

Early Nebraska Settlers

THERE are doubtless some Nebraskans still living who were here in 1854 and who were participants in the stirring scenes incident to the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill. Such early settlers are much better prepared than I am to speak in a reminiscent way of early territorial and state history and probably on this semi-centennial occasion they will contribute a fund of interesting information pertinent to those times.

My own personal experience in Nebraska did not begin until a little later. In August, 1868, I drove through from Burlington, Ia., to Nebraska for the purpose of locating a home. I had some friends living in Butler county, and the fact that they were well satisfied with their new surroundings induced me to journey in that direction. After a short visit with them I pushed on a little farther and crossed into what is now Polk county, where on September 2 I located a homestead, a property on which I subsequently lived with my family for a number of years.

At that time the immigration to Nebraska was beginning to assume considerable proportions, but it was not until 1871-2 that it had reached the flood tide. Ours was the second home established in Polk county. I built the first frame house in that county, a one-story structure, 12x18 feet. That was in the spring of 1869. I hewed the sills and floor joists from native timber, and the shingles were made from native cottonwood blocks. The siding and other necessary lumber were hauled from Lincoln by my teams, having been previously hauled to Lincoln from Nebraska City, to which latter point shipment had been made by water. The first white child born in Polk county was Edgar T. Roberts, in 1869. The second was my oldest son, O. E. Mickey, born in 1870.

I mention these personal matters simply as evidence that I was reasonably early on the scene in that part of the state and had an opportunity to form an idea of what pioneer life was. If one were to describe Nebraska as it appeared in those days he would have need for but few words. Omaha and Lincoln were both small places and gave but little promise of the splendid development to which they should attain in later years. As I remember, the Union Pacific was the only railroad within the state, and that was in process of construction.

The majority of the important settlements were either in the Missouri valley or very close to it. A general sentiment seemed to exist that settlers could not maintain themselves west of the central portion of the state, and hence nearly all commercial and agricultural activity was confined to the eastern portion. The public school of the states to the east were teaching that a treeless waste known as "The Great American Desert" lay west of the Missouri, including all of Nebraska and extending to the foothills of the Rocky mountains. It took time to dissipate this erroneous idea and that probably accounts for the fact that emigration to Nebraska was delayed as long as it was.

But it is impossible to keep a good country very long in the background. In due time the idea permeated the eastern and middle states that this section had been maligned; that here was a country well suited to home-making, rich in agricultural possibilities and capable of sustaining a large population. The result of this correct conception we see in all parts of the state today. The prairies have been compelled to yield their increase, the buffalo grass has given way to pastures and

meadows of timothy and alfalfa, orchards and areas of small fruit are a part of the equipment of nearly every rural habitation and the evidences of peace and plenty are on every hand.

During the fifty years since the erection of the territory the population has increased to nearly 1,500,000 of happy, contented people, all imbued with the idea that they live in one of the best countries on earth. It is not necessary to go into figures and statistics in order to illustrate our growth.



From Desert Waste to Diadem

FIFTY years in Nebraska! How vast the theme! When we look at the Nebraska of fifty years ago, marked on the maps of that day as a part of the great American desert—a barbaric land without a landmark and without an inhabitant except the untutored and savage Indian, and then view it as it is today in all its magnificent grandeur, with its thriving cities and towns, its well-cultivated farms and its immense herds of domestic animals, the contrast is so great that it hardly seems a reality, and more like products of the necromancer's art—like the scenes and pictures from some wondrous dream. But the magic which has produced this is not the sorcerer's spell. It is the genius of the world's dominant race, which has touched with deft hand the eager earth and extracted therefrom untold wealth and produced within our borders cities and towns, and fields a-blossom and a-bloom. From May, 1854, to May, 1904, what wondrous change! From the waste of a desert to the diadem of a splendid state.

The great state of Nebraska is but a small part of that immense territory which President Jefferson purchased from France in 1803, the one-hundredth anniversary of which purchase is now being celebrated in St. Louis, Mo., by the grandest exhibit the world has ever seen. Napoleon was fully aware of the value of what he abandoned and said he renounced it with the greatest regret. He knew he was losing an empire of imperial dimensions.

At the time of the passage of what was known as the Kansas and Nebraska bill in 1854, there was great agitation in congress on the slavery question. The law permitted any state to vote for or against slavery and in Kansas and Nebraska was fought the first battle for emancipation. There were six slaves in Nebraska in 1858, and a bill was introduced in the legislature to abolish slavery. In the debate on its passage one of those who favored the bill quoted those memorable words of the immortal Lincoln: "We will hereafter speak for freedom and against slavery as long as the constitution guarantees free speech; until everywhere in this broad land the sun shall shine, and the rain shall fall, and the wind shall blow upon no man who goes forth to unrequited toil."

The constitution of the state of Nebraska as adopted by the legislature excluded the

FIFTY years ago, when Nebraska included most of the area which now comprises the states of Nebraska, North and South Dakota, Wyoming, Montana and Idaho, there was not anywhere in the territory a substantial town or village of white people.

Within the memory of the living the region was in the possession of Indian tribes. Half a century ago military posts had been established at Fort Kearny, Fort Laramie and a few other places, but there was no settlement of whites in those days which deserved the name of a town in either Kansas or Nebraska. Forts Laramie and Kearny were the prominent positions in the southern part of the territory. In the northern parts there were Forts Pierre, Clarke, Union, Benton, Berthold, Alexander and Manuel's Fort, the last three of which were in the Yellowstone, and all were stations of the Fur company. Besides these there were a few scattering trading posts and emigrant camps. This is the catalogue of the civilization of the great Nebraska territory fifty years ago.

negro from the right of suffrage. Congress passed an act to admit the state, provided the word "white" be stricken out. President Johnson vetoed this act and it was passed over his veto. In February, 1867, the legislature was convened and accepted the fundamental conditions imposed by congress. On March 1, 1867, President Johnson issued a proclamation declaring Nebraska a state.

The early settlers of Nebraska had much to contend with. After the panic of 1857 our people were much disheartened. There was no demand for property of any description—not even the richest farming lands. Our money consisted of "city scrip" and bills issued by banks, without limit and without security. Gold and silver, what little there was of it, was hidden away, and in the fall of 1867 was at a premium of 50 to 60 per cent. The next year all paper money, almost without exception, was entirely worthless. After that we had devastation of crops by grasshoppers, Indian depredations and the massacre of settlers, and it was not until after the completion of the Union Pacific railway that the last relic of Indian savagery was swept from the face of this fair land that peace and quiet reigned.

Five years prior to the first settlement of the territory, but three states of the union had a larger population than that of Nebraska today, and it is safe to hazard the prediction that before the next general census our people will number over 2,000,000. Today Nebraska is looked upon as a marvel of rapid and enduring growth. And what should be a source of pride to us all is that within its borders is found the highest grade of public education and the lowest percentage of illiteracy of any commonwealth in the land. Education, the ordinances of morality and Christian endeavor are the essential elements which shall preserve this nation and this state. While these remain, who shall compete with us in the honors due to a state, and who in our abundant harvests, our un-pastured plains and valleys, our rich balances of trade, our increasing commerce and the expansion and reward of labor?



Rev. Edward Everett Hale is the author of the first history of Nebraska, which was published in New York in 1884. It gives a complete account of the geographical and physical characteristics and the political position of the territories of Nebraska and Kansas from the best information obtainable up to the time the manuscript was given to the publishers on August 21 of that year. It is interesting to note that while Rev. Hale fully realized the wealth of the territories' resources, he did not hazard, even to a small degree, to predict the wonderful development which has taken place during the half century. Cautiously he ventured to hope, with some feeling of confidence, that Nebraska and Kansas as they then existed would some day be taken into the union. Where Rev. Hale hoped there might be two states there are now eight, and as chaplain of the United States senate, instead of seeing this vast western territory represented by four members in that body, there are now sixteen.

"It must be that the settlement of the new territories by the best population which can be given them shall command the active effort of all true lovers of their country," wrote Rev. Hale. "The crusaders are already on their way. They will need only the guides, who shall show them the fairest lands in the world. No propagandism is needed to instill them. Thus will this emigration, with the rapidity with which it now proceeds, add almost at once two new free states to the American union. It is not within the province of this book to look farther. It is enough to foresee so great a victory of the right as is this. It will be only by a miracle of indolence, by blindness utterly incurable, that the men of the free states can forfeit such a prize."

When Rev. Hale wrote thus hopefully the Missouri river was navigable by steamboats all the way to Great Falls, and boats of fifteen inches draft had actually traversed the river that far. The Yellowstone had been navigable eighty miles from its mouth. The steamboat El Paso had ascended the Nebraska or Platte river 500 miles from its mouth. And still, without the navigation of this great system of rivers, upon which many of the fond hopes of the early pioneers were based, the country has developed and grown beyond the dreams of the most sanguine.

What will the next fifty years bring forth? Nebraska is yet in its infancy, and its development has only begun. I firmly believe that the next fifty years will see as great, if not greater, development than has taken place during the last fifty. The utilization of our waters for irrigation and for electricity, and the discovery of products better adapted to the section, and of better methods of working out our resources, will bring this about. The next fifty years will see Nebraska waters, which now wash unused into the Gulf of Mexico, harnessed for all kinds of industrial purposes, and our towns and cities, and even the farms, will be accessible through the establishment of interurban railroads in as complete a system as the telephone and telegraph of today.



Uses of Photography in Modern Advertising

A PHOTOGRAPHER who does a great deal of the illustrating work for big New York advertising firms is an adroit and versatile genius. He is considered the star of all the "before and after" artists and he has earned his reputation.

Not long ago the writer, as a special mark of favor, was permitted to look at his "studio" while the advertiser's photographer went through an average morning's work. An exceedingly pretty young woman was the first subject. She was to be pictured in the familiar "before and after" style, to advertise a new remedy for the skin.

The photographer himself "made up" her face, and when he got through with the camel's hair brushes the young woman's countenance was a sight. He took the "after" photographs of her first, thus showing her as a young woman with a smooth, faultless skin; round, well filled neck, and so on. Then he went at her face with the "make-up" articles, and changed her countenance into a veritable map of blotches and pimples and lines and wrinkles. When he had finished and the young woman caught sight of herself in the glass she let out a little involuntary scream.

"Oh, you'll be all right after you use our remedy," cheerfully said the photographer, and he took a number of views of her in her capacity as a "before taking."

The same young woman posed for a garter advertisement. The idea was to get

a picture of a stocking attached to a garter that was not doing its work properly and, after that, a portrayal of a stocking held snugly in place by the garter intended to be advertised. For the first picture the young woman had on a rather slouchy pair of low shoes, with which she had come provided according to the thoughtful photographer's suggestion, and her quite ordinary cotton stockings were wrinkled and hanging in folds about the shoes.

For the "after-using-ours" picture, however, the young woman had on a dainty, billowy, lacy undershirt, silk open-work stockings and fancy high-heeled shoes, and the stockings clung with a fine and appealing snugness, as a matter of course, thus illustrating the superior excellence of the new garter.

Another pretty young woman was then called in to pose for some pictures to illustrate the claims of a new brand of ironing wax about to be put on the market. For the picture to illustrate the no-accountness of all other brands of ironing wax except the one to be advertised, the young woman wore, at the photographer's suggestion, a soiled and ill-fitting old gingham house waiste, that hung in folds about her, and when she stooped over gave her a round-shouldered effect.

The photographer fixed her hair so that it seemed to be hanging in damp strings, and with a brush he painted little lines, supposed to indicate the result of acute

worriement over using no good ironing wax, under her eyes. For this picture she was posed standing wearily over an ironing board, holding out and gazing disgustedly at a frazzled and soiled shirt bosom.

Ten minutes later she reappeared looking as trig as could be in a fetching white waist, all of the imitation shine taken off of her nose, her hair neatly done up. She was then posed in an attitude of keen delight and satisfaction, gazing with a smile of approval at the nice, new, shiny, un-rumpled shirt bosom which she held out before her.

Then a couple of babies, twins, came along. They were to be used to illustrate the advertising of a new baby's food about to be marketed. The photographer said that he'd had tremendous difficulty in getting hold of just the right pair of twins, and had sent commissioners to range the whole East Side before he had got the twins he wanted. They were twin boys, just a year old. One of them was in a fat and flourishing state of health, but the other twin had just emerged from some sort of infantile complaint, and was thin and drawn and of a poor color.

But, aside from the difference in their condition of health, the twins looked precisely alike. The unprosperous-looking baby wore a befitting expression of acute gloom while he was being photographed for the "before and after" picture, and the fat young customer, by sundry and divers arts

of the photographer, was worked into a delighted crowing picture of happiness by the time the shutter was dropped on him for the "after taking" advertisement.

Then another young woman came along to "stand for" a corset ad. First she wore a corset that was about the most abominable fit imaginable. It seemed impossible to imagine that so graceful and sinuously formed a young woman could look so impossible in a corset.

The whalebones of the corset were sticking out at the bottom, and the young woman was represented with stringy hair and angry eyes, as gazing vengefully at the ill-shaped and injurious stays. Then she donned a pair of the "fit form," straight-front stays to be advertised, and with her hair nicely combed over her "hat" and her plump arms at rest at her sides, she presented a sufficiently bewitching figure to sell almost any old corset.

"There are tricks in all trades but mine," said the photographer when his morning's work was finished, but the wink with which he accompanied the remark was eloquent.—Washington Star

Good Guess

"In what sense," asked the teacher, "do we look upon George Washington as the father of his country?"

"In the two cents, ma'am," ventured Tommy Tucker, seeing that no one else was prepared to answer.