

NEBRASKA EDITORS SEE NEBRASKA FIRST

VISIT NEBRASKA'S VALLEY OF THE NILE ON ANNUAL OUTING.

VIEW AN EMPIRE IN BUILDING

A Hundred Nebraska Editors Get First Hand Knowledge of State's Garden of the Gods.

By Frank E. Helvey

Western Newspaper Union News Service. In days of old intrepid explorers returned from the Land of the Midnight Sun or the heart of Africa with wondrous tales of the lands they had visited. On the afternoon of Friday, August 11th, more than one hundred Nebraska editors, members of the Nebraska Press Association, with wives, sons and daughters, returned in their special train to Grand Island from a

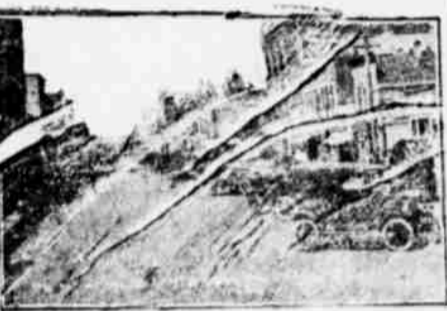


U. S. Postoffice, North Platte.

five days' trip into northwestern Nebraska, with a wondrous tale of the progress, prosperity and promise of that section of this sovereign state, which in interest and importance far outshines the stories of fact and fable of the old-time explorers.

Tired, travel-stained and happy, the editors left Grand Island for their respective homes on Friday evening, with the memory of a most delightful and educationally profitable trip fixed for all time in every heart and mind. Perhaps the most vivid and outstanding recollection in every mind was that of the literally overwhelming hospitality of the people of northwestern Nebraska. This one item baffles any attempt at adequate statement. Beside the reception given to the Nebraska editors and their families by the people of the northwest, the classic story of the entertainment offered the Prodigal Son on his return fades into the class of a crust of bread and a glass of water. The editors were shown that for the time being they owned the country and the fullness thereof was showered upon them in a manner so prodigious as to beggar description. It was overwhelming and our language contains no words or phrases that adequately express it. Everywhere it was the same, whether in village or more pretentious city, neighborly care and boundless preparation for the comfort and entertainment of every guest marked every moment of the sojourn. An automobile at hand for every individual at every moment of the day or night, entertainment for every hour, banquet piled upon banquet such only as the free-hearted and full-handed Nebraskan can provide, were mere accents to the good things that marked the hours of every day. Perhaps one thought may fairly describe it. This was the genuine brand of Nebraska hospitality, the like of which is to be found nowhere else in all the world.

Space limits will prevent anything more than the simple narrative of this unique and happy journey of more than one hundred editors and their



Central Avenue, Kearney.

families into the land of Promise which is also the land of Fulfillment. After viewing northwest Nebraska and drinking deep of its hospitality, the editors have unanimously approved the selection of "A Little Bit of Heaven" as the official ode of that section of the state and confirmed the rights of the people of the valley of the North Platte in its exclusive use.

GRAND ISLAND.

Sunday and Monday, August 6-7, the itinerant editors gathered at Grand Island and were royally cared for, feted and dined by the "Independent" under the personal supervision of Mr. A. F. Buschler. The splendid Liederkrauz hall and park was offered as headquarters and gladly accepted. The minstrel performance which was planned as a slight return to the people of the towns in which the editors remained over the evening was rehearsed and "licked into shape" to the partial satisfaction of all concerned, excepting Editor Cutright of the "Star," who to the last proclaimed that the show was "rotten." Visiting and renewal of acquaintance for all marked the very pleasant stay of more than a day in Grand Island.

On Monday afternoon the editors' special train was made available and

all returned to their assigned quarters for the five days' trip. The special consisted of baggage car, day coach, four Pullmans and the cafe, lounging and observation car "Nebraska," the latter in charge of Mr. P. P. Jones of Kansas City, who has been proclaimed a Prince of the Royal Blood by the Nebraska editors. To Mr. Jones everyone of the participants in the journey are indebted for a thousand favors and marks of thoughtful kindness and consideration. He well deserves distinct mention as his untiring courtesy made every hour of a long trip a joy to old and young alike and his name will ever remain a grateful memory to all. While on the Burlington system the special train was in charge of Mr. B. A. Kauffman, and on the Union Pacific in charge of Mr. E. C. Mallon, both of the passenger departments of their respective roads; to both of whom the editors extend hearty thanks for many favors during a trip, from which any incident of delay or discomfort was entirely absent.

At 3:30 Monday afternoon the special was ready for the first leg of the journey and pause is made for a moment to extend our thanks to the hospitable city of Grand Island.

BROKEN BOW.

Bowling along toward Broken Bow, the first stop and the first surprise came at Ravenna where a stop of 20 minutes to change engines was scheduled. Mr. J. H. Harrison had knowledge of this and two score of young ladies were at the station under his direction with lemonade, fans and ten gallons of rich leed buttermilk, all of which was very acceptable and much enjoyed.

Arriving at Broken Bow at 7 o'clock, the Commercial Club with many automobiles met the train with a band and a most hearty welcome. The editors and ladies formed a parade at the head of which the ladies of the party carried the magnificent flag made by the ladies of Ord, Neb., and presented to the Association. This magnificent ensign is 48 by 90 feet, requires two score of people to carry it and when displayed covers the average street almost from curb to curb. Forty of the ladies of the excursion party carried "Old Glory" in extended display and furnished a novel and attractive innovation in a Nebraska parade.

The editors' "Silver Cornet Band," organized among Association members by Frank A. Harrison of Lincoln, and directed by him, had its first try-out in the Broken Bow parade and stood the test grandly. The band under Mr. Harrison's energetic and competent leadership was a source of continual joy throughout the trip and added much to many an occasion. Mr. Harrison, Adam Breede and A. W. Ladd were the "Stars" of this organization and the "Newspaper Band" is now famous in northwestern Nebraska.

The visitors were given an enjoyable auto ride, a splendid banquet following, and then a formal welcome in the big chautauqua tent. Nearly three thousand attended to voice the welcome of Broken Bow to its visitors. The Association then offered in return as an expression of thanks for the splendid hospitality extended, a first performance of the Minstrel Troupe, providing an hour and a half of song and negro comedy. Either the "troupe" made a hit or Broken Bow people are kind enough to appear to like their guests when they don't, as applause and approval were generous and continuous. As "end men," singers and "coons," "Do" Tanner, George Foxworthy, Adam Breede, Will Israel, Will Kaupth and Asa Wood carried the honors, and a chorus of twelve made a foundation of fine harmony for the songs. An orchestra of six, directed by Frank Helvey, supplied the instrumental harmony for the colored brothers.

HYANNIS.

Shortly after midnight the special departed from Broken Bow for Crawford and the farther northwest, passing the good little city of Hyannis in the night without a stop but with good wishes for the many friends located there.

CRAWFORD.

Arriving at Crawford at 7 a. m. Tuesday, the editors found the same generous Nebraska welcome and hospitality awaiting them.

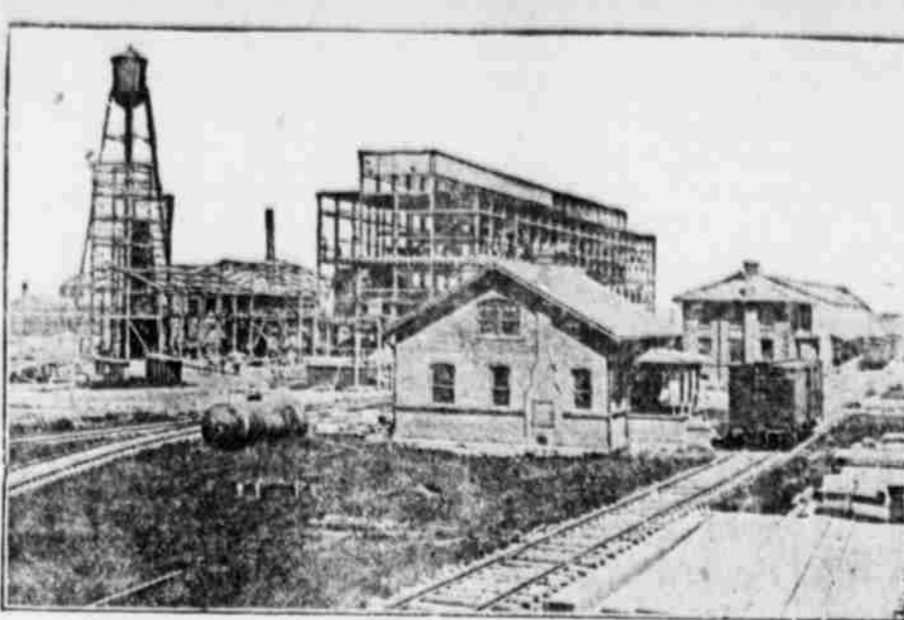
The visitors were taken by the Commercial Club in autos to the beautiful city park of Crawford, through which winds the White river, and given a bountiful breakfast, served by the ladies of the city. A splendid band gave a program during the meal, following which the party was taken for an auto ride out to Fort Robinson and through the adjacent country, returning at 11 o'clock to depart for Chadron.

(By Con. Lindeman, The Tribune.) Crawford, Dawes county, Nebraska, has a population of 2,000, is located on the C. B. & Q. R. R. and the C. & N. W. R. R., 415 miles from Lincoln, the state capital, 473 miles from Omaha, and 273 miles from Denver, Colorado, and is a natural distributing point of this section. Here the Paxton & Gallagher Co. have a large distributing place, and also the International Harvester Co. have their general western headquarters. There are two wholesale fruit establishments, a flouring mill, a mica mill, a wholesale hide buying station, two lumber companies, foundry, steam laundry, garages and many minor industries.

Crawford has the best of schools, four hotels, two banks, five churches, sanitary sewerage, best of water, electric light and power plant, 24 hours service.

CHADRON.

Arriving at Chadron at 12:30, the visitors were met by the Commercial Club, citizens and a splendid band and



Sugar Factory at Gering Showing Progress July 1, 1916

a parade formed with the Association flag and band in the post of honor. The parade to the city park was followed by an auto ride over the city and vicinity which terminated in a courteous banquet at the Depot Hotel. Here, as everywhere, the most charming young ladies of the city served the guests and a fine orchestra made the banquet an hour of delight. Formal welcome and appropriate response by President Davis marked the close of the feast and the visitors entrained for the long ride to Bridgeport via Crawford and Alliance.

Chadron, about thirty years old, has a population of 3,500, altitude of 3,375 feet, and is the center of a most productive territory. Has a creamery, ice plant, planing mill, cigar factory, harness factory, two brick plants, wholesale seed house, complete sewer system, flouring mills, municipal water system, twenty miles of cement walks, \$65,000 railroad payroll, twenty-four hours electric service, cement block plant, \$15,000 fair grounds. Chadron is the home of the Northwest State Normal School, a state institution established in 1910. Contiguous territory produces alfalfa, potatoes, and creamery products in abundance.

BRIDGEPORT.

Bridgeport was reached at 7:30 p. m., and the same hearty and sincere welcome, the same boundless hospitality extended as at other points of the journey. The visitors were entertained for supper, following which the Association Minstrel Troupe gave their performance in the opera house to a capacity audience. All along the journey old friends, now residents of the northwest, appeared in quest of former neighbors and friends. This was particularly true at Bridgeport, a large number of "reunions" being held during the stay there.

Bridgeport, county seat of Morrill county; C. B. & Q. Ry. Population about 1,500. Modern little city with progressive commercial club, two banks, good improvements, including \$25,000 court house. Surrounding country is being brought rapidly to the front by irrigation.

The city of Bridgeport is abundantly surrounded with irrigable lands and has several irrigation systems in sound financial condition. Under these irrigation projects, the lands are of a very fertile nature and produce crops of alfalfa, corn, wheat, rye, oats, potatoes, sugar beets, and all the vegetables and the products produced from these lands are of such diversified varieties that if the country was shut off from the world, we could produce everything that is necessary to satisfy the appetite.

Our alfalfa raises pork, and beef, and butter, and cheese, and honey, and various other necessities to supply the table. Our sugar beets produce the sugar. Our vegetables are of the best quality and are produced in enormous quantities. Last year there was shipped from Bridgeport over \$20,000 worth of cucumbers and cabbage alone, and this year will see that record increased by many thousands of dollars. This is a young industry but it is a mighty one.

The visiting editors were now in the irrigation district of the North Platte Valley and were prepared to view the Eden of which they had heard much. The realization was beyond their information or their dreams and as this land bowing with milk and honey unrolled before them enthusiasm for northwest Nebraska overleaped all bounds.



The Beautiful Park, Broken Bow.

BAYARD.

The good people of Bridgeport on Wednesday morning provided more than sixty automobiles for the purpose of conveying their visitors overland to the little city of Bayard, where the citizens of that community had invited the editorial party to join them at

dinner. The trip to Bayard was one of the most delightful of the entire outing, the arrival being made at the latter place before noon. At the noon hour everybody repaired to the large auditorium in the city, where one of the most bountiful dinners ever prepared in Nebraska was offered and consumed. Bayard is not a large city but its hospitality certainly outranks that of any metropolitan city in the world. Bayard will always be remembered as the most delightful fried-chicken center on earth, a careful statistician among the editors having computed that no less than 25 bushels of the most delicious fried chicken was consumed by editors and their families present. Bayard will ever remain one of the delightful memories of the trip.

Bayard, Morrill county; C. B. & Q. Ry. Population about 600. Well improved town and important trading center, with two banks, elevators, brick yard, newspaper and good stores.

Bayard's location in the heart of the North Platte Irrigation Project (largest in the United States), is most favorable. It lies across the Platte river from the historic landmark, Chimney Rock, in Morrill county.

Bayard has an adjacent territory of 75,000 acres of fertile irrigable land (more than can be claimed by



One of the Buttes Near Crawford.

any other town in the United States). The composition of the soil is the best in the state of Nebraska. The territory around Bayard is best adapted to dairying, stock raising and farming in all of its branches. The principal products are alfalfa, sugar beets, small grain of all kinds, potatoes and all classes of live stock. More than \$70,000 worth of freight business was handled through the Bayard station in 1915.

GERING.

Following the banquet at Bayard the visitors were taken across the Platte overland to Chimney Rock, a station on the Union Pacific, where they again met their special train and via Melbeta proceeded to Gering, where they were again met with enthusiastic welcome by the citizens of that charming and attractive town. Almost in the shadow of Scottsbluff, Gering is as attractive for its scenery and surroundings as it is for its wealth, progress and splendid citizens. Again the parade was formed, the visitors and citizens led by the big flag marching to the heart of the city, where the parade was disbanded and the first business meeting of the Association held during the afternoon.

As evening approached all the visitors were taken to the splendid Country Club adjacent to Gering, and at the very foot of Scottsbluff. Here, with the valley of the Platte as a 20-mile panorama spread before the eye, the western sunset providing a beautiful background, another banquet was offered the travelers, equal in its prodigality to any that was served at any place. Probably 3,000 people had gathered here to welcome the guests

body is talking about Gering. It is a paradox—the oldest and the newest town in the "panhandle." Through tribulations following cowboy days, through struggles to spread the waters of the North Platte over the fertile soil of the valley—it was fifty miles from a railroad—Gering maintained a healthful existence.

Its very life trembled in the balance before the menace of later rivals, yet the plucky hamlet clung to its being like grim death, to win out hands down after twenty-five strenuous and romantic years. The Union Pacific's ultimate main line was Gering's first impetus toward the front rank, and its population of 600 swelled to double in a year, augmented again last year by the inauguration of work on the big government canal which adds 107,000 acres to the south side irrigated area.

The final touch which stamped the seal of certainty came with the inception of the million dollar sugar factory, most modern in the world, which will make its first sack of sugar before snow flies this winter. The city, practically rebuilt within a few years, grows by leaps and bounds. 300 structures having been built this year; new high school and court house in prospect, and new enterprises and business added daily. Now 2,500 inhabitants, with less than half the factory force of 600 yet on hand. High and slightly, perfectly drained, amid scenic beauties and a wide expanse of intensely cultivated farms, with municipal water, day and night electric service, sewerage, half a dozen churches, accredited schools and no saloons—to use an idiomatic expression, "all hades can't stop her."

Early on the following morning the visitors were loaded in automobiles and started out on an excursion overland, which ended at Scottsbluff in the afternoon, after a trip of 75 miles through Nebraska's Garden of Eden.

MITCHELL.

Starting south from Gering, the seventy automobiles, extending in a line of more than three miles, crossed the Platte at the pretty little town of Melbeta, passed through the equally prosperous little city of Minatare and on north to the Minatare dam, a part of the great Pathfinder conservation project. The dam was an item of decided interest to all. It has cost the general government to build it nearly one million dollars. The party drove across the top of the dam, secured a splendid view of the adjacent country and proceeded south and west to Scottsbluff, where a short stop was made on the way to Mitchell, at which place the Community Club entertained the visitors to a dinner which amounted in fact to a banquet. Again the lavish hospitality of the northwest was in evidence, and after a drive through the streets of Mitchell, one of the finest little cities of the North Platte Valley, the party proceeded by auto to Scottsbluff for the afternoon business meeting of the Association, scheduled for that city.

All Nebraska is famous for its beautiful and accomplished young women. At every stopping point scores of charming young ladies assisted their capable and handsome mothers in serving the visitors with the world's best of everything. The official historian of this journey, after more than half a century of rambling over Nebraska, was commissioned to designate the most beautiful and charming young lady in northwestern Nebraska. This was a task to challenge the wisdom of Solomon and the artistic sense of an Old Master. Decision for a long time seemed impossible, less than a hair's breadth dividing the merits of hundreds of Nebraska's fairest daughters. At the thriving and attractive little city of Mitchell the problem solved itself. She lives there and her charming personality adds a garland of roses to her splendid little home city. If the editors of Nebraska be ever permitted to designate the portrait of a young lady to be placed on the coins and currency of our country it will be that of Miss Vera Springer of Mitchell, Nebraska.

(By G. E. Mark, The Index.)

Mitchell, the third in size of the towns of Scottsbluff county, having a population of about 1,200, first building in fall of 1900, incorporated in 1902. Is beautifully located on the North Platte Valley line of the C. B. & Q. Ry., near the north bank of the North Platte river, about 15 miles northwest of Gering, the county seat of Scottsbluff county.

Mitchell is in the center of the best developed and most productive irrigation lands in western Nebraska, the far-famed Mitchell valley under the Mitchell Ditch being tributary, as also lands under the Government's Interstate Canal, the Tri-State, Ramshorn, Enterprise and the proposed Fort Laramie ditches.

The government headquarters offices of the Reclamation Service for the North Platte Project are located here. Mitchell has a fine public school system, several churches, a number of fraternal societies, opera house and lodge building, electric lights, city water and sanitary sewer systems, a number of fine stores among which is the largest department store in the state west of Grand Island, two strong banks, several garages, a newspaper (The Index), an alfalfa meal mill, a pickle factory, and prospect for a beet sugar factory in the near future.

SCOTTSBLUFF.

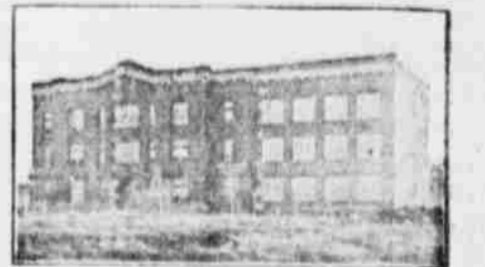
Arriving at Scottsbluff in the early afternoon hours, the same enthusiastic welcome was given as elsewhere. The Association immediately went into business session, effected the election of officers for the ensuing year, provided

for an adjourned business meeting at a later date, and adjourned in time to again face a stupendous banquet provided by the people of the city. To comment on the lavish hospitality of the banquet would be but to repeat what has been said over and over again. A wealth of good things, coupled with a sincere good will, reflected for Scottsbluff the boundless hospitality of its people.

Following the banquet the Association Minstrel Troupe again offered its hour of fun and negro comedy which seemed to be pleasing in a degree to a crowded house. About the midnight hour, with all aboard, the editors' special train turned eastward for the first time for the long return trip which would finally take the party to Grand Island, the Journey's end.

(By R. J. Dobell, The Star-Herald.) Scottsbluff, Nebraska, has grown in a few years from a small village to a city of the first class with a population of 6,000.

Situated in the very center of the North Platte Valley and in the heart of the finest irrigated section in the United States its advantages and possibilities are unlimited. While the erection of business blocks and dwellings is almost phenomenal they are



State Normal School, Chadron.

both substantial and artistic. Eleven new business houses are in the course of construction at a cost of over \$150,000 and over 100 new residences are being built.

The Great Western Sugar Co. is expending this year \$250,000 in the enlargement and remodeling of their factory here and a total of \$1,000,000 in new buildings and repairs that year.

Scottsbluff has one of the finest and best equipped creameries in the state, a fine modern hospital, a city with a fine water system, electric light, sewer and steam heat, two national banks and two state banks with a combined deposit of \$1,000,000, a Country Club, three miles out, in the shadow of Scottsbluff and one of the most beautiful spots in all Nebraska with golf links said to be the finest in the west. Business houses stocked with goods equal to Omaha or Lincoln. Scottsbluff ranks second in freight shipments of any city on the Burlington system in Nebraska, has a weekly, semi-weekly and daily paper.

NORTH PLATTE.

With deep regret at leaving the garden spot of the northwest, the special started on its long journey toward North Platte, which place was reached in time for a delightful breakfast under the auspices of the local Commercial Club. Here again the welcome was as warm and the hospitality as abundant as at any place in Nebraska. And in the mid-forenoon the special again started eastward for the mid-day stop at Kearney.

KEARNEY.

Without notable event Kearney was reached about 1 p. m. The same western welcome was extended at the train by the Commercial Club and citizens, a parade was again formed, headed by the big Ord flag, and the Association band, and the march taken into the center of the business section of Kearney. Here the parade disbanded and the good people of Kearney called their visitors to the banquet board, loaded with all the good things the mind of man can conceive. Here again genuine western hospitality was the passport and every Kearneyite a past-master in the lodge. Shortly after the good-byes were said with genuine re-



Street Scene, Bridgeport.

gret, the editors returning to their special for the last time. The short journey to Grand Island was soon under way and in the late afternoon hours the editors again arrived at Grand Island, to find that the hospitality of the people there had suffered no decline, and everything possible was done to make the remaining hours before departure for home thoroughly pleasant.

At Grand Island the party broke up into its original units, the late afternoon and early evening trains conveying most of the travelers toward their home towns.

The end of the journey brought distinct regret to everyone who had participated in it. No incident or circumstance marred the satisfaction of the travelers for a single moment during the entire journey and by unanimous consent the trip was voted an absolute and unqualified success, a fragment memory that would last through life.

Just prior to the departure of the early evening trains the Nebraska Press Association presented to Horace M. Davis, its retiring president, a neat gold watch fob, with monogram seal, in recognition of his untiring energy in the affairs of the Association and his unflinching courtesy and good-fellowship throughout the field of his labors for the Association.