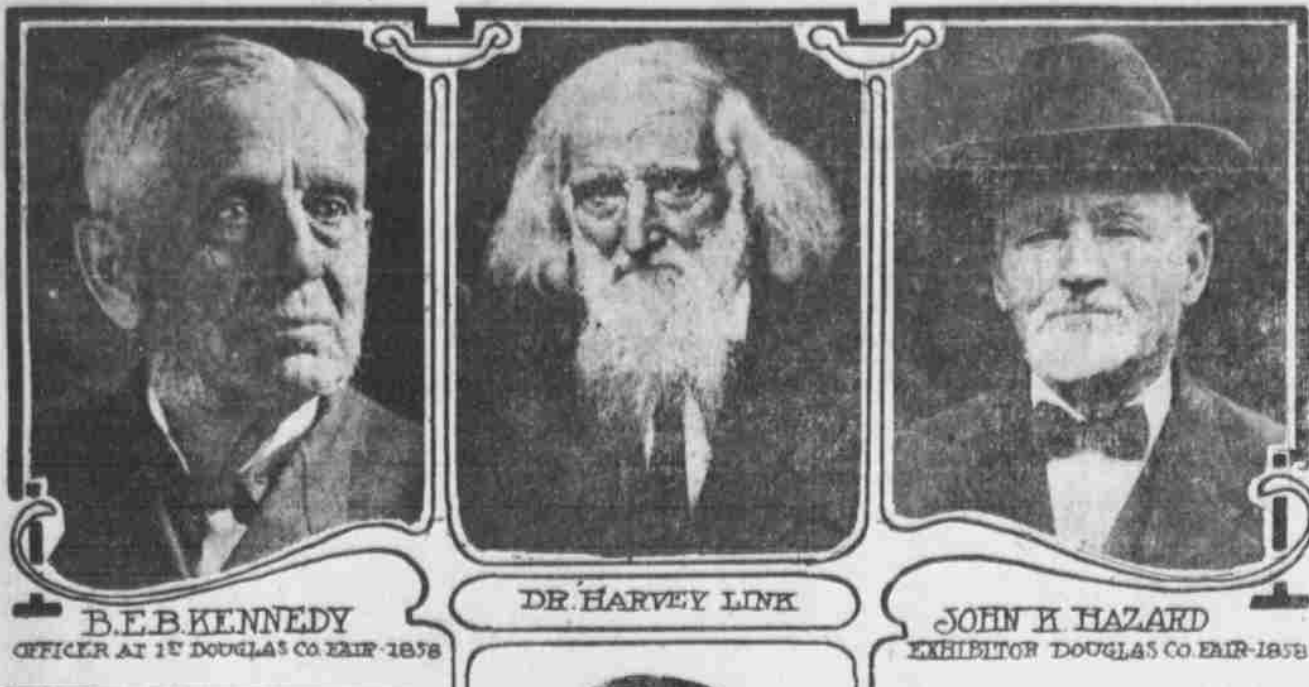


Douglas County's First Fair



B. E. B. KENNEDY
OFFICER AT 18 DOUGLAS CO. FAIR 1858

DR. HARVEY LOVE

JOHN K. HAZARD
EXHIBITOR DOUGLAS CO. FAIR 1858

Comparison between the first premium list of the Douglas County Fair association, issued in September, 1858, and the premium list for 1911 would be one good way of showing the remarkable strides in the north of this county and city. The premium list for the first fair would occupy probably one column of the Bee, while the premium list for 1911 is a pamphlet of forty-four pages. The list of cash prizes offered in any one of several classes today would equal in length the whole list in all classes, fifty-three years ago; and the changed aspect of the various classes is quite interesting. In the old list eleven different classes were covered by the money prizes offered, which totaled slightly under \$200. In the 1911 list the classes number only sixteen, but the total of all prizes offered runs well into the thousands.



G. W. HARVEY
SEC. DOUGLAS CO. AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

In 1858 several prizes were offered in the "oxen class," the largest amounts going to the best yoke of working oxen and the best trained yoke of oxen. Substantial prizes, for that day, were also hung up for horses of every kind, from the best work team to the "best racking horse." Four prizes of \$1 each were offered in the "culinary class" at the first fair—for best five pounds of butter, best five pounds of cheese, best two loaves of bread and best gallon of syrup. Development of agricultural implements was encouraged by prizes for everything from a breaking plow to a threshing machine. Another class was made for "ornamental work," such as painting, printing, daguerreotypes and penmanship. And "mechanical work" also had a chance to win some coin by producing the best pairs of gentlemen's boots and shoes and ladies' shoes; also pants, coat, vest, and best horsehoe. In the line of women's work money could be won by the best bonnet, best artificial flowers, and "best needlework generally."

Corn had not yet won a high place as a crop in Nebraska, and but one prize was offered, \$1 for the best twelve ears. Any one of several varieties of peas called for the same amount. In the 1911 list corn is king. With a long list of prizes for different varieties, \$150 as a special prize for best ten ears, and \$50 in the class for boy corn raisers.

Of all the men and women who served as officials or judges at the first Douglas county fair, only Judge B. E. B. Kennedy and Dr. George L. Miller are living today, so far as known. The list contains the names of Jesse Lowe, the first mayor of Omaha; J. T. Griffin, Sylvanus Dodge, Harrison Johnson, Philip Cassidy, Edwin Patrick, H. D. Johnson, H. Z. Chapman, R. S. Bryant, John I. Painter, James McArdle, Joseph Sheely, H. Page, W. H. Backus, William Orr, George W. Stephens, P. C. Chapman, George W. Homan, Smith Richardson, Robert Knox, J. Reese, T. C. Smith, A. J. Hanscom, E. H. Chapman, L. A. Walker, James McGeath, Dr. Enos Lowe, James Creighton, M. W. Keith, A. T. McAdams, B. E. B. Kennedy, Joseph Barker, J. M. Thayer (afterward governor and general in the army), A. Van Vamp, O. B. Seldon, A. D. Jones (first postmaster), George Armstrong, George Claves, B. Costers, Fred Drexel, Thomas Watson, O. P. Ingalls, V. Burkle, W. T. Beaks, J. T. Croft, M. F. Shin, Nelson Baker.

The women taking part in the first fair as judges were Mesdames Jesse Lowe, J. T. Griffin, H. Johnson, T. G. Goodwell, S. T. Piffeld, J. M. Thayer, B. H. Chapman, A. D. Jones, E. Eastbrook, A. Van Camp, A. J. Hanscom, G. L. Miller, H. Zoller, R. Smiley, A. R. Gilmore, E. H. Chaplain, T. B. Selden, Nelson Baker.

This first fair was announced to be held at Saratoga on Thursday, September 30, and Friday, October 1, 1858. Members of the "executive and viewing committees" were requested to report to the secretary "at the earliest moment," so that vacancies could be filled on the morning of the opening day.

The officers were: President, L. A. Walker; vice presidents, J. M. Thayer, O. B. Seldon, Joseph Barker, John Steinberger, McKinzie, J. W. Roberts; secretary, William Young Brown; treasurer, J. E. Allen; executive committee, E. H. Chaplain, J. T. Griffin, B. H. Chapman, Jesse Lowe, H. D. Johnson, R. S. Bryant, Allen Root, M. T. Patrick, R. D. Whitney, J. McGeath, A. J. Hanscom, W. T. Backus, J. G. Creighton, H. B. Allen. The premium list was printed in the

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The excellence of De Miracle is too widely known to need comment. The specially interesting thing is that we sell this preparation as well as other De Miracle products at specially reduced prices, not for one day, but every day. You can buy them at our toilet goods department at

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50c Cream cut to 32c
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Note—The best proof that De Miracle is the standard depilatory of the world is that it has stood the test of time. It was the greatest selling depilatory ten years ago, and still enjoys this enviable reputation.

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LOYAL PHARMACY
207-5 North 16th St.

Omaha paper of that day and a copy was presented by the family of L. A. Walker, first president. It was cut out and pasted on a sheet of writing paper. Inscribed on the back of the list is the following notation, in an old-fashioned hand:

"The spring of 1858 commenced with a very heavy depression in all kinds of business, in prospects and prices. Production of all kinds selling low; much held over not bringing cost of production. Good corn is scarcely to be had, but the general price ranges below 50 cents a bushel. May 15, potatoes were selling at 20 to 30 cents per bushel. The weather was beautiful in March, but cold and backward from the middle of April to middle of May. June and July were very wet, extra heavy rains for this country. Corn washed out in many places. The emigration to the gold regions raised the price of corn and potatoes, but neither ranged above 50 cents a bushel."

The county fair association continued to hold its annual fair mainly in the vicinity of its first location, but occasionally in Omaha proper, joining with the state fair when it was first located at Omaha, and continuing in this relation during the periods that the state fair was being held in Omaha, and until it was permanently located at Lincoln in 1900. Since then Douglas county has been holding its fair in conjunction with the Ak-Sar-Ben festival, furnishing some of the best displays ever gotten together by a county organization. Today this society stands the peer of any county agricultural society in the United States, in point of excellence and magnitude of its farm products and general display, barring live stock. In its annual exhibitions this fair has for the last seventeen years maintained an average exhibition space of 6,000 square feet.

In 1858 the Douglas County Fair association organized a system of precinct or township collective exhibits, in which each precinct in the county became an independent exhibition association, in open contest and competition against all other precincts or townships. As many as twelve precincts out of thirteen in the county have entered in competition for the prizes offered.

The cash premium incentive was, from the start, a recognized stimulant in securing the attention and interest of exhibitors. As much as \$750 in cash has been placed at the disposal of the precincts, varying in amounts from \$50 to \$150, available to each of the contestants. Besides these collective precincts, prizes from \$2.50 to \$3.00 has been offered in prizes for the individual articles comprising these collections. To this system of the exhibition spirit aroused in the people, is due the liberal displays that this fair has been able to command.

The Douglas County Fair association has practiced the method of retaining its old members on the board as long as they were willing to give their time, attention and best efforts to the work. There are now on the board of directors a number of men who have spent ten to twenty years in the study and practical work of putting up agricultural exhibits. Several have been prominently associated with national expositions and world's fairs, where their skill came in competition with the best expert fair builders of the country, and they were prize winners even in this kind of company.

Judge Kennedy, giving his early impressions of Omaha and its people, whom he first met at the county fair, held in 1858, said:

"I arrived in Omaha on September 14, 1858, having left my native state, Vermont, in quest of a new home. I saw a printed notice that there would be held a county agricultural fair at Saratoga, north of the city of Omaha and I resolved to attend. I passed through the gate on a ticket that cost 25 cents, and found a good-natured crowd of people, who regarded me with some degree of attention, perhaps from my awkwardness, or Yankee inquisitiveness, or both, as well as my unfamiliarity with western life and customs. With some boldness and assurance I introduced myself to the president, Lewis A. Walker, and in turn was introduced to the acting secretary, A. D. Jones. The twain seemed to be in charge of the whole show. This brief acquaintance grew into a personal friendship which lasted through all the years of President Walker's residence in Douglas county, and to the death of Secretary Jones in 1908 in Omaha, aged 83 years.

"The annual address was delivered by Dr. Gilbert C. Monell, grandfather of Senator Gilbert M. Hitchcock. It was able and appropriate to the occasion, and was cordially applauded.

"The display of agricultural products from the farm and garden was quite equal in quality to any I have ever seen in the state, but limited in kind and variety. Fruit was not set. The exhibition of stock was not extensive, notwithstanding good premiums were offered in all classes of animals, from horses and work oxen to pigs and chickens. The last day of the fair closed with exhibitions of equestrianship by women, athletic contests and sports of a humorous and cheerful nature, not unlike the present day athletic meets that have become so popular.

"Subsequently I became a member of the association and was honored as its secretary during several years, and until the state fair association held its first exposition at Omaha, when the Douglas county exhibits were grafted into or upon that of the state, since which time I have been only an interested spectator.

"I vividly recall the excellent addresses during the time I was a member of the association. They were attended with good results, stimulating its members to renewed action and earnest competition. It is neither difficult nor expensive to obtain good speakers at such times from the departments of the state or national experiment bureaus. Such addresses have fallen somewhat into disuse, but should be revived and adhered to."

John K. Hazard, now almost 77, retired and living at 1508 Ohio street, was an exhibitor at this first Douglas county fair. With his brother, the late David Hazard, he exhibited a team of oxen which captured first prize.

"And they were as fine a pair of animals as I ever saw," said Mr. Hazard. "In those days we used to take a good deal of pride in our work cattle, and the man with the best team of oxen had something to boast of. As I remember it,

that fair in 1858 was held in the neighborhood of the old John T. Croft home and the ground was enclosed by a rough board fence. That section of Omaha was then known as the town of Saratoga, and great expectations were built on its future, but they were not realized.

"William Young Brown was the secretary of the fair, and was a greater boomer for the town of Saratoga. Later it was charged that Brown had played some sort of trick with the affairs of the company handling the townsite, but whatever the cause the company went to pieces, and there began the litigation over claims that extended through many years, which is now a part of history."

Mr. Hazard is a typical man of the old

west. He has freighted goods to Denver for the Creightons and on his own account. He has freighted alone. He tells with a good deal of pleasure of how he saved his scalp from the Indians on one of those lonesome trips. A bunch of young bucks held him up and wanted a meal, which he gave them. Then they demanded some of his goods.

"I refused to let them take anything," said Mr. Hazard, "and stood them off with the butt end of a heavy whip. I also had my two revolvers handy, and was just making up my mind to take two or three of them with me if they came to personal attack, which they seemed intent on making, when a chief came riding up and ordered them back to their vil-

lage. He was a friendly Indian, and told me he had much trouble keeping his young men in order; that their hearts were bad, but that he would see to it it was not molested. For the balance of the trip I was not molested. It was a long and lonesome journey, rather late in the fall, but the offer of big money induced me to make it."

Bits of Wisdom.
A man can accomplish a lot while waiting for his wife, who is going to be ready in just a minute.
Experience may be the best teacher, but some people prefer a more fashionable school.
Many a bride sweeps up the aisle of a church who would faint at the very sight of a broom.

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IN GENUINE SOLID OAK-- FUMED OR EARLY ENGLISH FINISH

An Entire Room Full of Furniture for 45.75

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BUFFET
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This offering certainly ought to convince you that it is to your interest to "get Rubel's" price before you buy anything, anywhere. You can't possibly buy such a dining set anywhere else in Omaha within 50 per cent of the price we mention—you simply can't do it. And we can furnish your home complete with values like this—



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Made of genuine solid oak, in fumed or Early English finish, two-door also, design conforms to other articles, double strength glass.

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Made in straight lines, conforming perfectly to the design of other pieces in the set; made of heavy seasoned solid oak, in Early English or fumed finish; extra strong, y-mold, seats bolted and braced in most substantial manner.



This table is of pleasing design, round top, heavy legs, built along straight lines and set in the corner of heavy square pillar; table extends to 6 feet. This complete dining room set is a marvel at the price—must be seen to be appreciated. Convenient Terms of Payment.

Buffet, \$14.80 China Closet, \$12.75 Table, \$10.70 Four Chairs, \$7.50

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On every job of cleaning we do we make it a point to sew up the little rips, put on missing buttons and hooks and eyes and do other light repairs free of charge.

For repairing that requires more time we make a reasonable charge; the following prices will give you an idea:

New pockets 25c each; new buttons on coat and vest, 50c; on overcoat, 25c to 50c; new velvet collars, \$1 to \$2.50, owing to kind of velvet used; new coat sleeve lining, 75c to \$1.25; overcoat \$1.50 for mohair; \$2.50 for satin or silk; new vest back, 75c; inside lining, \$1.00; new coat lining, \$2.50 to \$3.50; overcoat lining, \$4.50 to \$7.00.

All our repair work and altering is done by experienced tailors at about two-thirds the price charged by the regular tailors and dress-makers. We guarantee satisfaction.

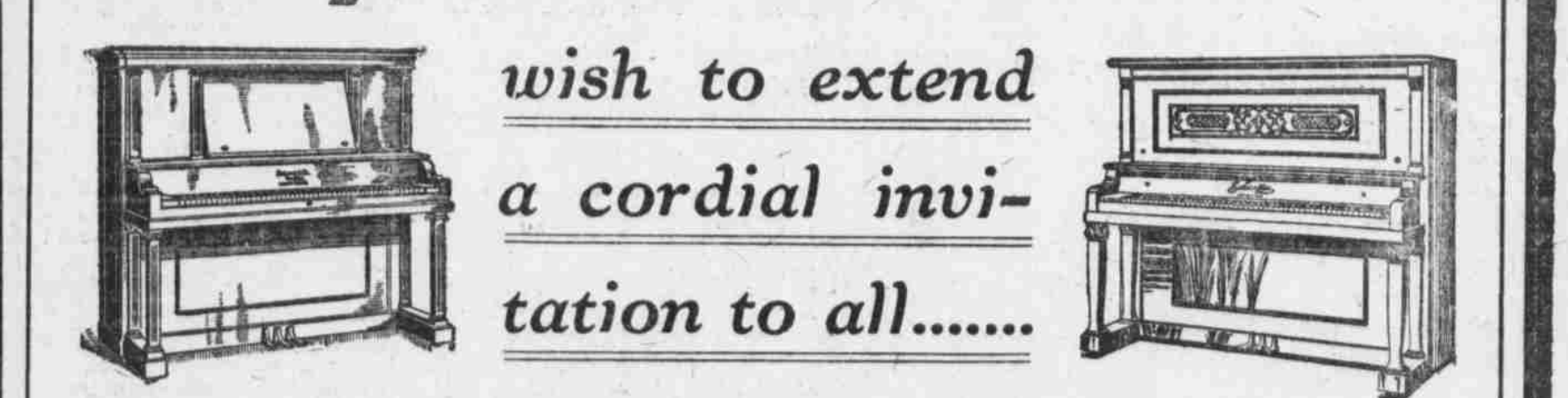
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Wheat.....	\$45.00	Decker & Son.....	\$125.00
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