

**THE PASSING OF A PIONEER.**

The following biography of John E. Evans was written by his brother J. D. Evans and appeared in the Nebraska State Journal for March 7, 1921. We print it in full.

Nebraska is no longer in the juvenile class. More than half a century has passed since President Johnson was forced to proclaim its admission into the union on an equality with the original states. The territorial pioneers have nearly all joined the majority. The second group of pioneers who came with a rush after the close of the war of the rebellion are rapidly falling in for the final roll call. One of this second group was John E. Evans of North Platte, whose recent death has been briefly noted in the press.

Born at Housburg, Tioga county, Pennsylvania, November 7, 1846; died at North Platte, Nebr., December 26, 1920. His parents were Evan Evans and Margaret Williams Evans, born in Carmarthenshire, South Wales, and who emigrated to America in 1841. The family settled in Pennsylvania, remaining there until 1849, when they removed to Sauk county, Wisconsin. Evan Evans was conspicuous among his neighbors as one who knew. He was mediator, referee and final arbitrator in most of the disputes and disagreements among the neighbors in that frontier settlement.

John was one of three brothers who served in the civil war. The First Wisconsin cavalry, which he joined as a recruit without any previous training, was constantly on the move during his entire service, never remaining in camp more than two days at any one time.

The winter following his discharge at the close of the war he attended the Silsby academy in the little village of Spring Green, Wis., and in the spring of 1866 started west in company with his brother, L. D., and a neighbor, David Evans. Going as far as St. Joe, Mo., by rail, at that point they took a Missouri river steamboat to Nebraska City, then a prominent outfitting and shipping point for freighting across the plains.

Here the boys engaged with David Brown (who died in 1901), to drive mules in his train transporting merchandise to Salt Lake City. John drove a six mule team, using only one line. It took two months to make the trip from Nebraska City to the Mormon capital. Fort Kearney was then an active military post and trains were held until the number traveling together were numerous enough to put up a good fight if attacked by hostile Indians.

Remaining in Utah until the following spring, John taught a school in a rural settlement near Salt Lake City. The school was supported by contributions from parents having children in attendance. At the close of the term many had no cash, and payment was made in kind. John hired a team loaded up with the products of the soil, carted the truck to the city and sold it as best he could. Business in Utah at this time was largely by barter. It was a thousand miles or more to a railroad over an uninhabited country and the products of the soil could not be transported by wagon that distance. This situation harmonized with the plans of the Mormon hierarchy which wanted to develop its peculiar institution unmolested by the gentile world.

In the spring of '67 John bought a pony and rode alone 500 miles over mountains and valleys to the mining regions of Montana where the other two boys had gone the summer before. After trying his luck prospecting and working in the mines—placer mining almost wholly in those days—for two summers, John returned to Wisconsin, and the next year (1870) came to Nebraska. After a short residence in Ashland and Plattsmouth, he settled in North Platte and went to work in the general merchandise store of Miller & Panniston. Here he made his home until the day of his death, almost fifty years.

In 1879 John made a trip to Oregon and bought a herd of cows, driving them to Nebraska, a hard and dangerous trip, with only here and there a settler, but infested with Indians who were not always friendly. While in the Snake river valley on the homeward route, with seven men assisting in the drive, strategy and a night drive alone saved the herd from being run off by the Indians and probably the lives of the party as well.

In the pioneer days politics sometimes got pretty hot. Being a division on the U. P., North Platte was classed as a railroad town. The monthly pay roll was a big fraction of the money in circulation. Not unnaturally the railroad thought it could run the politics of the town and county, as well as furnish the money to run their business. The democratic party was a negligible quantity. The fight, bitter as family fights are apt to be, was between the two factions of the re-

publican party—railroad and anti-railroad.

Before Australia taught us the use of the secret ballot, and before the advent of the direct primary a sort of primary took the place of the mass meeting caucus. A board to receive and count the ballots was agreed upon. Each faction selected its own candidates, printed its tickets and rallied its forces in the open.

On one occasion Pete approached the polls with an anti-ticket in his hand. His shop foreman stood on guard and said, "You vote that ticket and there will be a vacancy in the shop tomorrow." "Pete," said John Evans, "on guard for the anti, what did you come to this country for, to be somebody's tool or to be a free American citizen?" "I ban a free American citizen," said Pete as he handed the judge his anti-ticket. True to the foreman's threat, Pete lost his job. Political freedom is not always a guarantee of industrial freedom.

At a county convention following one of these hot primaries which the anti had won, John Evans was the candidate of his group for chairman. Having received a majority of the votes he went forward to take the chair and was met by a gun in the hands of the chairman of the county committee who was presiding. Without a halt in his stride to the front, John said, "you wouldn't shoot" and brushing aside the chairman and his gun took the chair and the convention proceeded to business.

It often happened that these contests were followed by contesting delegations under one pretext or another. The division was sometimes so close in the state convention that the contesting delegations from half a dozen counties had the balance of power. It goes without saying that the vote on admission of delegations had no reference to the merits of the credentials. If the regular delegates were on our side voted for them. If the contestants were friendly, no matter how flimsy the pretext of their claim, we voted for them. In this regard each faction pursued the same tactics.

At the convention that nominated Col. T. J. Majors for governor, John Evans was a prominent candidate for secretary of state. This convention was notorious for its turbulence. So lacking in deliberation and orderly conduct was the convention that it was next to impossible to keep a correct tally of the votes on candidates. The vote between Evans and Piper was so close that a verification of the count was demanded. As the call of counties proceeded half the convention was on its feet and changes and corrections were numerous, but finally Piper was declared the nominee.

Excitement reached its greatest height in this convention when Edward Rosewater announced his resignation as national committeeman, as a protest against the nomination of Majors for governor. John M. Thurston was immediately elected to the vacancy. In his speech of acceptance Thurston made a great hit, declaring as a climax that Nebraska republicans stood for the protection of William McKinley and the reciprocity of James G. Blaine.

Edward Rosewater, who could never be accused of lacking the courage of his animosities, lived to sorely regret his abdication of power on this occasion, even if he did succeed in defeating Colonel Majors for governor.

John Evans served one term as representative in the Nebraska legislature in 1901. A session made memorable by a senatorial contest that continued during the entire session. Owing to the death of Senator Hayward there were two United States Senators to be elected. D. E. Thompson who had been Hayward's principal opponent in the preceding session, had put in four years preparing for the contest. As a final tactical movement he formed a combination with Edward Rosewater which was expected to land both of them in the United States senate. It was a strong combination, strong enough to control the republican caucus. But the republican sentiment of the state was against Thompson and his political methods and against the Thompson-Rosewater combination and some members were pledged to their constituents to vote against Thompson. So it happened that nine members refused to abide by the decision of the caucus. As long as the nine held out there was no chance of an election. Resisting all sorts of political pressure, including that of the national committee the nine held out to the end, and on the last day of the session Thompson and Rosewater were dropped and Millard and Dietrich were elected. Following are the names of those who won this memorable contest: John E. Evans, Dan Swanson, Frank Jouvenant, J. J. McCarthy (of-ferwards elected to congress), C. F. Steele, A. B. Oleson, J. E. Hathorn and John A. Whitmore. It was a notable instance of representatives carrying out at great odds, the wishes of their constituents and of their own sense

of right.

June 8, 1881, John E. Evans was married to Miss Marion H. Hall. The Halls, father, mother and daughter, came to North Platte in 1871 from the state of New York. The forbears of the family came to America in colonial days, Mrs. Evans being a member of the D. A. R. and also of the W. R. C. Miss Hall was a teacher in the North Platte schools before her marriage, a lady of culture and refinement and a real home maker. Everett H. Evans, the only child, is a practicing lawyer, a graduate of Ann Arbor and twice elected mayor of his native town. He served two years in the navy in the world war.

North Platte was noted for its activities in support of the government during the world war. No troop trains ever passed through without being fed. Money was raised and used generously for the boys at the front or in camp. There were parades and demonstrations almost daily, with "Uncle John" carrying the flag. The Sammy girls, a wonderful organization of patriotic girls was a most effective group of workers and John Evans was their comrade and adviser. No group was properly started to the war without a few words of cheer and encouragement from John. While he hated the necessity of war, patriotism with John Evans was an obsession.

John E. Evans held many positions indicating his high standing in the county and state. When his friend, Judge H. A. Church, was elected department commander of the G. A. R., John was his assistant adjutant general. Later in 1912 John was himself elected department commander, filling both positions with marked ability and devotion. He was postmaster of North Platte, county clerk, clerk of the district court, deputy secretary of state, member of the legislature and for nine years registrar of the United States land office. For a time he was cashier of the North Platte National bank. Few excelled him as an expert in pension matters, in land titles and in his general knowledge of local and state government; while his grasp of national questions was the result of thorough study. The old soldier and his widow, the poor and the inefficient were served without money and without price not only, but with a hearty good will that warmed the heart.

He had many friends over the state and in Lincoln county no man had a wider acquaintance or a more devoted friend than John E. Evans. His widow and son survive him.

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**ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**  
BE IT KNOWN: That we, the undersigned, do hereby in pursuance of the laws of the State of Nebraska, associate ourselves together as a body corporate in manner and for the purpose herein after set forth.

The name of this corporation shall be the Platte Valley Poultry Breeders' Association.

The offices of the association shall be kept in the city of North Platte, Nebraska, and the principal place for the transaction of its business shall be in Lincoln County, Nebraska.

The term of the existence of this association shall be twenty (20) years.

The Capital stock of this association shall be one Thousand Dollars (\$1000.00) divided into shares of Ten Dollars (\$10.00) each, of which capital stock at least Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) shall be subscribed and fully paid before the commencement of the business of this association, and no stockholder shall be allowed to hold or be the owner of more than one share.

The object and general nature of the business to be transacted by this association, and for which it is being created shall be to place on public exhibition or show, poultry for the purpose of demonstrating and encouraging poultry breeders to raise a higher standard of poultry perfection and egg productions.

The business and affairs of this association shall be managed and directed by a board of directors to be elected by the stock-holders from among their number and not otherwise, which election shall be by ballot, each stockholder having but one vote, and which election shall be held on the date of the organization of this association, which board of directors shall elect and choose from their number a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, and all elections for directors thereafter shall be held annually on the first Saturday of February at the office of this association.

The Stock-holders at any annual or special meeting election may adopt any by-laws for the guidance and direction of said board of directors as may be deemed proper by a majority of the votes cast at such election, and a majority of said board of directors shall constitute a quorum to do business, and said stock-holders shall be entitled to one vote only and the right to vote by proxy properly authenticated will be lawful.

The board of directors shall have the general management of the business of this association, and are limited in their authority as to contracting any indebtedness over and above the cash in the Treasury.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, We, the undersigned incorporators hereunto set our hands and affixed our signatures hereto this 25th day of February, 1921.

John A. McDonald,  
M. C. Rogers,  
L. F. Simon,  
R. H. Jandebour,  
Edw. Walker,  
Arthur G. Artz,  
R. McFarland,  
L. I. Tucker,  
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J. H. Johnson, March 17, 9 miles southwest of North Platte.

Ralph Soper, March 22, 8 miles northeast of North Platte.

F. O. Johnson, 14 miles south of North Platte, March 23.

Scott Reynolds, March 29, 8 miles southeast of North Platte.

C. R. Swanson, March 30, 17 miles northeast of North Platte on Bill Ross' place.

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**ORDER FIXING CLAIM DAYS.**  
In the Matter of the Estate of Nettie A. Yohe, Deceased.  
Now on this 4th day of February, 1921, it is ordered by the Court that the executors be allowed one year from this date in which to settle said Estate, and creditors will be allowed until the 8th day of June, 1921, to file their claims, after said date, claims will be forever barred. That on the 8th day of June, 1921, and the 8th day of June, 1921, at 10 o'clock a. m. of each of said days, the court and the Executors will attend at the county court room in said county, to receive, examine, hear, allow, and adjust claims. That notice of this order be given creditors and all persons interested in said Estate by publication of a notice for four successive weeks immediately preceding the 8th day of March, 1921, in the North Platte Semi-Weekly Tribune, a legal semi-weekly newspaper printed and published in Lincoln County, Nebraska.  
(SEAL) WM. H. C. WOODHURST,  
County Judge.

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