

# State Capitol building dedicated to brave settlers

By Melinda Norris

The year was 1932. In the midst of a drought and depression, Nebraskans dedicated the completion of the state capitol building to the brave pioneers who settled Lincoln and Nebraska.

Although the dedication glorified the courage of the first Nebraskans, it served as an inspiration to their ancestors who were fighting to save their land.

News of that dedication, and the events listed below came from the *Evening State Journal*, Nebraska's only newspaper in 1932; and *Tower on the Plains*, a 100-year history of Lincoln by R. Neale Copple, dean of UNL's School of Journalism.

1932. It was the twelfth year of prohibition, Herbert Hoover was running for re-

election, the Lindburg baby was kidnaped, and Adolf Hitler lost the German presidential election.

In Nebraska, eight northern counties, plagued by a summer drought and grasshoppers, received aid during a winter blizzard from the American Red Cross to feed starving cattle, horses and swine.

Drought relief in 87 counties in Nebraska, Montana and North and South Dakota cost the Red Cross \$1 million.

Headquartered in Norfolk, the Red Cross accepted donations from across the state and organized the Burlington and Northwest railroads to donate free freight.

Gov. Charley Bryan, brother to William Jennings Bryan, refused to call a special session of the Nebraska Legislature to allocate the \$12,000 in state relief fund to counties for food, clothing, hay and grain.

"Not unless I'm kidnaped," he said, would he leave the state for Lt. Gov. T.W. Metcalfe to call the session.

As the year dragged on, sheriff's auctions were held on the steps of the courthouse. Cattle, horses and machines were put on the block to satisfy mortgage requirements for farmers.

Looking for work, farmers came to Lin-

coln and joined relief recipients picking watergrass from the courthouse lawn.

Goodwill Industries opened its doors in Lincoln as an aid to the depression.

The Lincoln Trust Company and its subsidiary, Lincoln Safe Deposit Company, filed voluntary bankruptcy, taking depositors and security holders for \$2 million.



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