As the university grew in size and would soon be owned by "a few rich more buildings were added, University Eastern capitalists." Others countered Hall was converted into general use make room for Ferguson Hall.



Eric Gregory/Dally Nebraskan West entrance to the new Animal Science Building on East Campus. Construction is scheduled to be completed this fall.

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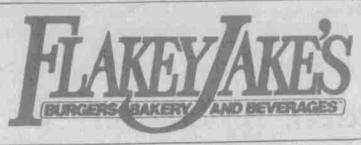
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