

Febold Feboldson Is Hero of U N Book

By Gaylord Marr

America's folklore heroes are one of the most delightful aspects of our national heritage.

Nebraska's own Febold Feboldson, legendary Swedish pioneer who wrestled regional adversities in his attempt to make the state habitable in its pre-settler days, is the newest of the nation's mythical strong men.

"Tall Tales of the Great Plains," a recent publication of the University of Nebraska Press, captures in print Febold's more sprightly exploits. Compiled by former Nebraska Paul R. Heath, now with the Library of Congress, the collection is enhanced with bizarre drawings by Lynn Trank, native artist and graduate of the University of Nebraska.

Legendary before Literary Character

Febold first broke into print twenty years ago in the Gothenburg, Neb., Times. Don Holmes, editor, and Wayne T. Carroll, local lumber dealer who wrote a weekly column for the newspaper, encouraged readers to submit contributions concerning Febold's cavortings.

"Because I have published Febold more widely than either of his other champions, Carroll and Holmes, I have been credited with creating him," writes Heath in the introduction to his book. "I did

not. Febold and all his nephews were in existence when I came upon the legend."

Stories of the indomitable Swede have circulated across the Nebraska plains and in the small towns since pioneer days. The anecdotes told are typical of the life lived on the Great Plains and represent the lighter side of the plainsman's serious attempt to wrest a living from the land.

Bee-line Boundary

One of the many tall tales recount Febold's re-establishing of the Kansas-Nebraska boundary line after Paul Bunyan accidentally erased it when he turned the Kansas mountains upside down to satisfy the settlers who preferred plains instead. According to the yarn spinners, the President considered the Republican river as a boundary line between the two states. Washington lobbyists declared that such a decision would be grossly unfair to the Democratic party. Someone suggested that the President contact Febold.

Like most folklore heroes, Febold possessed an amazing tenacity of purpose. It took him fifteen years to complete the assignment, but he succeeded. Breeding bumble bees the size of eagles, he hitched these to a plow—and plowed a bee-line for a boundary!

Typical of the Nebraska pioneer, Febold turned adversity

to his credit. When the corn borer came, he turned the pest to producing corncob pipes. His ingenuity knew no bounds.

The Swede devised means—as effective as they were original—for combatting the drouths which beset the state, for ridding the region of grasshopper plagues, for inducing rain to fall when the elements became contrary, for coping with the bitter prairie blizzards. Why shucks, there wasn't anything Febold couldn't do, declare the old timers, none of whom actually remember the Swedish plainsman but all of whom perpetuate the tall tales of his adventures.

Febold, they assert, was the swiftest man in human history; he could blow out the lamp and jump into bed before the room got dark. One night, after his trusty houseboy, Little Ptomaine (a dispossessed Indian chief) had rearranged the furniture in the room without Febold's knowledge, the Swede walked into his bedroom, blew out the light and jumped for the bed. He struck the side of the house with such force, the story tellers say, that the foundation was stretched and the building tumbled into the basement.

Among the countless colorful incidents, these few indicate the horseplay and horse sense from which are woven the many tall tales of Febold Feboldson.

Handsome bound in colors of rust and yellow, "Tall Tales of the Great Plains" is available at a special student rate of \$2.50, at the sales department of the University Press, located in the basement of Architecture Hall.



SHARPSHOOTER PAR EXCELLENCE—With a single rifle shot, Febold Feboldson, legendary giant hero of the Midwest states, bagged the entire catch pictured in the top drawing above. Taken from "Tall Tales of the Great Plains," recent publication of the University Press. The incident resulted when the flock of ducks, killed by Febold's shot, fell on the dead tree, breaking it in two. The trunk of the tree fell upon a bear, killing it. Honey from a bee comb within the tree trickled into the stream attracting fish and two turtles which agile Febold nabbed with his own hands. In many similar amusing tales, Febold out-bunions Paul Bunyon, his folklore cousin.



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Movies Provide Aid to Linguists Says L. D. Teale

Gadgets have been a boon to present day foreign language students at the university.

Lloyd D. Teale of the modern languages department reported the progress made with movies, phonograph records, and wire recorders in teaching languages Saturday. He spoke before the annual meeting of the Nebraska division of the Modern Language Teachers association of America held on the university campus.

He said that the new devices eliminate much of the disinterest toward foreign languages left by older methods of instruction. He explained that they are particularly useful in teaching students to speak as well as read the languages.

"The movies provide students with cultural material about other lands which gives them a greater appreciation of the language they study," Teale said.

He outlined the use of the wire recorder as a corrective aid in learning to speak a language.

Dr. William K. Pfeiler of the university is present of the association.

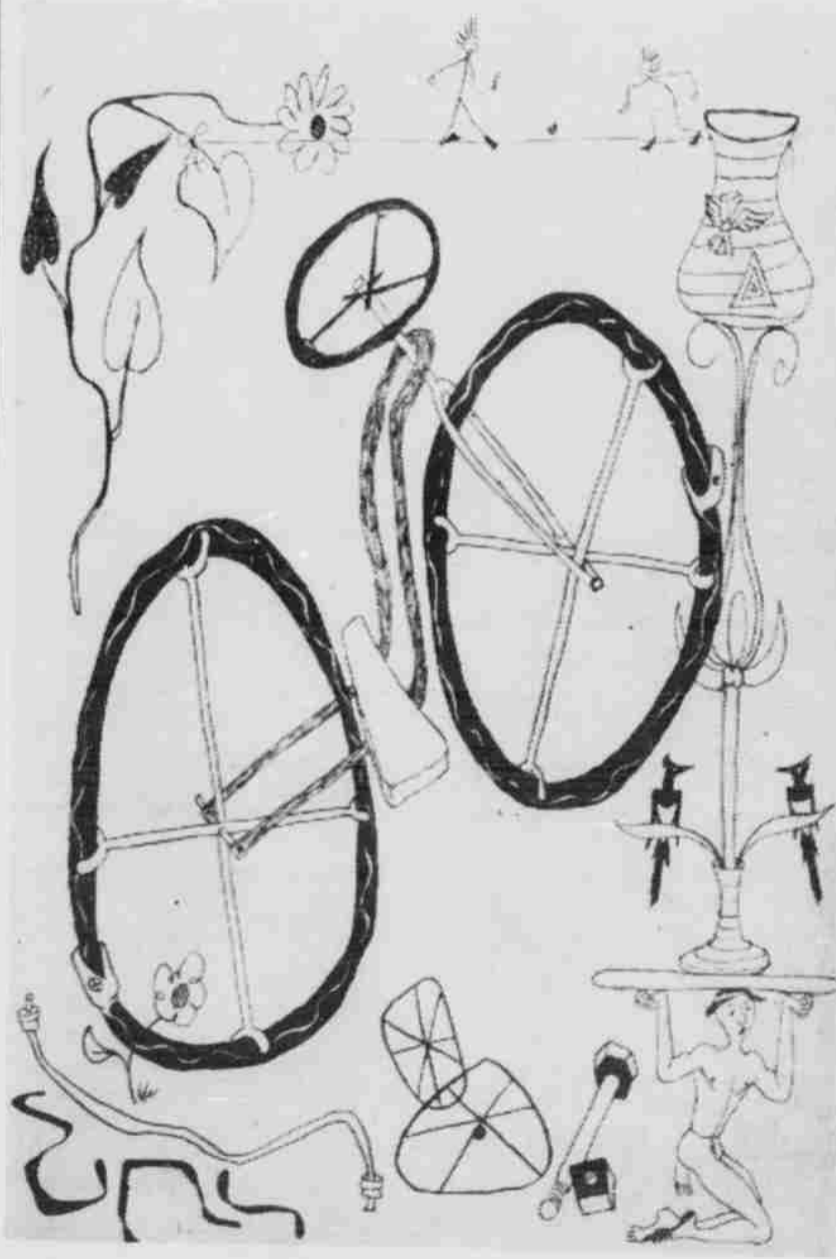


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ANTICIPATING MARCONI, Alexander Graham Bell and other so-called inventors. Febold was a fabulous inventor. In the lower drawing, artist Lynn Trank pictures the outcome of his ingenuity. His horse disabled with digestive difficulties, Febold pieced together the forerunner of the bicycle by filling two snakes with moonshine whiskey and persuading them to grasp their tails in their mouths. Adding an improvised seat to the snake hoops, Febold propelled the vehicle with his feet. Local Indians described the sight as "sitting down to walk!" Illustrated too is Febold's long-distance communication system which consisted of a taut rope on which various vibrations correspond to pre-arranged signals. The phoophil birds, perched on the leaves, proved the system's undoing, however.