

# Some Statesmen Fought Against Expansion of Settlements in West

## East and South Wanted Nebraska Territorial Area as Dumping Ground for Indians—Rush to California Helped Bring Realization of Possibilities of the Great Plains Region.

(Continued from Page Three.)

40's, vouched chiefly by Thomas H. Benton, for a Pacific railroad, was commonly coupled with a demand for the organization of the territory to be called Nebraska. From the first there was rivalry between the northern and central, and the southern sections over the location of the proposed Pacific road.

Official promotion of the organization into a territory was begun in 1844. Wilkins, secretary of war, advocated it in his report for that year, and Stephen A. Douglas, chairman of the committee on territories, introduced the first bill for that purpose. He persistently pushed the enterprise to its accomplishment ten years later. Mr. Wilkins proposed, for the first time it is said, the name Nebraska for the new territory.

Stephen A. Douglas. Illinois and Iowa had just begun to visualize the vast and promising trans-Missouri plains as commercial adjuncts. The east and south had, in its mind, pre-empted this territory as a perpetual asylum for their Indians of whom they were determined to be rid, and accordingly about 100,000 of them had already been pushed across the Mississippi. Douglas afterward explained that the apparently premature introduction of his bill to organize the "Territory of Nebraska" was to serve notice on the secretary of war to stop using it as a dumping ground for Indians. The war department had control of Indian affairs until 1849. He also explained that the Atlantic states were jealous of any further territorial expansion.

A few brief illustrations of the irrational opposition to western expansion are apropos. Discussing in the house of representatives, on December 29, 1848, the bill for the occupation of Oregon by the United States, Mr. Bates of Missouri, said: "There was then the rugged and almost impassable belt of the Rocky mountains, and nineteen-twentieths of the space between the Missouri and the Pacific ocean, beyond the culturable prairies, which were not above 200 or 300 miles, was a waste and sterile tract, no better than the desert of Zaire, the ravering of which, even during the best seasons, was attended with the extreme of difficulty and danger."

Ignorant Orators. For the southwest, Mr. Mitchell of Tennessee said: "But let gentlemen look at the vast, wide-spread fertile valley of the Mississippi; let them reflect upon the thousands of acres yet untouched by the axe of the settler. No, sir, I will never encourage native born Americans to leave their country, till I see the boundary of our twenty-four states and territories first filled up." But the promoters of the organization of the plains into a territory had visions of the commercial importance of traffic over the Oregon trail, now first established. St. Louis was at first the direct beneficiary of this traffic, but the all-powerful Douglas represented the soon-to-be all-conquering Chicago interests. The rush to California from all parts of the country east of the Missouri, from 1849 on, brought those interests into direct touch with that promising artery of trade. At this time St. Louis newspapers were confidently and complacently claiming commercial supremacy over the new northwest, in perpetuity. But Chicago first, then the great twin cities of the north, and then Kansas City at her very back door, arose to convince the southern metropolis of the vanity of her hopes, especially those fostered by the wish.

The Price Douglas Paid. In the final accomplishment of the political organization of Nebraska, Douglas yielded the repeal of the Missouri compromise—prohibition of slavery from all territory north of latitude 36 degrees and 30 minutes

to the demands of the slavocracy. This precipitated, if it did not cause, secession and the civil war—through the election of Lincoln, who had most skillfully taken advantage of the opportunity his chief rival had given him to incite sectional division.

In 1862, the more radical leaders of the republican party sought to strengthen its hold on congress and to insure the election of the republican candidate for president in 1864, if perchance it should be thrown into the house, by the creation of western territories into states—namely Colorado, Nebraska and Nevada. But while this project was delayed by the opposition of democrats and many powerful republican leaders, President Lincoln had recognized certain of the rebellious states, notably, Arkansas, Louisiana and North Carolina, for reunion.

Now came the clash between the president and the most intensely "practical" republican partisans, Thaddeus Stevens, Wade, Chandler and others. Charles Sumner was not, like the rest of the radicals, craving power for the party's sake. He was obsessed by the issue of suffrage for the negroes upon equal terms with the whites. The suffrage question was the issue between "the two most influential men in public life," Lincoln and Sumner—says Rhodes, the historian.

But Sumner and Stevens went so far in impracticable harshness against the rebels as to demand confiscation of their individual property. Sumner insisted on the extreme "state suicide" doctrine, but Lincoln's larger vision saw that it was vain and profitless to cavil over sophisms like this, though he finally decided that it would be dangerous to admit that the seceding states had succeeded in getting out.

Lincoln and Sumner. The new constitution of Louisiana had been accepted by Lincoln, but because it only empowered the legislature to confer suffrage on negroes, along limited lines laid down by Lincoln, Sumner defeated its recognition and incidentally kept Arkansas out also.

The radicals then passed the Davis reconstruction bill which absolutely prohibited slavery in the reconstructed states, which Lincoln and his cabinet held congress had no constitutional power to do, and Lincoln "pocketed" the reconstruction bill. It was passed July 2, and congress adjourned two days later.

On July 8, Lincoln defended his veto in a proclamation, and then came the defiant Wade-Davis manifesto which confirmed the breach. On April 11, three days before his assassination, Lincoln very powerfully defended his action in the Louisiana case. So he died defiantly facing his so far successful radical foes. That last speech is stamped with greatness.

Nebraska's New Precedent. The Nebraska question had destroyed Douglas, the great creator of the territory, and its reaction unborn the great Lincoln, who had signed the enabling act, and pressed the territory's admission to statehood. The reckless radicalism, particularly touching negro suffrage, which crushed Lincoln's reconstruction policy, overrode Johnson's veto of the audacious imposition of an amendment of the constitution of Nebraska after it had been adopted by the people, denying them an opportunity to vote upon the change.

In an opinion as chief justice of the supreme court of Nebraska, Oliver P. Mason declared that "the very best constitutional lawyers of the land," who were members of the congress which imposed the condition knew that it was without force or effect, and "until the case of our state arose, no single instance ever occurred of congress admitting a state without the popular approval of the constitution."

## Enter---The Omaha Bee

Though the "Omaha Daily Bee" was first printed on June 19, 1871, it announced in the issue of July 27, that thereafter it had been a gratuitous advertising medium, but thenceforth it was to be "a newspaper in the true meaning of the word." Which it very truly was.

The multitudinous enemies it made in keeping its pledge, which constituted its superlative success, avowed that its chief characteristic lay in vigorously stretching this true meaning. But the significant fact is that conditions were such at this time, and this only, that success, which, as Balzac has it, "ruins more men than it makes."

It serves my historical purpose to point out that the powerful political Nebraska cabal, mostly at Omaha, by supporting the continued conservative or reactionary regime, which had now come to be called Grantism, thus offered themselves up to the Rosewater ruination. The need of curtailing space is a sufficient reason for passing by the more speculative phase of the question—whether these reactionists, in Rosewater's sight, were rightly ruined. However, the fact itself is suggestive.

The Economic Phase. The economic urge of social conditions in 1871 is revealed in the contest over the constitution in that year, in which the Baby Bee took a characteristic part.

The first constitution of the state was a barebones on which expectant beneficiaries of the superior honors and emoluments of statehood hung their hopes. Experience Estabrook made a statement, printed in the Weekly Herald, that it was compiled by a committee of nine lawyers appointed by the legislature. It was rightly asserted by others that they were self-appointed. The instrument was made as near like the organic act of the territory as possible, with the same small number in the legislature and meager salaries for state officers. The enabling act passed by congress and signed by President Lin-

coln, April 19, 1864, provided for a convention to form a constitution, to be held July 4, of that year; but the opposition to statehood was so strong that, on assembling, the convention adopted a resolution to adjourn, "without forming a constitution," by a vote of 37 to 20. In violation, or derogation, of the enabling act, the legislature submitted the committee's constitution to a popular vote, and a doubtful majority was counted for it.

The convention of 1871 was held for the purpose of substituting for this makeshift instrument an adequate, progressive one. The new constitution disclosed a new popular political temper and the attitude of the Bee toward it was the precursor of its political career.

The Bee's Firm Policy. The most effective feature of The Bee's editorial page was the arsenal of facts adduced in it, supplied or inspired by its founder. This method was employed, vividly, at the outset, in opposition to the objections, many of them specious, of the Herald and the Republican to the new constitution.

In general, the North Platte section, largely dominated by Omaha, was against the constitution and the South Platte for it; but it was beaten by the defection of Nemaha county. The total majority against it was 641; Nemaha county's majority against it was 667—attributable mainly to Senator Tipton, then the favorite son, and in smaller part to Furnas who began the not creditable habit of going against his section in his notorious defeat, in 1857, of the bill to remove the capital to the South Platte.

The Bee declared that the United States senators opposed the constitution because it was easier to control 32 members of the legislature—the number under the old constitution—for their own re-election, than the 89 to 100 provided for in the new one. Answering the contention that Nebraska could not afford the more ex-

pensive proposed constitution or to stand with maturer states, such as Illinois and Iowa, in establishing the principle and practice of railroad regulation, The Bee of September 13, 1871, quoted the Chicago Tribune's terse statement of its novel economic status and prospects: "The opening of the Pacific railroad through its entire length, the survey and commencement of other rivals within and leading to the State, the concentration near Omaha of all the great trunk routes from the East, has given Nebraska, within a few years, the growth and maturity for which other States have had to wait a quarter of a century."

The Tribune pointed out this other important distinction: "The new constitution is perhaps the best matured instrument of the kind ever proposed in any state." It embraced nearly all of the wise antimonopolistic provisions of the new constitution of the Tribune's state, which had been adopted July 2, 1870.

The Bee of September 1, 1871, pointed out that the main provision of the constitution touching corporations is that which gave the legislature, "the right to fix a reasonable maximum rate of tariff on freight and passengers." This, in a comprehensive sense, was the principal political issue in the state until the adoption at the general election of 1906 of an amendment to the constitution providing for an elective railway commission, and the passage by the legislature of 1907 of an anti-pass bill of a 2-cent passenger rate bill and of a bill making a flat 15 per cent reduction of freight rates.

Death of E. Rosewater. The death of the founder of the Bee occurred a few months before this full fruition of its planting and its incessant watering for 36 years. The pioneer period of the war, especially—dropping the too mild metaphor—against the most powerful politicians of both parties, was very ingenious and equally relentless, and more than a moiety of them were either crippled or killed.

Like most capable captains, The Bee's genius lay in seeing and seizing the desperate opportunity with the unique conditions offered. By these tactics the audacious David soon accomplished the immediate demand of necessity by destroying his immediate rivals, the Republican and the Herald, and it was not long until the third Goliath, the State Journal, which too tardily saw the signs of the times, was brought to its knees.

I have always given the precedence of the promoters of our early railroads, and especially Mr. Forbes and Mr. Perkins, generous credit for meeting the monster desert myth on its own ground and courageously creating confidence in its stead. On May 23, 1872, however, The Bee strongly endorsed a criticism by the Herald of Mr. Doane's supercilious attitude, as general superintendent of the Burlington & Missouri Railroad in Nebraska, toward the public. The Herald had said: "Except for horticultural and agricultural gatherings, long since held upon these plains by men who pioneered the stage coaches, which have pioneered the railroads, neither Mr. Doane nor any other Bostonian would now be railroading in Nebraska. Except for such 'gatherings' as that to which Mr. Doane, with pure picayunishness, now refuses self-fare tickets, Boston would have remained to this day, in utter ignorance of the fertility and value of the rich lands in Nebraska."

The Bee's Independence. The personal challenge was this of May 7, 1872: "Who Rules the State?"—a ring of officeholders directed by a man at Washington, or the citizens of the commonwealth. And it was fought out on that line until the silver question and the growing conservatism of success brought and held the frequently intermittent insurgent well within the party lines. In its formative period, The Bee was singularly independent, and its independence almost as singularly consistent. While it boldly opposed the almost certain renomination of Grant in 1872, it advocated his election in preference to Greeley, contending that the democrats would not support Greeley as liberal republicans, but as democrats. It maintained that the nomination, in 1872, of Crouse instead of Taffe for governor; of Furnas for governor, and Lake, Gannett and Maxwell for judges of the supreme court, was a "remarkable contrast to the ticket two years ago, when Taffe and his ringmasters foisted on this state for governor, a man whose guilty transactions were as well known to them as they were made known to the people shortly afterward."

Something tangibly more and better than a mere change of factions had been won; and yet, on the publication during the campaign of the testimony in the Furnas-Herald bribery suit, The Bee reversed its prior belief that its preferred candidate for governor was innocent; and it afterward severely denounced him for pardoning Weber, the Fremont swindler.

The paper of the deadly sting knew that either itself or the Republican must go and its Roman resolve was set to a Carthaginian execution. It literally stung its adversary to death and chiefly by attacks on "the reactionary wealthy men" who were the owners of "the dying concern." Its singularly direct and apparently unstudied assaults were so nearly and naively void of humor as to lend them a strikingly humorous effect. The Bee was quite true to its opportunist policy also in supporting Ingersoll, who was nominated for governor at the Hastings antimonopoly conference in 1882, in preference to James W. Dawes, the very regular candidate, and Silas A. Holcomb, fusionist candidate for governor, against Thomas J. Major and John H. MacColl in 1894 and 1896, also in supporting Charles H. Brown, antimonopoly democrat, for congressman in 1884, rather than Archibald J. Weaver, regular republican.

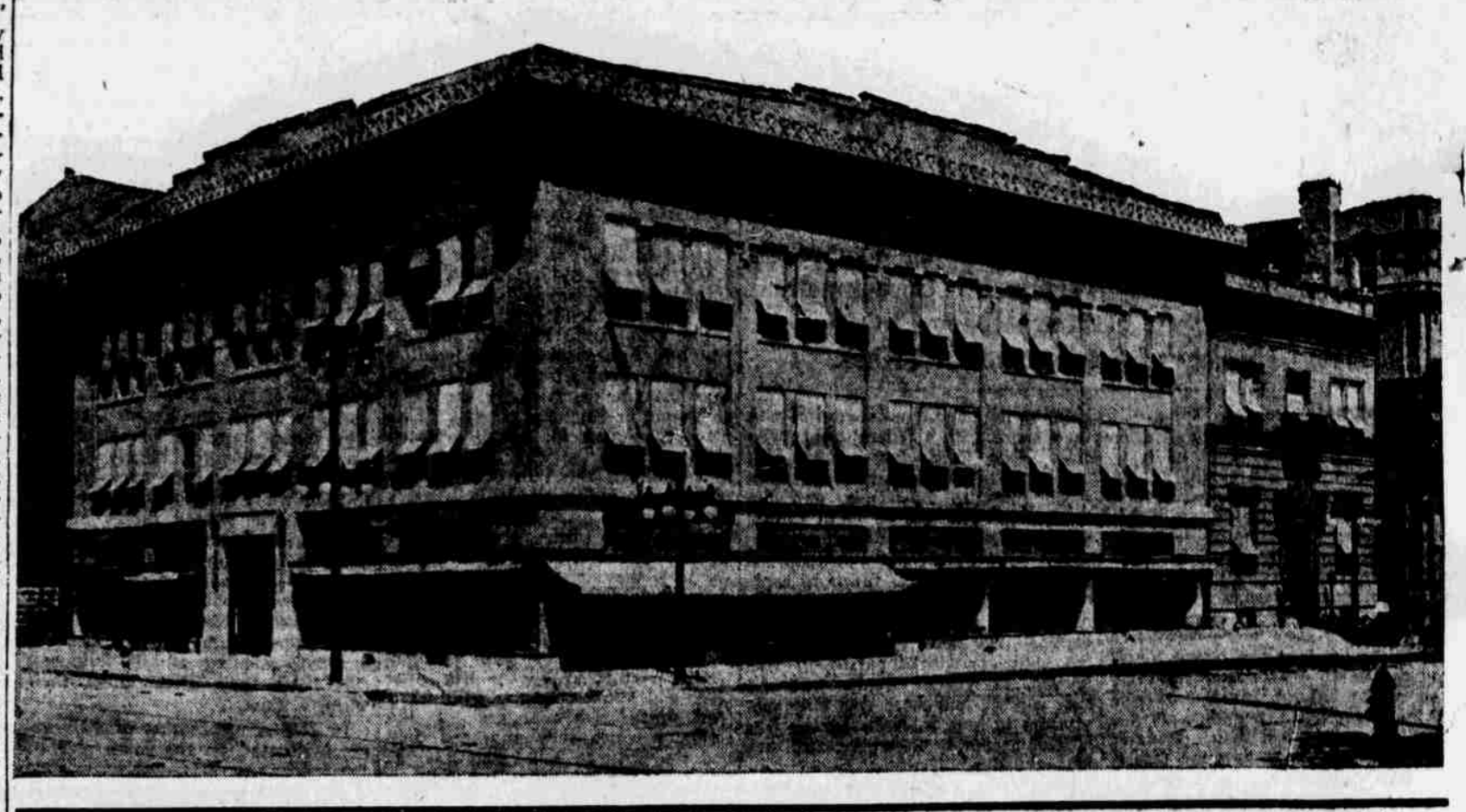
Indeed, The Bee's tactics were shaped to its discernment, though perhaps unconscious, that the two-party plan was no longer feasible and that the habitual devotion to it could be broken down. Its breakdown everywhere no weseems imminent, if not practically complete. The Bee was on principle opposed to such republican leaders as James W. Dawes, James Laird, Church Howe, "Jack" MacColl, Thomas J. Majors and John M. Thurston.

The rest of the galaxy of political stars The Bee condemned, but Dawes it condemned: ("His public career has been that of a trading politician who never hesitates to sacrifice principles or friends for personal preferment.") was its greeting on his nomination for governor in 1882. Among democrats, J. Sterling Morton—opponent of Dawes in 1882 and 1884—brilliantly resourceful and aggressive (but "the notorious railroad lobbyist"), was its shining mark.

There were two fundamental reasons for The Bee's unequivocal attack upon John I. Redick, Joel S. Griffin, Phineas W. Hitchcock, St. A. D. Balcombe, Edward B. Taylor and Casper E. Yost—their ultra-conservatism, as The Bee chose to appraise it, and the fact that they were owners of the Republican. Perforce, this border warfare by The Bee was often unfair and not always or ultimately successful; but in its temerarious adventures, the "balancing of inconveniences," which chiefly constitutes life and wholly the reformer's life, have far more than the average marks to their credit. Carlyle pictures the roundup: "A heroic Wallace, quartered upon the scaffold, cannot hinder that his Scotland become one day part of England, but he does hinder that it become on tyrannous, unfair terms part of it." In that crude formative period The Bee's corrective ministrations were indispensable. Though far from a classicist himself, the god of this master newspaper quite clearly saw the wisdom of first making mad those whom it would destroy, and it made them mad, very mad indeed, and kept them constantly so. Of all Nebraska's professional pageants, this one stands out as most spectacular.

Procession of the Crops. At the beginning of The Bee, there was much rather worse than useless speculation by agricultural pundits about what crops could be successfully grown. In the report of the president of the board of agriculture, submitted January 5, 1871, the planting of trees for lumber had "prominent" advocates, the raising of sugar beets was prematurely pressed and silk culture was whimsically considered. From the first there was among settlers a perverted sentiment for planting fruit trees, all things were desirable in that line; and the plain farmers could not be diverted from their clear judgment that Nebraska was made for the production of the great agricultural staples. The sequel has shown abundantly the soundness of their judgment. From the first, the board of agriculture, in 1871, the state, with a large area yet uncultivated, has come to rank third in wheat, fourth in corn, sixth in hay, fifth in hogs, sixth in horses and well up in many other staples.

To What End? It is platitudinous to remark that the material achievement of the commonwealth pictured here has been marvelous; but the question obtrudes, "What are we going to do with it?" Can these present bruised and broken bones live and how shall they be properly articulated? Taking counsel from common contemporary feeling and especially of the prophets—press, priest, publicist—the system itself has broken down, or at least has lost practical coordination, in muddling along to a new firm footing, which we must assume we are hopefully doing, our chance of reaching it depends upon the state's extraordinarily balanced condition to which I have adverted. Nebraska is neither over-urbanized nor over-industrialized, nor over-ruralized, nor over-alienated, but the components of urbanity of labor class consciousness, of rural life, foreign people are so proportioned and of such relatively sane, comestible temper, that it is yet practicable to establish satisfactory and stable relations between them. Among our most important states, Nebraska has, I think, this fortunate distinction.



Home of Lincoln Telephone & Telegraph Company

# Lincoln Telephone & Telegraph Company

Lincoln, Nebraska

The Lincoln Telephone and Telegraph Company was organized in January, 1909, taking over the properties of the Lincoln Telephone Company, including the Automatic Telephone Exchange at Lincoln, built in 1903, also the long distance lines of the Western Telephone Company. Its growth has been steady from that time and in 1912 it purchased from the Nebraska Telephone Company all of the Bell exchanges and long distance lines south of the Platte River to the west line of Adams and Webster Counties in Nebraska.

It now owns and operates 121 exchanges, among the more important being the cities of Lincoln, Hastings, Beatrice, York, Nebraska City, Fairbury, Superior, Seward, Plattsmouth, Auburn and David City. In addition to its Central Office Exchanges and a considerable number of Toll Stations, the Company owns and operates a complete toll system with 22,000 miles of toll lines, covering 22 counties in southeastern Nebraska, having an area of approximately 12,500 square miles, with a population of over 500,000.

Its lines reach every community in the territory served and connect with the lines of both the Independent and Bell Companies, including the Transcontinental line of the American Telephone & Telegraph Company.

**GENERAL BALANCE SHEET DEC. 31, 1920**

ASSETS		LIABILITIES	
Physical Property	\$ 8,698,905	Capital Stock	\$ 6,618,463
Investments	193,104	Funded Debt, bonds due	1,375
Materials and Supplies	552,492	in 1946	1,500,000
Current Receivables, etc.	468,477	Bills Payable	None
Cash and Deposits	164,149	Current Payables	246,080
		Reserve for Depreciation	1,112,073
		Other Reserves	72,000
		Surplus	528,511
Total Assets	\$10,077,127	Total Liabilities	\$10,077,127

The Company has an Annual Income of over \$2,500,000. A force of employees of 1,375. A monthly payroll of \$100,000. Present number of Telephones 66,197. Number of Stockholders over 2,000. Nebraska Stockholders 1,281.

The common stock of the Lincoln Telephone and Telegraph Company has paid regularly for the past 12 years Quarterly Cash dividends at the rate of 7% per annum and the company is now offering a limited amount of this stock to investors at its par and regular value of \$100.00 per share. Send your check for the amount you wish to purchase and stock will be mailed to you, or send name of your bank, to which certificate will be sent, and you can pay for it on receipt.

# The Lincoln Telephone & Telegraph Company

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