

Daily Nebraskan Traces University's Beginning

By NORM LEGER

Another winter's day of wind howling across the lonesome prairie and an overcast sky with heavy clouds served as a background for E. E. Cunningham when he stood in the state senate to introduce the bill.

The bill, known as S. F. No. 86, was referred to the committee on education, and two days later the bill was read for the third time, passed and signed by Governor David Butler. The date: Feb. 15, 1869.

It was a law passed by the Nebraska legislature enacting "that there shall be established in this state an institution under the name and style of 'the University of Nebraska.' The object of such an institution shall be to afford to the inhabitants of the states the means of acquiring a thorough knowledge of the various branches of literature, science and the arts."

Provisions

The law provided for six departments or colleges, including: 1) literature, sciences and the arts, 2) agriculture, 3) law, 4) medicine, 5) practical sciences, surveying mechanics, and 6) fine arts.

Commenting on the enactment, Mr. H. H. Wilson, member of the class of 1878, who for 28 years was a teacher in the College of Law, and whose reminiscences were printed in the February, 1941, issue of the *Alumnus*, wrote "Nebraska had been a member of the Union less than two years when on Feb. 15, 1869, there was put on the statute book of Nebraska a law that has become famous as the Charter of the University of Nebraska. It is remarkable that at a time when there was very little accumulated wealth in the state, and when many of her citizens were dwelling in sod houses and dugouts, they envisioned the future of an educated and efficient citizenry."

Remarkable, yes, but explainable.

Pound Book

In the *Semi-Centennial Anniversary Book* published in 1919, Dr. Louise Pound, renowned university English professor, expressed her beliefs regarding the early establishment of an institution of higher learning in Nebraska. "From the first, the pioneer plainmen of Nebraska were not content to be absorbed only in the activities of the present. They were not only adventurers and workers; they were dreamers," she said. "We picture them as engaged in useful labors but as leading humble and routine lives, engrossed in pioneer tasks. We are likely to forget that they were a special breed of men, especially rich in ambitions and ideals—richer in these, it may be, than many of us who are their descendants."

Furthermore, according to Dr. Pound, "New regions are not sought by the weak or the timid or the dependent, but by those of stern make—men of unusual self-reliance, endowed with enthusiasm and with zealous ambition."

Only a few years before the University of Nebraska came into being, the Overland Mail Service operated across the Nebraska territory as did the famed Pony Express, which ended in 1861.

Population Centers

The population centers of Nebraska then were Omaha, Nebraska City, Plattsmouth, Falls City and Brownville, with the total state population of no more than 100,000. There were still thousands of Indians—Sioux, Winnebago, Omaha, Otoe—residing on government reservations.

The University of Nebraska was established just two years after Nebraska was admitted to statehood and four years after the Civil war and Lincoln's assassination. The city of Lincoln had been designated as the capital home only two years before, a time when Lincoln had a popu-

lation of 1,000, only well water, few or no sidewalks—and the present campus was raw prairie.

Any historical account of the beginning of the university can hardly overlook the building of University hall, the first structure on the campus.

Planned to Destroy It

That the Board of Regents once resolved to tear down the building shortly after it was built is a fact probably known to many. What prompted this resolution and its ultimate outcome was given an interesting recording by Professor H. W. Caldwell in 1889. The trials and tribulations brought about by the building of U. hall, as told by Prof. Caldwell, will appear in the Sunday edition of *The Daily Nebraskan*—Sunday, February 15, University of Nebraska Charter Day.

Latest Word on Cribbingston's Safari Into Women's Dorm

By SUSIE REED

It was many years ago that poor old Rochester J. Cribbingston loaded a train of camels, with bananas and journeyed into that vast unexplored region at 540 N. 16, a journey from which he was never to return.

It was in the year 2 that Cribbingston conceived the idea of exploring this territory to uncover the nature of the wild life there and reveal it to the world. He was but a youngster when he gathered his safari about him and headed into the girls' dorm. And that was the last that was heard of Cribbingston.

A few days ago, however, school authorities discovered a body on the steps of Love library. The authorities rushed the body to the Student Health Center where immediate medical attention saved his life.

World Abuzz

"Are you a student who has just received his semester grades?" inquired the attending physician. The old man endeavored to speak. "No," he said, his voice creaking, "I am Rochester J. Cribbingston." The astounded doctors reported their discovery to the newsmen, and soon the world was buzzing with the news of Cribbingston's return.

Today is the first day that Cribbingston has had the strength to speak. History professors and museum curators huddled around the sick man's bed, eager to learn of the terrors of the girls' dorm.

Cribbingston was too weak to reveal much, but he was able to present many amazing facts before the white-uniformed nurses asked the gentlemen to leave.

Long Story

Cribbingston's story began with his trip into the dorm. He told of the many days he spent working his way through the door amid the crowds of couples who were having a last minute "quickie." At last he made his way in. Immediately he was surrounded by swarms of savages in their native costume, jeans and shirts. The natives bound him

and carried him upstairs where he was tied to a post.

Tribal chieftans gathered in council, discussing the problems of the day. They spoke of classes, of grades, of men, and of parties, each one talking a little louder than the rest. While they spoke they consumed large quantities of kangaroo extract which they called "coffee." The dorm filled with smoke as the peace pipe was passed among them.

Suddenly a patter of feet was heard in the hall. The natives seized their prisoner, shoved him under the bed, and put out the campfire. All was quiet as Cribbingston shuddered with fright under the bed. After about fifteen minutes of silence, the fires were lit again and Cribbingston was hauled out.

Stuffed in Closet

The council talked on into the wee hours of the morning. Finally, Cribbingston was stuffed into a closet. From there, he heard the natives stomping and yelling wildly in a ritualistic dance. At last, the camp once more became quiet. Cribbingston stated that he had never spent such a terrifying night. Once the silence was broken by the sound of a fire alarm which rang out through the halls, bringing the startled natives to their feet.

At this point in Cribbingston's story, the soft-shoed nurses insisted that the gentlemen leave. Meanwhile, the world awaits more news concerning this region.

No Ag Movie

No movie is scheduled at Ag Union for Sunday, Feb. 15, according to Alice Matthauser, Ag Union director. The union will be closed until 4:00 p. m. on account of the Alumni organization's 79th birthday meeting in the downtown union the same day.

Coffee Hour will be held as usual at 5:00 o'clock in the union lounge. Coffee and brownies will be served and requests will be played.

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