

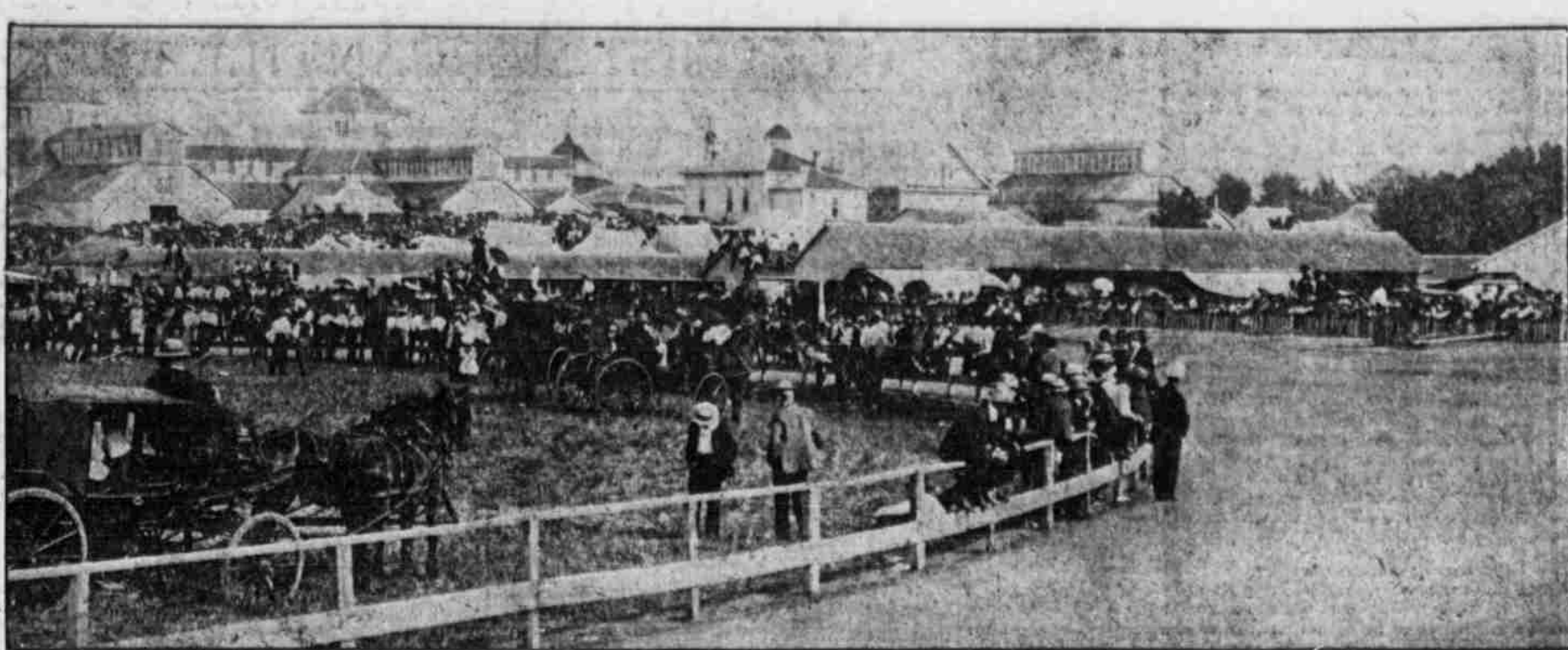
# Development of Nebraska State Fair Since Its Territorial Origin

**T**HE origin of the association under whose auspices the Nebraska state fair is held, dates back almost fifty years. It was near the beginning of Nebraska as a territory, that what is now known as the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture was originally created by an act of the territorial legislature with perpetual existence, approved October 14, 1858, entitled, "An act to establish a Territorial Board of Agriculture." The bill for this act was prepared and its passage secured by the efforts of Robert W. Furnas, then a member of the council branch of the territorial legislature.

The provisions of the act for the formation of a board of agriculture were: That it should consist of sixteen members, the term of office for one-half to be for one year and one-half for two years, thus providing for the election of one-half of its members each year. The board elected its own members and officials, as it does at the present time. The act also provided that the president of county agricultural societies thereafter organized, and in active working existence, should be ex-officio members of the territorial board.

**Notable Names in List.**  
The original members named in the act were: A. D. Jones, E. Esterbrook, John M. Thayer, Robert W. Furnas, Thomas Gibson, Harrison Johnson, Christian Bost, James Cole, S. A. Chambers, Jerome Hoover, Mills S. Reeves, Broad Cole, J. C. Lincoln, Harlan Baird, Joel T. Griffin and E. H. Chaplin. A majority of these members named in the act met at the Hershorn house (where are now the Union Pacific railroad headquarters) in Omaha, October 30, 1858. A temporary organization was had by calling John M. Thayer to the chair, and A. D. Jones, the first Omaha postmaster, as secretary. The term of service of members was at this meeting appointed by lot.

**Under State Legislation.**  
The territorial law creating a board of agriculture was amended in 1867, when Nebraska became a state, under which the following persons were made a body corporate in the name and style of the Nebraska Board of Agriculture, with perpetual succession, so that the term of service of one-half of the members should expire annually on the day of the annual meeting: S. M. Kirkpatrick, O. P. Mason, C. H. Walker, George Crow, J. G. Miller, John Patrick, John Ritchie, John Callmore, Samuel Maxwell, Elam Clark, Isaac Albertson, Amos Gates, George A. Hall, William Imsey, E. A. Allen, H. M. Reynolds, W. D. Scott, A. S. Holiday, John B. Bennett, B. Gates, Louis A. Walker, J. Sterling Morton, J. W. Hollingshead, G. P. Miller, J. B. Stout, Henry Sprick, S. W. Kennedy, A. L. Child and Anderson Miller.



A VIEW OF THE NEBRASKA STATE FAIR GROUNDS.—Photo by Staff Artist.

The above named persons, twenty-nine in number, constitute the charter members of the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture, being given this honored distinction by an act of the legislature. Prominent among those having held important positions on the State Board of Agriculture were named, as presidents: Robert W. Furnas, J. Sterling Morton, R. R. Greer, S. M. Barker, R. H. Henry, Ed. McIntire, John Jensen, Martin Dunham, J. T. Clarkson, Eli A. Barnes, Milton Doolittle, S. C. Bassett, E. L. Vance, J. B. Dinmore, W. R. Moller and the present incumbent, Peter Youngers. As secretary: D. D. Jones, C. H. Walker, J. C. McBride, D. H. Wheeler, Robert W. Furnas, S. C. Bassett, unexpired term of Mr. Furnas and present incumbent, Mr. Moller. Treasurer: John M. Thayer, L. A. Walker, J. W. Moore, Chris Hartman, L. A. Kent, Ed. McIntire and present incumbent, E. E. Rind.

**Growth of the Fair.**  
The Nebraska state fair, from its little beginning in 1859, has steadily grown into one of the most prominent and influential agricultural exhibitions in the United States. Each decade has shown great progress in the exhibition interests at the state fair. In all lines of agricultural industry the disposition has been to improve and a higher standard of perfection in the exhibition art. In addition to the great natural resources of a state rich in the inexhaustible fertility of its soil, there has been a systematic training of exhibition skill in the various counties, prompted by the incentive of contest which the county collection exhibit Nebraska has for the state fair has created.

**Liberality in Premiums.**  
It may be well to mention in this connection that no other state has ventured upon so broad a basis of premium attraction for its agricultural products display. In this one feature of county collection exhibit Nebraska has for the past dozen years offered \$2,000 in cash prizes to the counties contributing in this display, guaranteeing each county a cash premium equal to the expense of making its exhibit. This guarantee has in some instances raised the aggregate amount to be paid for county collective display 500 above the regular premium offer of \$2,000. Thus it will be observed that the grain farmer and vegetable farmer is measured by the same premium incentive, in order to attract his attention to the fair, that is used by all fairs to interest the live stock breeder in the show ring.

**Importance of a permanent location for a state fair did not come to the people of Nebraska until six years ago, when, after failures, disappointments and great sacrifices of money had been made in temporary locations, without getting satisfactory results, there was an effort put forth which resulted in harmonizing the agricultural sentiment of the state for a permanent location where a fixed system of exhibition improvements could be constructed.**

**The present state fair grounds since becoming the property of the state has had centralized around it a strong feeling of interest and endorsement in making this the exhibition home of the agricultural and live stock industries of the state.**

**The pervailing sentiment throughout the state is towards state fair improvement, the building of a practical exposition, one that will belong to the people and that will be operated and conducted in the interests of the people whose industries a state fair is designed to encourage, foster and give the widest possible recognition**

that merit entitles them to. The state fair is becoming more and more an institution of learning. The educational features of the fair are developing on every hand. The fair visitor in this age goes to the fair to see, study and become informed on subjects of interest to the farmer and the conduct and well being of the farm, in soils and crops. In this relation the Nebraska State fair has been giving great attention to the convenience and accommodations of the machinery department of its exhibition, especially the farm machinery which so many thousands of farmers visit the fair to examine and compare by the advantages thus afforded.

**On a Business Basis.**  
The Nebraska state fair management started in a few years ago under a reform basis. Its new managers believed that a state fair should be run upon a strictly business basis; that in the conduct of a fair obligations were entered into with its patrons for the payment of large sums of money in premiums. The operating expenses also were a moral obligation upon the association and those who represent it and these expenses could not be met under the free pass system that had so generously prevailed for many years. The trimming down of free admissions was introduced and has been steadily enforced until the free pass applies only to those whose business interests contribute to the advantage and upbuilding of the fair.

# Chat with Inventor Alexander Graham Bell at His Washington Home

**W**ASHINGTON, Aug. 30.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—It was a still, small voice that reached my ears the other night, when I called on Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, for a chat about some of his recent scientific experiments. The voice was that of Dr. Bell himself. As it came over the wire it was not louder than a whisper, but its every syllable was articulate and distinct and I could hear it as plainly as though I stood before the famous inventor face to face. As I listened my mind went back to the time when that same voice made its first successful communication of this kind, and my heart thrilled at the thought of what its owner has given the human race.

It is scarcely a generation since Dr. Bell invented the means of sending articulate sounds over a wire, and today by that invention the voices of all the world pass to and fro without regard to distance. Last year on the Bell telephone lines alone there were more than 4,500,000,000 conversations, or enough to give three talks to every man, woman and child upon earth and leave some to spare. Those conversations took place in the United States and it is fair to presume that an equal number were uttered in Europe, Asia, South America and Australia.



ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL IN GOWN—TAKEN AT EDINBURGH WHEN THE UNIVERSITY GAVE HIM THE DEGREE OF LL.D.

**Our Big Telephone Business.**  
I have before me the last report of the American Telephone and Telegraph company. It gives no statistics outside its own business, and it practically includes only the progress of the Bell lines in the United States. The figures are astounding and they should be multiplied by two or more to give an adequate idea of the telephoning of the world. The total mileage of the Bell lines is now more than 6,000,000. It has in use enough wire to reach 260 times around the earth; more than enough to bind two girles around the sun and still leave plenty over for waist bands for Mars and the moon. Indeed, if wire could be stretched through space, the Bell wires alone are enough to make twenty private lines to the moon and leave a million odd miles to spare. The wires which were stretched by that company during last year would stretch fifty times around the earth, and they use so much copper to make them that some of our greatest mines are kept busy furnishing it. It would take a big forest to supply the 3,000,000 poles to which those lines are hung, and the underground conduits in which they lie are so many that if placed end to end they would girdle the world.

**A Midnight Chat.**  
It required but a few words to arrange the interview. The time fixed was midnight, for the inventor of the telephone is a night worker. He has always done the greater part of his experimenting and thinking after dark, finding that his mind works more clearly as the world grows quiet, and that it is at its best between 12 and 4 in the morning. During the summer months he seldom goes to sleep before dawn and his usual hours for rest are from 4 until 11 a. m. Dr. Bell's afternoons are devoted to business and social engagements, and his nights to reading and scientific experiments. During our talk I asked him whether his arrangement of the hours was not injurious to health. He replied that he had not found it so, and that he far preferred it to that of other men who work by day. Indeed, night and day are much the same to him, and when he is especially interested in some of his experiments goes many hours without sleep, working on far into the day, and then sleeping for hours at a stretch to make up. It is by this means that he does an enormous amount of work, carrying out studies and experiments along many lines, and, at the same time, keeping himself thoroughly abreast of the scientific world. He is now within a year or so of the age at which Dr. Osler said the working man should be discharged, but his eyes are as bright, his step as firm and his mind as active as when he made his great discovery as to the telephone thirty odd years ago. He tells me that he never felt better than he does now, and I doubt whether he has ever enjoyed his life or work more.

**Contents of a Package.**  
"Well, that dispatch went the round of the press and coupled with it came the statement that Prof. Bell, the inventor of the telephone, was interested in it and that he had filed in the Smithsonian Institution a sealed package containing a full description with illustrations of his investigations. Now, the fact was that I had filed a package, but it related to my investigations as to the phonophone or the conveyance of sound by means of rays of light. How it became associated with the helix matter I do not know. At any rate the moment my name was published in connection with it an indignant letter was printed in a reputable English scientific journal, signed by two well known professors, Ayrton and Perry, stating that neither was the mythical Dr. H. E. Lix, nor had I forth their statements with the idea of blurring the real discoverers of the process. A week or two later other claimants appeared. They came forth from different parts of the United States and from England.

**Dangers of Publicity.**  
"Suppose Prof. Henry had advised you to publish your discoveries and you had done so, Dr. Bell," said I. "What would have been the result?"

"I might have lost my invention and my work would have been claimed and stolen by others. As it was, as soon as the practical advantages of the telephone became known there sprang up claims of prior invention on all sides. A number of well known electricians appeared, each announcing himself the original inventor, and numerous claims and interferences were filed against my patent. This is the case with nearly every successful patent that is issued, and claims have been filed for such infringements by men bearing fairly good reputations."

**Telephoning Without Wires.**  
"Will you ever have a wireless telephone, Dr. Bell?" I asked.

"I think it is possible, though the distance of its use may be limited. I remember some experiments I once made not far from the Cambridge observatory near Boston. We had driven two poles into the ground a few hundred feet apart and had connected them by wire. As soon as the connection was made I put the receiver to my ear and heard a clock distinctly ticking. The tick was a peculiar one, and I recognized it as that of the clock on the Cambridge observatory, which set the time for the greater part of Boston. Upon studying the matter I concluded that the sound was conducted by the ground to my receiver. A short time later I tried some experiments as to wireless telephony on the Potomac here at Washington, and I was able to hear signals made on a boat at the Acqueduct bridge while in another boat stationed as far down the river as the Washington monument. In this case the water acted as the conductor. Indeed it is a question whether what we now know as wireless telegraphy is brought about by the signals being carried by the medium

of the air or by means of the ground and water. It may be found that in all cases the real conductor is the latter.

"Do you look for many changes in the telephone in the near future, Dr. Bell?" I asked.

"The improvement of the transmission of sound," said Dr. Bell. "That will remain practically as it is, but I do expect changes in the machinery to facilitate the uses of such transmission. I believe that we shall soon have an automatic telephone service in which every subscriber, by means of certain buttons and a combination of wires, will be able to call upon whomsoever he pleases without the annoyance of the central station. When this is accomplished the cost of telephoning will be much reduced, for the greater part of the vast army of telephone operators will be done away with and the expenses of operation can be made less."

"How about having newspapers by telephone with readers at a central station and buttons by which the news can be turned off and on?"

"I don't know about that," said Dr. Bell. "Such an attempt was made not long ago in Vienna or Budapest, I think, but whether it was a success or not I am unable to say. Inventions have been recently made by which music can be carried long distances by telephone, and they are now planning to have concerts so furnished all over New York, giving the best of classic and other music to thousands of subscribers at once."

"One of the claimants was a well known New York electrician, Mr. Sawyer, who, like the rest, asserted that he could see through a telegraph wire and could send any kind of an image he wished in that way from one place to another. Another published an article in the Scientific American with illustrations of his invention. I answered nothing in reply to such statements. I had never made any experiments of the kind, and had no inventions to claim. After a short time it appeared that the claimants themselves were in the same situation. They were frauds, pure and simple, and some of them undoubtedly had put forth their statements with the idea of blurring the real discoverers of the process."

**Telling my talk with Dr. Bell I asked him to tell me something about his attempts to locate the bullet in President Garfield's body.** It may be remembered that when Guitau shot the president the X-ray had not been discovered. The surgeons probed again and again. Other experiments were made to find where the bullet lay, and among them some by means of Dr. Bell's inductive balance, which had then just been invented. Said Dr. Bell:

"My instrument consisted of a piece of mahogany board of about the size and shape of a flatiron. It had a handle upon the top, and its bottom was covered with a green cloth. Inside the board was an electric coil, so made that when it was moved over anything of a metallic substance it would buzz. I could take a bullet in my hand, and having made the proper electrical connections, could rub the board over the back of my hand and the result would be a loud buzzing noise, the sound being loudest when the coil was over the bullet. The instrument afterward proved to be of great value for this purpose in hospitals, although it failed in connection with President Garfield. It was on account of that invention that the University of Heidelberg gave me the degree of honorary M. D."

"What was the cause of the failure, doctor?"

"It is easy to see now," was the reply, "although we did not realize it at the time. We took the machine to the White House and tried it upon the president with the assistance of Surgeon General Hamilton. We moved it all over the person of the president, and to our surprise the machine began to buzz whenever it came near him. According to it, he was full of lead, and the result was that we left the White

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## New Head of Iowa Knights of Pythias

**F**L. FERRIS, of Sioux City, was elected without opposition to the office of Grand Chancellor of the Knights of Pythias, Domain of Iowa, at the Grand Lodge session. The new chancellor has been prominent in Pythian circles for twelve years. He was a member of the judiciary com-

mitted during the revision of the laws of the order and has been a member of the Grand Tribunal for three years. Mr. Ferris is a prominent attorney of Sioux City and has been a practicing lawyer there for eighteen years. For eight years he has been justice of the peace.



F. L. FERRIS OF SIOUX CITY, NEW GRAND CHANCELLOR IOWA KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS.

## Esra Meeker on His Long Journey Overland

**L**AST January the newspapers announced that Esra Meeker had started from Seattle, Wash., to mark with monuments the old "Oregon Trail." It was on January 1st that Mr. Meeker left Seattle, and on August 18 he was at Lexington, Neb., 2,000 miles from his starting point and almost a thousand miles from his destination. He expects to finish his journey at Indianapo-

lis. Near Lexington one of his oxen died, and he was forced to purchase a cow to take its place, as he could not secure another ox. He erected a monument on the Platte river, about six miles south of Lexington, which place was known as Plum Creek in the days of "the trail." The photograph from which the accompanying picture is made was taken by the Misses Savin of Lexington.



ESRA MEEKER AND HIS OUTFIT AT LEXINGTON, NEB.

personal, now drifting into reminiscences connected with his many inventions, and now scientific, as I asked him as to the possibilities of new discoveries along certain lines in the future. A part of the talk I have already published in an article about Dr. Bell's recent experiments in the evolution of sheep, and as to his present working on his flying machine. Another part I give you today in the conversation which follows.

"We had been talking about the Smithsonian institute, of which Dr. Bell is one of the regents, and of the late secretary, Dr. S. P. Langley, who was one of Dr. Bell's intimate friends, when I asked him whether he had known Joseph Henry, the first secretary and director of that institution. Dr. Bell replied:

"I became acquainted with Prof. Henry when I was still working on the telephone and he was kind to me. It was a year or so before my patent was granted, when I called upon him at the Smithsonian institution and explained my ideas as to the construction of an instrument which would carry vocal sounds. I was then interested also in multiplex telegraphy, and we talked about that. Prof. Henry was a man of remarkable ability, along the lines upon which I was working. He had made many discoveries in electricity and in electro-dynamics, having constructed an electro-magnetic telegraph long before the invention of Prof. Morse. He appeared much interested in my experiments and I determined to ask his advice about the apparatus which I had designed for the transmission of the human voice by means of an electric wire. After I had explained the idea I asked him to advise me whether I had better publish my discoveries and let others go to work along the same lines or whether I should keep it at and attempt to solve the problem myself."

"'But,' said I, 'I feel that my mechanical knowledge with. There are many difficulties to be overcome and I fear I have not the knowledge of electricity required.'"

"Well, then, you better get it," said Prof. Henry.

"Those words spurred me to action. I cannot tell you how much they encouraged me. I did go to work again and it was the result of that work which enabled me to bring about my final success. My patent for the telephone was granted just about two years before Prof. Henry died."

"I might have lost my invention and my work would have been claimed and stolen by others. As it was, as soon as the practical advantages of the telephone became known there sprang up claims of prior invention on all sides. A number of well known electricians appeared, each announcing himself the original inventor, and numerous claims and interferences were filed against my patent. This is the case with nearly every successful patent that is issued, and claims have been filed for such infringements by men bearing fairly good reputations."