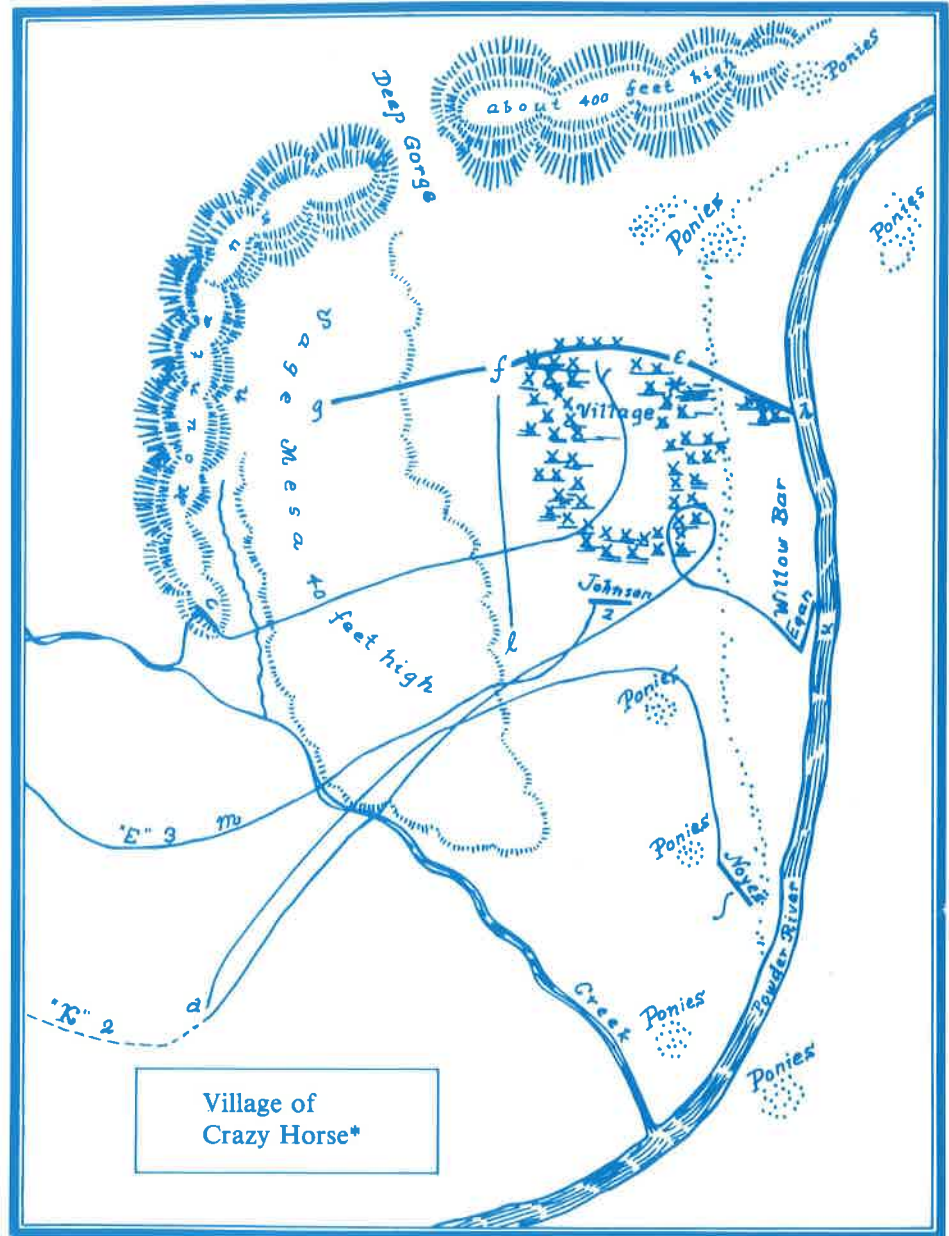


# HERSHOIDS

IN EDUCATION



\* Prepared by the Department of the Platte, signed by W.S. Sartten, Captain and Chief Engineer, Department of the Platte.

This map depicts the Sioux Indian Village of Chief Crazy Horse on the Powder River, Montana Territory, March 17, 1876. (Source: National Archives, Chicago Branch.)

## Primary Source Documents for Teaching Social Studies

ARTICLES BY:

Barr  
Bunce  
Burton  
Harkins

McBride  
McKiddy  
Salmela

## Primary Source Documents for Teaching Social Studies

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# EDITORIAL

By Michael J. Harkins

The editor of this issue of *Thresholds in Education* is convinced that primary source documents can serve as a major impetus for stimulating interest in the social studies and promoting critical, reflective thinking.

The contributors were asked to share their best thinking about, and where possible, provide examples of how primary source documents can be used by social studies teachers to achieve the above outcomes.

In the first essay, "Free Speech or Sedition: The United States vs.

Eugene V. Debs," Gary E. McKiddy provides a narrative and lesson plan showing how primary source documents can be used to promote understanding of some of the issues related to freedom of speech.

The second essay by Lawrence W. McBride, "Using Genealogical Sources as Documents for the Teaching and Learning of History," suggests ways of using genealogical sources in teaching history and Michael J. Harkins describes a teaching activity

using the U.S. Census 1790-1870 in the article that follows.

The essays by Kirk R. Salmela, Shirley J. Burton, Keith Barr, and Michael J. Harkins offer further illustrations and examples of how primary source documents may be used in teaching various aspects of the social studies.

The final essay by Peter W. Bunce describes the vast array of primary source documents available to students and teachers that can be found in the National Archives.

## Free Speech or Sedition: The United States vs. Eugene V. Debs

Gary E. McKiddy

*Gary E. McKiddy is a high school teacher in St. Charles, Missouri. He has had a variety of teaching experiences, including five years in Saudi Arabian schools. His research interest is in curriculum development for social studies courses.*

Some subjects provide the opportunity for a teacher to channel students' love of argument into a productive learning experience. There can be no greater excitement than seeing a class divided over an issue where each side presents a logical, well-researched argument. The trial of Socialist Party presidential candidate Eugene V. Debs in 1918 for violation of the Espionage Act is just

such a case. Examination of the case, using documents stored in the National Archives, opens discussion on a basic issue—freedom of speech. Is free speech necessary in a democracy? Is speech to be totally free? If not, how, when, and by whom can it be limited? *The United States vs. Eugene V. Debs* (1981) draws attention to these questions about free speech, questions which are of vital concern to every citizen of the American democracy.

### Historical Background

The First Amendment to the Constitution states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an estab-

lishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech...". The founding fathers were well aware of restrictions which had been imposed by the English Parliament during the colonial period, and they wanted to insure that United States citizens would be free to discuss, debate, and even criticize the policies of the government. They considered the free exchange of ideas to be a vital part of the American governmental process.

From the beginning, however, the issue of Freedom of Speech was subject to great debate. Was all speech to be allowed? Can the government restrict speech which endangers public order, which incites riots leading to the loss of lives or property, or

which aids an enemy during the time of war? Should those who disagree with the most basic principles of democracy be allowed to voice their opinions? The Federalist Party, in an attempt to narrowly define Freedom of Speech, used its majority in Congress to enact the Sedition Act of 1798 making it a crime to criticize the government. Americans were divided over the conflict then taking place between Britain and France. The Federalist Party hoped that the Sedition Act would silence criticism of its pro-British policy coming from the pro-French Jeffersonian Democratic Party. The Federalists did not anticipate the mass opposition which arose in response to the act, eventually leading to the law's repeal and to the defeat of the Federalist Party in the election of 1800.

Congress did not again pass a law so broadly abridging the Freedom of Speech until the beginning of World War I. The June, 1917 Espionage Act was amended in May, 1918 to include a section on "seditious speech." Traditionally, treason consisted of overt acts—giving aid to enemies of the United States or conducting war against the United States. Under the new law, it was declared treasonous to print, write, or publish any "disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language about the form of government of the United States or the Constitution, or any language intended to bring the form of government of the United States, or the Constitution of the United States, or the military forces...or the flag...or the uniform of the Army or Navy...into contempt, scorn, contumely, or disrepute." Speech itself could be considered treason; action was not required. Violation of the act was punishable by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment for not more than 20 years or both.

America's entry into the European War had been an issue of hot debate. Many Americans, especially Populists and Socialists from the Midwest and West, favored neutrality. Wilson's Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan, had resigned when he felt that Wilson's actions were no longer impartial. In 1914, the Socialist Party of America, as well as the Socialist Parties in France, Britain, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, opposed the fight-

ing. They argued that the war was a ploy of capitalists to increase profits at the expense of the workers. The Socialists declared a policy of pacifistic brotherhood.

The standard of the American Socialist Party was carried by Eugene V. Debs of Terra Haute, Indiana. In the presidential election of 1912, he had carried 6% of the votes, almost 900,000. After 1914, Debs charged that East Coast bankers would try to bring the U.S. into the war in order to save the hundreds of millions of dollars they had loaned Britain and France. Debs continued to repeat this message in his speeches throughout the United States after the nation entered the war in 1917. His speech on this theme at the Ohio Socialist Convention of June 16, 1918 at Canton provided the basis of the evidence for a grand jury indictment, a trial, and his eventual conviction.

In the speech, Debs had voiced opposition to the militarism of Germany and to the "Junkers of Wall Street" who had led the United States into war. He expressed his opposition to the capitalist system in the United States and in Europe. In his conclusion, he urged the crowd to join with Socialists everywhere to reject capitalism and "proclaim the emancipation of the working class and the brotherhood of all mankind."

During the trial, Debs did not deny any of the statements he made in Canton. His defense rested entirely upon his First Amendment right to Free Speech. He told the jury that he never advocated violence nor disloyalty. His only purpose had been to inform the people as to the iniquities of the social system under which they lived and to urge them to change it by peaceful and orderly means. He told them: "I believe in the right of free speech, in war as well as in peace...It is far more dangerous to attempt to gag the people than to allow them to speak freely what is in their hearts." Despite his argument, Debs lost the case. he was sentenced to ten years imprisonment. The case was appealed all the way to the United States Supreme Court which upheld his conviction and sentence on March 10, 1919.

Can the government limit free speech, in spite of the First Amendment? Is all speech protected by the

Constitution? Can a speech be seditious? Can extenuating circumstances be used to justify limitations on individual liberties? These are the issues with which students must grapple as they examine the case of *The United States vs Eugene V. Debs*.

## Teaching Plan

### A. Opening Up the Issue

1. Anticipatory set. Before class, list the following on the board: Communist Party USA, Nazi Party, NAACP, Democratic Party, Ayrian Nation, Socialist Party, Flat Earth Society, Republican Party.

2. Opening. Explain that hypothetically each of the groups listed on the board has offered to send a speaker to give a presentation at your school. The school board has asked your students to give their opinion as to which groups should be scheduled. Have the students list the pros and cons of allowing each group to speak. Is the right of each of these groups to speak protected by the Constitution?

3. Discussion. On the board write: Freedom of Speech. Ask students to define. Examine Amendment One of the Constitution to see what it says about Freedom of Speech. Why is it important in a democracy? How 'free' should speech be?

4. Background lecture. Using the information above, give a brief introduction to limitations which have been placed upon the freedom of speech. Introduce the Debs case, but do not discuss the outcome of his trial.

### B. Organization and Research

1. Anticipatory set. Distribute and read aloud the Grand Jury indictment.

2. The class will try the Eugene V. Debs Case. The class should be organized into the participants of the trial: a judge, a jury, teams of defense and prosecution lawyers (two or three students on each team), Eugene V. Debs, witnesses for the defense and prosecution (those who attended the Canton, Ohio meeting, experts on Constitutional law, members of the Socialist Party, representatives of the ACLU, Congressmen who supported the Espionage Act).

3. The class should research the case, the life of Eugene V. Debs, and Freedom of Speech. This can be done in the library or from packets of materials previously gathered by the teacher. The judge and jury should research Freedom of Speech and censorship during the time of war. The prosecution and defense teams should prepare their cases. Though the Debs case occurred in 1918, students should be free to refer to decisions of later cases to support their argument.

### C. *The Trial of Eugene V. Debs*

1. Convening of the court.
2. Opening statements by the attorneys.
3. Examination of witnesses and presentation of evidence. The information below should be introduced during the trial:

#### a. *Statements made by Debs in the Canton, Ohio speech:*

- "Are we opposed to Prussian militarism? Why, we have been fighting it since the day the Socialist movement was born..."
- "I hate, I loathe, I despise Junkers and Junkerdom. I have no earthly use for the Junkers of Germany, and not one particle more use for the Junkers in the United States."
- "The feudal barons of the Middle Ages, the economic predecessors of the capitalists of our day (Wall Street industrialists), declared all wars. And their miserable serfs fought all the battles...The master class has had all to gain and nothing to lose, while the subject class has had nothing to gain and all to lose—especially their lives."
- "[Capitalists] are urging you to 'cultivate' war gardens, while at the same time a government war report...shows that practically 52% of the arable, tillable soil is held out of use by landlords, speculators and profiteers."
- "When Wall Street says 'war' the press says 'war' and the pul-

pit promptly follows with its Amen."

- "When we unite and act together on the industrial field and when we vote together on election we shall develop the supreme power of the one class that can and will bring permanent peace to the world...In due time industry will be organized on a cooperative basis. We shall conquer the public power. We shall then transfer the title deeds of the railroads, the telegraph lines, the mines, mills and great industries to the people."

#### b. *Statement in favor of Freedom of Speech:*

- John Stuart Mill, *Essay on Liberty*: "The peculiar evil of silencing the expression of opinion, is that it is robbing the human race...If the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity for exchanging error for truth; if wrong, they lose, what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth, produced by the collision with error."

#### c. *Statement justifying restriction of speech:*

- Oliver Wendell Holmes in *Schenck vs. United States* (1919): "The question in every case is whether the words are used in circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent."

#### d. *Show photo of Debs giving the Canton speech.*

4. Closing statements. At the actual trial, Debs delivered his own closing address to the jury which has been reprinted in a number of biographies. It may be read, as well as having his lawyers present their closing argument. This statement, as well as the entire text of the Canton speech, is

found in *Debs*, edited by Ronald Radosh.

5. The judge charges the jury. It is not necessary to prove that Debs' speech caused insubordination, mutiny, or aided Germany. The jury must determine only if that had been his intent. Punishment for violation of the Espionage Act was a fine not to exceed \$10,000 or imprisonment for not more than twenty years or both.

6. Deliberation of the jury.

7. Verdict and sentencing. The jury may suggest a sentence. Before hearing the sentence, Debs addressed the court. His remarks included the statement that: "...years ago I recognized my kinship with all living beings, and I made up my mind that I was not one bit better than the meanest on earth. I said then, and I say now, that while there is a lower class, I am in it, while there is a criminal element, I am of it, and while there is a soul in prison, I am not free."

### D. *Conclusion*

After the students have reached their verdict, distribute or display a copy of the jury verdict. Debs was sentenced to ten years in the federal penitentiary. Have the students discuss their opinion of the Debs verdict. Was Debs' opposition to World War I, or any war, covered by the First Amendment? Why or why not?

Debs ran his 1920 presidential campaign from prison. Though he polled 917,799 votes, more than in 1912, the electorate had increased so it was not as large a percentage. President Wilson refused to release Debs, but the new Republican president, Warren Harding, ordered his release on Christmas Day, 1921. Eugene V. Debs, though ill, continued to write for Socialist newspapers and magazines. He died of a heart attack on October 20, 1926.

### E. *Supplemental Activities*

1. Students may wish to investigate the following: Anti-war movements in the United States, the American First Committee, William Jennings Bryan and United States entry into World War I, Charles Lindbergh as an anti-war spokesman, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Sedition Act of 1789, Censorship during World Wars

I and II, the Smith Act of 1940, and the Internal Securities Act of 1950.

2. Students interested in legal issues may wish to research other cases dealing with free speech and report to the class. Landmark cases include: *Schenck vs. the United States* (1919), *Gitlow vs. New York* (1925), and *Witney vs. California* (1927).

3. The teacher may wish to have the class read and discuss John Stuart Mill's essay *On Liberty* (1859). It contains the classic argument favoring free speech.

4. Students may wish to research and discuss the two judicial doctrines relating to free speech: Clear and Present Danger, and Dangerous Tendency.

**Sources**

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PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENTS

FDR

THE UNITED STATES VS EUGENE V. DEBS

Source: National Archives-Chicago Branch, 7358 South Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois 60629.

DOCUMENT #1: Cover page of verdict.

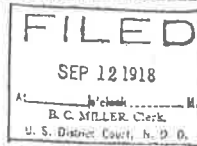
No. 4057

THE UNITED STATES

vs.

Eugene V. Debs

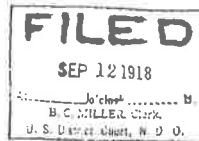
VERDICT.



NOTE: Thresholds in Education Foundation hereby grants permission to photocopy all primary source documents found in this issue of Thresholds when intended for classroom use.

DOCUMENT #2: Filing date of verdict.

*Yours truly*  
*# 4057*  
*The United States*  
*vs*  
*Eugene V. Debs*



*Government Exhibit 19.*

6278 records -

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO }  
EASTERN DIVISION } SS.

44057

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE UNITED STATES, within and for the Division and District aforesaid.

At the April Term of said Court, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighteen.

The Grand Jurors of the United States of America, duly impanelled, sworn and charged to inquire of crimes and offenses within and for the body of the Eastern Division of the Northern District of Ohio, upon their oaths present and

Sec. 3, Title 1, find that Act of June 15, 1917, as amended by Act of May 16, 1918. (Espionage)

EUGENE V. DEBS

hereinafter designated the defendant, late of the Division and District aforesaid, heretofore, to wit, on or about the 16th day of June, 1918, at the City of Canton, County of Stark, in the State of Ohio, in the Division and District aforesaid, and within the jurisdiction of this court; the United States of America being then and there at war with the Imperial German Government pursuant to a joint resolution of the Congress of the United States, theretofore adopted, and which resolution was approved by the President of the United States on the 6th day of April, A. D., 1917, did then and there unlawfully, wilfully and feloniously make and convey certain false reports and false statements, with intent on his part, the said defendant, to promote the success of the enemy of the United States so at war as aforesaid, that is to say, the Imperial German Government, to wit, that he the said defendant, did then and there wilfully, unlawfully and feloniously make and utter certain false reports and false statements in a public speech and address to a certain assembly of people, among whom were Clyde R. Miller, Dennis R. Smith, A. P. Owen, and Virgil Steiner, citizens of the United States of America, and divers other persons whose names are to the Grand Jury unknown, and if known, are too numerous to mention herein, and for that reason are omitted.

The said false reports and false statements were made and conveyed with the intent to promote the success of the enemy so at war with the United States of America as aforesaid, and were in words and substance as follows: \_\_\_\_\_



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
Northern District of Ohio  
Eastern Division, ss.

April Term, A.D. 1918

THE UNITED STATES  
vs.  
Eugene V. Debs  
PLAINTIFF  
DEFENDANT

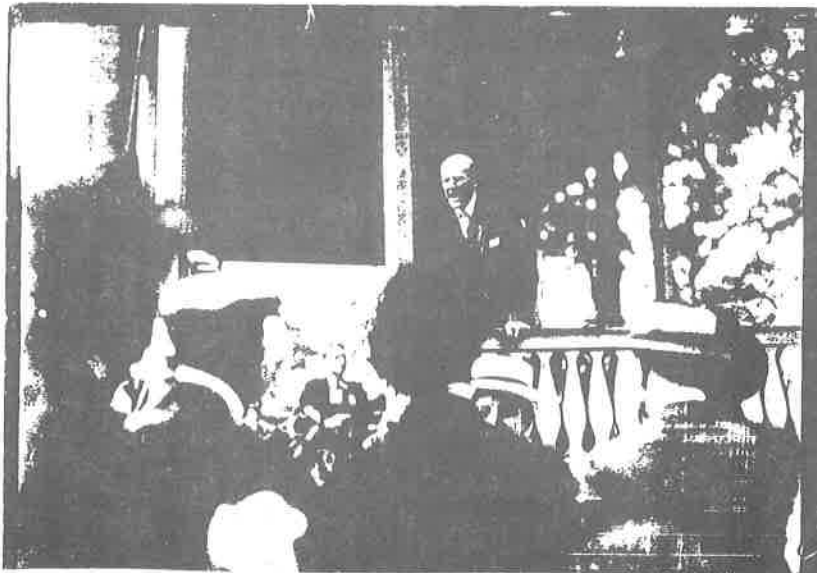
In the District Court of the United States.  
No. 4057

VERDICT

We, the Jury in this case, being duly impanelled and sworn, do find  
as to the 3rd Count of the Indictment, the Defendant is *guilty*  
as to the 4th Count of the Indictment, the Defendant is *guilty*  
as to the 6th Count of the Indictment, the Defendant is *not guilty*  
as to the 7th Count of the Indictment, the Defendant is *guilty*  
as to the 8th Count of the Indictment, the Defendant is *not guilty*  
as to the 10th Count of the Indictment, the defendant is *not guilty*

*Cyrus Stoner* Foreman

DOCUMENT #5: Photo of Eugene V. Debs giving speech in Canton, Ohio.



# Using Genealogical Sources as Documents for the Teaching and Learning of History

*Lawrence W. McBride*

*Lawrence W. McBride is Assistant Professor of History at Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois. He is the director of the teacher education program in history and social sciences.*

For years, professional genealogists and individuals who are researching their family history have understood the usefulness of many of the documents which are held in the National Archives. Of particular interest to genealogical researchers are: ship lists, military service records, naturalization records, and the National census records. The purpose of this article is to bring these overlooked documentary sources to the attention of teachers and students of both American history and world history. Each of these sources is readily accessible in the archives, or teachers and students can make a written inquiry about obtaining sample documents. The article concludes with a short guide on how researchers can obtain and use genealogical sources in the National Archives and in state, county or local offices.

The National Archives - Chicago Branch has hundreds of microfilm copies of ship lists. Ship lists allow researchers to trace the path of millions of immigrants from their original homeland to the United States. These lists (which are sometimes referred to as manifests) provide the name of every passenger—and crew member—as well as the ages of the passengers, their sex, place of origin, nationality, and occupation or profession. A study of a few ship lists from Queenstown, Ireland in 1848, for example, will provide a vivid picture of the effect the great potato famine had on the Irish population, as tens of thousands of young people, mostly young tenant farmers and unskilled laborers, left the country. A study of ship lists from German port cities

during the same year, as revolutions swept across central Europe, will reveal that thousands of German immigrants were often skilled craftsmen and professionals. As the earliest immigrants to arrive in the United States in massive numbers during the mid-nineteenth century, the Germans and the Irish contributed greatly to the course of United States urban history and to the westward expansion of the nation.

The National Archives also holds a wide variety of military records. Two types of military records are of particular interest. Revolutionary War service records include a narrative account of a soldier's war activity, which was usually very brief, and his pay, which was always very low. These service records often include documents relating to pensions, and give a description of the bounty lands in the old Northwest Territory which the early national government used as a form of pension payment to veterans. The National Archives also have service records for both Union and Confederate soldiers. This record series includes fascinating paperwork that sheds light on the typical soldier's family history, battle recollections, and testimony from officials, doctors, friends and neighbors about the soldier's health. An energetic researcher can trace the records of all the soldiers who may have enlisted en masse from a particular town. The local regiment can easily be followed from battle to battle.

Another fruitful source for genealogists, history teachers, and students alike, are records which are related to naturalization and citizenship. One unique record series in the Chicago Branch of the National Archives are the documents that were kept of Chinese aliens who wished to return temporarily to visit China. These individuals were asked a series of questions about their family life,

financial status, and place in the community. These types of questions and procedures seem to have applied to this specific group of people. If the individual returned with family members or a new bride, another series of questions was asked. The depositions are useful because they provide details about Chinese kinship patterns and social customs. They also yield a great deal of information which is generally ignored by the typical textbook about Chinese who came to the United States.

Immigrants who decided to become citizens completed another series of records. The most useful of these for students are the "Declaration of Intention" (Primary Source Document for Using Genealogical Sources...) and "Petition for Citizenship." The form itself for the latter document—there are tens of thousands of petitions in the regional branch of the National Archives—is quite interesting. It often required a photograph of the petitioner, demographic information, and family history. Students will find the oath, swearing off allegiance to foreign potentates, and abjuring anarchy, in the "Declaration of Intention" records, especially interesting.

The National census records have probably provided genealogists and family history researchers with more information than any other source. This is because the census records always include family members' names, ages, relationships and location at a particular time.

Teachers and students, however, can use census records for other purposes in history courses. For example, census records can be used to gather demographic information and data for the study of themes in social, economic, and political history. The census records for the anti-bellum period of American history include demographic information on the extent of slavery and the geographic pat-

terns of slaveholding in Southern states. The spectacular population growth in the eastern half of the United States between 1850 and 1900 can be described by analyzing the census figures for particular towns over time. Likewise, some conclusions can be developed about family structure by comparing data between rural and urban communities at a given time. A more difficult research task—because it requires a visit to the Archives microfilm room— would involve a

study of the frontier in nineteenth century America. Researchers can start with an older citizen of a western state in 1910 and try to trace his movements eastward and backward through time in the census records. (The Archives has a coding system that makes this exercise possible.) This exercise will also shed light on mortality, children's history, and labor history. Finally, researchers may wish to obtain and study the census schedules for the area around their homes or schools. Stu-

dents might be surprised to find out who lived there a century or more ago. Indeed, information in the census could be an excellent point of departure for a much deeper look into local, national, and even world history.

Table 1, Searching Genealogical Records, provides suggestions on how to begin genealogical research, and Table 2, Microfilm Records that Pertain to Genealogy, provides additional sources for the researcher.

**Table 1**

**SEARCHING GENEALOGICAL RECORDS**

---

**1. Census Records**

- know your ancestor's full name and state of residence when the census was taken
- visit the National Archives, Washington, DC, the regional archives branch at a National Archives Center
- any research or public library that has microfilm of the census schedules

**2. Military Records - Pre World War I**

- request NATF Form 80, "Order for Copies of Veteran's Records" from the regional archives branch nearest you or from the Reference Services Branch (NNIR), National Archives and Records Service, Washington, DC 20408

**3. Military Records - World Wars I and II**

- request SF Form 180, "Request Pertaining to Military Records" from the Reference Services Branch (NNIR), National Archives and Records Service, Washington, DC 20408. Information from these records is released only with written permission of the veteran, or if deceased, the veteran's next of kin.

**4. Passenger Arrival Records**

- request NATF Form 81, "Order for Copies of Ship Passenger Arrival Records" from the regional archives branch nearest you, or the Reference Services Branch (NNIR), National Archives and Records Service, Washington, DC 20408

**5. Naturalization Records**

- send your ancestor's full name, approximate date of naturalization, the state and county or town residence when naturalized to the regional archives branch that maintains records for the state in which your ancestor was naturalized.

**6. Land Records**

- send your ancestor's full name, the location of the land, whether it was acquired before or after 1908, and any additional information about the land to General Branch (NNFG), National Archives and Records Service, Washington, DC 20409
- To locate: birth, marriage, and death certificates, write to the Vital Statistics Office in the state in which the event occurred.

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Source: Lawrence W. McBride, *Illinois State University*, 1988.

**Table 2**

**MICROFILM RECORDS THAT PERTAIN TO GENEALOGY**

Census and Related Records	Immigration	Records of American Naval Personnel Who Served in the Revolutionary War. Arranged by surname.
Federal Population Census Schedules 1790-1910. All states.	M261 Index to Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York 1820-1846. Arranged alphabetically by passenger's surname.	M880 Compiled Service Records of Soldiers Who Served in the American Army During the Revolutionary War. Arranged under the designation "Continental Troops" or a State name, thereunder by organization, and thereunder alphabetically by soldier's surname.
Soundex Indexes to Federal Population Schedules 1880, 1900, all states. 1910, 21 states only.	M237 Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York 1846-1897). Arranged chronologically by year. (There is no available index at this time for this series.)	
T1224 Descriptions of Census Enumeration Districts (1910 only).	T519 Index to Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York June 16, 1897-June 30, 1902. Arranged alphabetically by passenger's surname.	M804 Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land-Warrant Application Files. Arranged alphabetically by surname.
T1210 Census Enumeration District Description Volumes 1900.	M575 Copies of Lists of Passengers Arriving at Miscellaneous Ports on the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts and at Ports on the Great Lakes 1820-1873. Arranged alphabetically by port.	M829 Revolutionary War Bounty Land Warrants in the Military District of Ohio and Related Papers (Acts of 1788, 1803, 1806). Arranged numerically by warrant number. There are indexes and registers.
M123 Special Schedules of the Eleventh Census (1890) Enumerating Union Veterans of the Civil War. Kentucky - Wyoming (including District of Columbia). Arranged by state and thereunder by county.	<b>Military</b>	M246 Revolutionary War Rolls. Arranged by state and thereunder by organization.
T655 Federal Mortality Schedules 1850-1880 and Related Indexes in the Custody of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Schedules and indexes for a few states only. Arranged alphabetically by state.	M860 General Index to Compiled Military Service Records of Revolutionary War Soldiers. Arranged alphabetically by surname. (This microfilm series is identical to T515.)	M602 Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the War of 1812. Arranged alphabetically by surname.
M595 Indian Census Rolls 1885-1940. Schedules only for Indian tribes residing in Michigan and Wisconsin. Arranged by reservation and thereunder by year.	M881 Compiled Service Records of Soldiers Who Served in the American Army During the Revolutionary War. Arranged under the designation "Continental Troops" or a State name, thereunder by organization, and thereunder alphabetically by soldier's surname.	M848 War of 1812 Military Bounty Land Warrants 1815-1858. Arranged numerically by warrant number. There are indexes.
Index of Chicago and Cook County, Illinois. 1860 Federal Census. Arranged alphabetically by surname.	M879 Index to Compiled Service	M630 Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served From the State of Michigan During the Patriot War
City Directories - Chicago (1839, 1844 book form), 1880, 189-, 1900, 1910, 1917. New York City 1909-1910. Brooklyn 1910.		

1838-1839. Arranged alphabetically by surname.  
M631 Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the Mexican War. Arranged alphabetically by surname.

M616 Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers During the Mexican War. Arranged alphabetically by surname.  
Indexes to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers

Who Served in Organizations From the States of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Arranged by surname.

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Source: Lawrence W. McBride, Illinois State University, 1988.

### Sources

Greenwood, Val D. The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co. Inc., 1973.

Wright, Norman E. Preserving Your American Heritage, Provo,

Utah: Brigham Young Press, 1981.

Kyvig, David and Myron A. Marty. Your Family History: A Handbook for Research and Writing, Arlington Heights,

Illinois: AHM Publishing Corp., 1978.

National Archives - Chicago Branch. "Guide to Searching Genealogical Sources" and "Microfilm Records that Pertain to Genealogy" are available from the Archives: 7358 South Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois 60629.

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*Fine Arts  
Assessment  
Conference*

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*April 22, 23, 1988  
Naperville, Illinois*

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PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENT

FOR

USING GENEALOGICAL SOURCES AS DOCUMENTS FOR THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF HISTORY

Source: National Archives-Chicago Branch, 7358 South Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois 60629.

TRIPPLICATE (To be given to declarant)

No. 97823

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DECLARATION OF INTENTION

(Valid for all purposes seven years after the date hereof)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA In the DISTRICT Court of the NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS of THE UNITED STATES of CHICAGO, ILL.

I, ROSE CONROY, now residing at 3127 South Myrtle Avenue, occupation Nurse maid, aged 22 years, do declare on oath that my personal description is: Sex Female, color White, complexion Fair, color of eyes Gray, color of hair Black, height 5 feet 5 inches, weight 120 pounds; visible distinctive marks None. race Irish; nationality British. I was born in Belmullet, Ireland on July 25th, 1911. I am NOT married. The name of my wife or husband is. we were married on. born at. entered the United States at. for permanent residence therein, and now resides at. I have NO children, and the name, date and place of birth, and place of residence of each of said children are as follows:

I have heretofore made a declaration of intention: Number. of. my last foreign residence was Belmullet, Ireland. I emigrated to the United States of America from Queenstown, Ireland. my lawful entry for permanent residence in the United States was at New York, New York under the name of Rose Conroy on the vessel SS. George Washington on November 9, 1925.

I will, before being admitted to citizenship, renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, and particularly, by name, to the prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of which I may be at the time of admission a citizen or subject; I am not an anarchist; I am not a polygamist nor a believer in the practice of polygamy; and it is my intention in good faith to become a citizen of the United States of America and to reside permanently therein; and I certify that the photograph affixed to the duplicate and triplicate hereof is a likeness of me: SO HELP ME GOD.



Subscribed and sworn to before me in the office of the Clerk of said Court, at Chicago, Illinois, this 10th day of December, anno Domini 1924. Certification No. 11-108048 from the Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization showing the lawful entry of the declarant for permanent residence on the date stated above, has been received by me. The photograph affixed to the duplicate and triplicate hereof is a likeness of the declarant.

CHARLES M. BATES, Clerk of the U. S. DISTRICT Court, Chicago, Ill.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE.

Photograph of Primary Source Document: Tom Johnston.



# A Teaching Activity Using the U.S. Census 1790-1870

*Michael J. Harkins*

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The United States Census can serve as a major Primary Source Document for study in American History classes. In order to use the census, the teacher should first determine how the school librarian can obtain microfilm rolls of the census years being studied. Several choices are apparent:

1. Request the film from a local library through the school librarian.
2. Have the school purchase selected rolls.
3. Visit a local library that has the microfilm census.
4. Visit the National Archives - Chicago Branch with the class to use their collection.
5. The teacher can visit the Archives and secure photocopies of the appropriate pages for students to complete the activity.

If the teacher requests the film through inter-library loan, the teacher should specify the year, state, and county needed. This information can be found in the attached questions. Many local libraries will also have the census available on microfilm. The National Archives - Chicago Branch has a complete collection of microfilm copies of the census 1790-1910. Visits to the facility to use the microfilm can be arranged by contacting the Director of the National Archives - Chicago Branch.

Once you have located the microfilm specific to the attached questions, the following steps should be followed:

## *Component A - Background*

1. Discuss the U.S. Census and its role in American history.
2. Review the different types of data that can be found in each census 1790-1870. Use the blank census forms found in Table 1 for this activity.
3. Discuss how the census can be used to trace family history.
4. Discuss how history can be written from original census documents.
5. Discuss how the data abstracted from the census can be used to enlighten students as to the events surrounding major historical dates and activities.
6. Discuss how the census can be used to identify social mobility patterns.

## *Component B - Use of the Census Microfilm*

Once the appropriate background discussion and review has been established, the actual use of the document can take place with the students.

1. Students should be divided into pairs or teams of three.
2. The instructor should assign each pair or team a specific identified roll of film, a microfilm reader, and a set of questions to answer. If the school does not have sufficient readers, the instructor should photocopy the specific pages from the census microfilm roll and prepare document packets

for students to use in pairs or groups.

3. The teacher should then distribute blank census sheets 1790- 1870 to each pair or team. Students should record the answers from the question on the blank census sheet for later analysis.
4. Give the students at least one 50 minute time period to complete the questions. Remember, not all students can use the same roll of film at the same time. Therefore, if using the rolls instead of photocopies, have students start with different questions and then switch rolls.
5. The teacher should circulate and assist students in handwriting interpretation while students are viewing the microfilm and answering the questions.

## *Component C - Debriefing-Analysis*

1. At least one class period should be devoted to the reporting and analysis of the census questions.
2. The teacher should synthesize the questions on the chalkboard by asking the following questions:
  - Where did most of the people live that you found in the census (region of U.S.)?
  - Were most of them married? If so, how many children did they have?
  - How old were the heads of the households?
  - Did any own slaves? If so, how many?
  - What were the major occupations of the heads of the households?

3. After the above data have been placed on the chalkboard, divide the students into groups and have them generate 1-3 hypotheses about the data. The teacher should circulate and assist them. The teacher should allow 20-25 minutes for this activity.
4. The teacher should then have each group report their hypotheses and comment on each as well as writing them on the chalkboard.
5. The teacher should then apply the students' hypotheses to what was happening in the country. A national hypothesis based on larger data sets should be generated.
6. The teacher should then place the students' work in perspective by having them use their text to locate at least 3 major events/activities taking place during the years the students worked with in the census. These events/activities can be categorized by years:

- 1790
- 1800
- 1810
- 1820
- 1840
- 1860
- 1870

The teacher could use a group process to generate these data, or assign it as homework. Suggested time frame: one 50 minute period.

7. After the students have identified the key events associated with the identified years, the teacher should then integrate these data with the data the students generated from the census questions. This could be completed in groups or as a whole class. Suggested time frame: one 50 minute period.
8. After the two data sets have been integrated, the teacher should have each student select one person from the census activity questions and then write

1-2 paragraphs about this person based on the data generated from the census and the national findings from #6. Suggested time frame: in class 30 minutes or as homework.

9. The teacher should collect and read the assignments and then present an overall assessment to the class concerning their attempt to integrate the data.
10. Teacher assessment of the activity. This could be formal or informal. However, the teacher needs to evaluate the activity. A rating scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the highest for the group work and written assignments, could be devised. The teacher can then evaluate the students individually and as a group. Peer assessment could also be used with the same 1-10 scale.

#### 11. Follow-up:

A written assignment should be used to determine the retention level and ability of the students to use the knowledge, skills, and information generated from the census activity.

### U.S. Census Problem Solving Activity 1790-1840

#### Question Set #1

Source: National Archives - Chicago Branch, 7358 South Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois 60629.

1. Locate the 1790 North Carolina census, roll 637, box 7. Turn to page 213, line 14 and locate William Ustils. Answer the following questions:
  - In what county did he live?
  - What rank did he have?
  - How many children did he have?
  - How old was he?
  - Was he married?
2. Locate the 1790 census for Pennsylvania, roll 637, box 9. Turn to page 127, line 5. Locate

A.D. Black. Answer the following questions:

- What does A.D. stand for?
  - What county did she live in?
  - How old was she?
  - Did she have any children?
  - Was she married?
3. Locate the 1790 census for Rhode Island, M-637, roll 10. Locate Mary Arnold, page 59, line 4. Answer the following questions:
    - What county did she live in?
    - How old was she?
    - Was she married?
    - How many children did she have?
  4. Locate the 1810 census for Kentucky, M-252, roll 6. Locate M. Littleton, page 142, line 6. Answer the following questions:
    - How old was he?
    - What was his first name?
    - What county did he live in?
    - Was he married?
  5. Try to locate Littleton in the 1820 and 1830 census and answer the same questions as in #4.
  6. Locate the 1800 Census for South Carolina, roll 32, box 49. Locate T. Ballard, P. 419. Answer the following questions:
    - What county did he live in?
    - How old was he?
    - Was he married?
    - Did he own slaves?
    - How many children did he have?
  7. Try to locate Ballard in the 1820 and 1830 Census. Answer the same questions as in #6.
  8. Locate the 1820 Census for New York, M-33, roll 64. Locate T. Sylvanus, p. 293A, line 1. Answer the following questions:
    - How many individuals was he responsible for?
    - What was his first name?
    - What was his occupation?



- In what county did he work?
  - In what town did he work?
9. Try to locate Sylvanus in the 1830 and 1840 New York Census. If you find him, compare the information given.

10. Locate the 1800 Census for Maryland, roll 32, Box 12. Locate John Richards and Thoroughgood Townsend, on p. 184, lines 1 and 4. Compare and contrast these two individuals. What is the greatest difference between them? Explain.

## U.S. Census Problem Solving Activity 1810-1870

### Question Set #2

Source: National Archives - Chicago Branch, 7358 South Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois 60629.

1. Go to the 1810 Census. Locate microfilm roll No. 252-Box 1. Take it from the cabinet and place the roll on a microfilm reader. Turn to page 516. Locate Augustus Burnham. Answer the following questions:
    - Where did he live? County and state?
    - How many children under 10 did he have?
    - How old was he?
    - Do you think he was married?
    - If your answer to this is yes, how old would his wife be?
  2. Go to the 1840 Census. Locate microfilm roll No. 704-Box 49. Take the roll from the cabinet and place it on a microfilm reader. Turn to printed page number 165. Locate L.W. Jenings. Answer the following questions:
    - Did he own slaves?
    - Where did he live?
    - How many sons did he have?
    - How old was he?
    - How many slaves did he own?
    - What was the occupation of his family?
    - What district did he live in?
    - What county and state did he live in?
  3. Go to the 1830 Census for Pulaski County and locate L.W. Jenings 10 years earlier. Answer all of the questions listed in question 2 and question 3.
    - Explain all differences between 1830 and 1840.
  4. Locate the 1860 Census. Roll No. 653-Box 592. Turn to Mss. handwritten page number 180. Tippah County. Locate Hansforth Arnett. Answer the following questions:
    - Where was he born? Year?
    - How old was he in 1860?
    - What was the name of his wife? Her age? Birthplace?
    - How many sons did he have?
    - What was his occupation?
  5. Locate the 1870 Census. Microfilm roll No. 653-Box 592. Go to page 190, Tippah County.
    - Locate William A. Boyd:
    - How old was he in 1860?
    - How old was his wife in 1860?
    - What was his value in land?
    - What was his personal property value?
    - Where was he born?
    - Where was his wife born?
    - What was his occupation?
    - Check the Slave Census Schedule for 1860 in the same county and state to see if Boyd owned slaves. If so, how many?
- Trace their movement from the East Coast to their home in 1860. Complete this by obtaining an outline map of the U.S. from your instructor. Then plot the movement.
- What are two of his sons doing?
  - What was the value of his land?
  - What was the value of her personal property?
  - Where do you think he and his wife met?
  - Where else did the family live? State?

Table 1. BLANK CENSUS FORMS

1790 CENSUS

Head of Family	Male		Female		Others	Slaves
	16 and Up	Under 16	16 and Up	Under 16		

1800 CENSUS

Head of Family	-10	10-16	16-26	26-45	45+	-10	10-16	16-26	26-45	45+	All Others	Slaves

1810 CENSUS

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1820 CENSUS

Head of Family	Male					Female					
	-10	10-15	16-18	16-25	26-44	45+	-10	10-15	16-25	26-44	45+

1830 CENSUS

Head of Family	Male										Female																
	-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60-70	70-80	80-90	90-100	100+	-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60-70	70-80	80-90	90-100	100+	

1840 CENSUS

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

1850 CENSUS

House	Family	Name	Age	Sex	Profession	Property		Birth place	Foreign		Born in Year	Md. in Year
						Real	Pers.		Father	Mother		

1860 CENSUS

House	Family	Name	Age	Sex	Profession	Property		Birth place	Foreign		Born in Year	Md. in Year
						Real	Pers.		Father	Mother		

1870 CENSUS

Table 1 (Continued). BLANK CENSUS FORMS

House	Family	Name	Age	Sex	Profession	Property		Birthplace	Foreign		Born in Year	Md. in Year
						Real	Pers.		Father	Mother		

1880 CENSUS

House	Family	Name	Age	Sex	M. of B. in C. Yr.	Rel. to Hd. Fam.	Cond.	Profession	Place of Birth	Father's B'place	Mother's B'place

1890 VETERANS

House	Family	Name	Rank	Co.	Regt. or Vessel	Enl.	Disc.	Served	P.O.	Disability	Remarks

1900 CENSUS

House	Family	Name	R	C	Sex	Birth		Age	M-S-D	Yrs. Md	# Ch.	P.B.	F.P.B.	M.P.B.	Yrs. in U.S.	Profession	Education	Home
						Mo	Yr											

1910 CENSUS

House	Family	Name	R	C	Sex	Age	M-S-D	Yrs. Md	# Ch.	P.B.	F.P.B.	M.P.B.	Yrs. in U.S.	Profession	Education	Home	CW	

# The 1860 Election and the Electoral College

*Kirk R. Salmela*

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Between 1820 and 1860, wrangling over slavery-related issues eroded the bonds of allegiance within national parties. By the time of the presidential election of 1860, the link between the northern and southern wings of the national parties, the Democrats and the Whigs, had become strained in the former and was broken entirely in the latter. Southerners labeled northerners as intriguing, unlawful tyrants. The Republican party in the North, led by Abraham Lincoln, called Democrats in the South anti-

republican aristocrats and slavocrats. Republicans argued that if they were elected, they would check and ultimately destroy slavery and would also foil a Democratic conspiracy to "enslave" northern whites, that is, to usurp popular rule. The Republicans, who maintained that the American people were faced with a choice between democracy and aristocracy, viewed the election as a test of will and strength, where life-styles and social orientations were pitted against one another.

Americans voted Republican in 1860 for many different reasons. They were attracted to Lincoln's Republican rhetoric, which boasted sectional superiority, promised to foil the Slave Power Conspiracy, and held that the

democratic process could effectuate peaceful change. His advocacy of "free labor" implied that southern society was inferior because it maintained slavery, which was an archaic hold-over in comparison to the more enlightened North. His "free soil" position stood firm against southern schemes to spread slavery to the West. His egalitarian desire that all men ought to be "free men" provided a dose of morality for good measure. Therefore, social progressivists, unblushing racists, abolitionists, and all true patriots, found something in Lincoln that they could support. Nevertheless, it was a close vote (see Table 1).

**Table 1**

**Popular Vote 1860 Election (81.2% Voter Participation)**

Candidates	Party	% of Popular Vote	Popular Vote
Lincoln	Republican	39.8	1,865,593
Douglas	Democrat	29.5	1,382,713
Breckinridge	Democrat	18.1	848,356
Bell	Union	2.6	592,906

Source: *Congressional Quarterly, Guide to U.S. Elections, Second Edition, 1985.*

The President is elected by the Electoral College. The number of Electors in 1860 was determined by the sum of the states' congressional representation. Prior to 1824, most Electors were chosen by their state legislatures. The Electors identified in the Illinois Primary Source Document, found at the end of this article, were elected by popular vote. The popular vote within each state determines its commitment of votes in the College. Although there have been a few exceptions, the victorious presidential candidate receives the entire Electoral sum from that state. When a can-

didate receives a majority of the total vote from all the states, that individual is declared the winner of the presidential election. (A procedure exists within the Constitution to settle an election should no candidate do so. In that case, the names of the three candidates receiving the highest number of Electoral votes shall be sent to the House of Representatives. The House, where each state has one vote, shall choose the President by ballot. Such has been the case in 1800 and 1824.) Excluding certain irregularities in New Jersey, Lincoln carried every state which prohibited

slavery. These state victories gave him 180 Electoral votes, which was a majority of the 303 Electoral votes.

Lincoln, however, enjoyed only a plurality of the popular vote. He received nearly 40% or 1.9 million of the popular votes but over 2.8 million Americans cast ballots for candidates other than Lincoln. His strength in the heavily-populated northern states was all that was necessary. Lincoln's 180 Electoral votes out-distanced the sum of his three rivals: 123 votes for Stephen A. Douglas, John Breckinridge, and John Bell (see Table 2).

**Table 2.****Electoral Vote 1860 Election**

State	Lincoln	Douglas	Breckinridge	Bell
Alabama			9	
Arkansas			4	
California	4			
Connecticut	6			
Delaware			3	
Florida			3	
Georgia			10	
Indiana	13			
Illinois	11			
Iowa	4			
Kentucky				12
Louisiana			6	
Maine	8			
Maryland			8	
Massachusetts	13			
Michigan	6			
Minnesota	4			
Mississippi			7	
Missouri		9		
New Hampshire	5			
New Jersey	4			
New York	35			
North Carolina			10	
Ohio	23			
Oregon	3			
Pennsylvania	27			
Rhode Island	4			
South Carolina			8	
Tennessee				12
Texas			4	
Vermont	5			
Virginia				15
Wisconsin	5			
Totals	180	12	72	39

Source: *Congressional Quarterly, Guide to U.S. Elections, Second Edition, 1985.*

Lincoln is not the only candidate to be elected by the Electoral College with less than a majority of the popular vote. Others include James Polk, 49.6% in 1844, Zachary Taylor, 47.4% in 1848, James Buchanan, 45.4% in 1856, Rutherford Hayes, 48% in 1876,

James Garfield, 48.3% in 1880, Grover Cleveland, 48.5% in 1884 and 46% in 1892, Benjamin Harrison, 47.8% in 1888, Woodrow Wilson, 41.8% in 1912 and 49.3% in 1916, Harry Truman, 49.5% in 1948, John Kennedy, 49.9% in 1960, and Richard

Nixon, 43.4% in 1968. No one, however, has been elected President by the Electoral College with a lower percentage of the popular vote than Abraham Lincoln.

The method of selecting an executive was the subject of considerable debate

at the Constitutional Convention of 1787. A direct election was considered by the Founding Fathers. Because the Founders felt, generally, that the people lacked adequate knowledge of the character and fitness of candidates to make an intelligent selection, a direct choice was opposed. Neither should Congress choose the president--that would endanger executive independence. The Founders also reasoned that state legislatures ought not to be empowered to select the president. Such a method of selection might give states an inclination to try to usurp federal prerogative. A compromise was eventually struck. The Electoral College, then, freed the executive from both state and federal legislative control and from the whim of an uninformed electorate.

The accompanying Primary Source Document shows the list of Illinois' Electors in 1860. The document is useful in the study of local, state, and national aspects of the Electoral College. Each County Clerk in Illinois sent an abstract of the vote for Electors to the office of Secretary of State, from which the final list was generated. The Governor signed and then caused the Great Seal of State to be affixed to the document certifying the duly-elected Electors. Meeting in their respective states, Electors then cast specific ballots for the offices of President and Vice-President. The ballots, signed and sealed, were sent to the seat of national government, directed to the President of the Senate. In the presence of both houses of Congress, the President of the Senate opened the ballots for counting. The candidate for president receiving a majority of the Electors

would become President. Illinois' Electors committed themselves to the winner of the popular vote in Illinois: Lincoln for President and Hannibal Hamlin of Maine for Vice-President.

Presidential elections may be studied in a number of ways. The Illinois document and Tables I and II are points of departure. Illinois was one of 13 states Lincoln needed to ensure his victory. Lincoln's 1860 triumph was sealed by his strong performance in the Old Northwest, New England, and in New York and Pennsylvania. Therefore, Republican support in New Jersey, Minnesota, Iowa, Oregon, and California was superfluous. The 13 states account for only 39.4% of the Union, nearly mirroring his 39.8% of the popular vote. Furthermore, the results are suggestive of "latitudinal migration," that is, fairly universal east-to-west emigration tendencies. Latitudinal migration transplanted the evangelical spirit of New England into Northwestern states.

One student exercise, using the Illinois document as a point of departure, would be to discover the fewest states giving a candidate a majority of the Electoral vote. If a hypothetical candidate would have been acceptable to both northerners and southerners in 1860, a candidate carrying Illinois would have needed to win only eight other states, or 27.2% of the Union. In 1900, a candidate would have needed to carry Illinois and eleven states, or 26.6% of the Union. As late as 1980, eleven states, or 22% of the Union, held a majority of the Electoral tally. Students could be asked to note the arrival of new states, shifts of population, and the mounting total of Electoral votes from 1860 to

1980. They should know that the 538 votes represent the sum of the states' representation in both houses of Congress and three Electors from the District of Columbia.

Another student exercise, with a slightly different twist, might be to discover the relative strength of a state within the Electoral system. Illinois' 11 electors in 1860, for instance, account for roughly 3.6% of the tally. Illinois' Electoral vote jumped from 11 to 24 in 1900, an increase of 109%. Illinois' strength in the Electoral system jumped from 3.6% to approximately 5.4% during that period, a 75% increase. The 26 Illinois Electors in 1980 represent nearly a 10.8% jump over the 1900's figure. Illinois' share in the Electoral system, however, dropped to slightly over 4.8% of the national total, a decrease of roughly 11.3%. This exercise demonstrates real and relative increases and decreases as it affects a state's strength within the Electoral system.

## Sources

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Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War*, New York: Oxford, 1970.

Michael Holt, *The Political Crisis of the 1850s*, New York: Wiley, 1978.

David Potter, *The Impending Crisis, 1848-1861*, New York: Harper, 1976.

PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENT FOR THE 1960 ELECTION AND THE  
ELECTORAL COLLEGE

Source: National Archives-Chicago Branch,  
7358 South Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois  
60629.

Executive Department,

Springfield, Illinois.

I, JOHN WOOD, Governor of the State of Illinois, hereby certify that the following named persons were elected Electors for President and Vice President of the United States, in the State of Illinois, at an Election held in said State for Electors for President and Vice President of the United States, on Tuesday, the sixth day of November, A. D. 1860; as appears from an abstract of the returns of said Election, made by the County Clerks of the several Counties, and now on file in the office of the Secretary of State of this State; to-wit:

LEONARD SWETT,  
ALLEN C. FULLER,  
LAWRENCE WELDON,  
JAMES STARK,  
HENRY P. H. BROMWELL,

JOHN M. PALMER,  
WILLIAM B. PLATO,  
WILLIAM P. KELLOGG,  
JAMES C. CONKLING,  
THOMAS G. ALLEN.  
JOHN OLNEY.

In Testimony Whereof, I hereunto set my hand, and have caused the Great Seal of State to be hereunto affixed, at the City of Springfield, this third day of December, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty, and of the Independence of the United States the Eighty Fifth.

*John Wood*

BY THE GOVERNOR,

*C. M. Hatch*

SECRETARY OF STATE.



# A Case of Fraud: Documenting Life in the Mid-West During the 1880s

*Shirley J. Burton*

*Shirley J. Burton is an archivist at the National Archives - Chicago Branch. Her research interests are in United States social history.*

During the Nineteenth Century, as new states were added to the nation, the United States postal service was also extended, despite the difficulties of delivering the mail and providing other mail services on the frontier. The Pony Express is one example of the extraordinary measures that were sometimes taken. Postmasters in outlying post offices provided an essential service by linking their patrons to family members, government offices, and trade centers. These postmasters enjoyed a great deal of autonomy in their duties. They were usually supervised by centrally-located inspectors who required regular reports, but who only made infrequent personal inspections. Postmasters were required to provide cash bonds to insure that the government moneys they handled by selling stamps or money orders were properly accounted for.

Lakefield, in Jackson County, Minnesota, is located in the southern part of the state, next to the Iowa border. This tiny village received its first postmaster in 1880, but the office had a high rate of turnover in personnel. When Carl S. Eastwood was appointed Postmaster in June, 1884, he was the fifth person to hold the position. However, he found his duties no more compelling than his predecessors had, and he soon diverted his attention to personal business in Mankato, which is located about seventy miles to the northeast. Early in July, 1885, Eastwood forwarded his resignation to postal authorities, and, acting on his own authority, appointed L. Walter Seeley as Deputy Postmaster. Eastwood selected Seeley on the basis of Lakefield citizens' "endorsement" of Seeley,

who was apparently a long-time resident.

When Eastwood returned from Mankato to Lakefield later that month, Seeley reportedly told him that a letter accepting his resignation had arrived, but that it had subsequently been misplaced. Eastwood felt relieved of his responsibilities, but his involvement in official post office business was about to take an extraordinary turn. As the records and documents from the United State Attorney's and Marshall's Office indicate, Eastwood's appointment of Seeley was ill-advised on several counts. The documents, moreover, give a picture of the rough and tumble life in the rural Mid-west in the 1880s.

During the next four months, Walter Seeley used his position as Deputy Postmaster both to embezzle post office moneys and to steal letters containing cash. Under the cloak of respectability offered by his position, he also borrowed money from post office patrons and sold them land that he did not own. He disappeared in the autumn, 1885, leaving his family behind. He took at least \$5,000 in ill-gotten cash.

A subsequent investigation by alarmed postal authorities from St. Paul revealed that Seeley had kept few of the required post office accounts. Several registers were missing. They immediately hired the world-famous Pinkerton Detective Agency (motto: "We never sleep") to get on Seeley's trail. The description circulated among Pinkerton men was a composite of information provided by Lakefield residents. By this time, the former postmaster, Eastwood, whose resignation had not been officially accepted until November, 1885, realized that he had erred. He told his former superiors that Seeley was a "deep-dyed villain." Eastwood also had another reason to despise Seeley. When he was postmaster, Eastwood

had to post a personal bond to insure against the loss of patrons' moneys. If Seeley was not caught, Eastwood would forfeit the bond. Moreover, Eastwood was at least partially responsible for financial shortages at the post office, because he had assumed the responsibility for appointing Seeley.

Investigators trying to locate Seeley kept his family under close observation. They watched as his wife took letters directly to northbound trains for mailing, instead of depositing them in the post office where they could have been monitored. They suspected that Seeley had fled to Canada.

After being a fugitive for over six months, Walter Seeley returned to visit his home in Lakefield. Authorities were waiting with a warrant for his arrest, and he was taken into custody, but only after resisting so energetically that two of the men who subdued him "lost a good share of their clothing in doing so." Seeley then confessed, and even produced several of the registered letters which he had rifled. He was sentenced to prison for the federal offense of stealing from the mail.

The official records in the Seeley case provide an interesting way to stimulate a class discussion about life in the 1880s. The personal description of L. Walter Seeley which was provided to the Pinkerton Detective Agency was compiled from observations made by Seeley's victims and former patrons. It provides more than just a colorful description of a small-time criminal and confidence man. Students might want to know how much of Seeley's description could be due to the exaggeration of his victims in Lakefield? Why might they exaggerate? What does his description suggest about his prior life, and in particular, about the medical care that was available to people in rural areas in the 1880s? How far away might the



nearest hospital have been? Were physicians licensed? Why might Seeley not have worn his artificial eye or his steel neck brace all the time?

Another interesting feature of the Seeley case centers on the question of, "How was he able to gain control of the Lakefield post office without an official appointment?" Obviously, a large amount of money was entrusted to local postal officials. Seeley was stealing over \$1,000 per month. Why did postal authorities in St. Paul not supervise the Lakefield office more closely? Why did Eastwood feel free to appoint his successor, and then simply leave town before he had proof that his own resignation had been accepted in St. Paul? Could this happen today? Who names postmasters? Was L. Walter Seeley, in fact, ever

deputy Postmaster of Lakefield, Minnesota? Are postmasters still bonded? Are other postal employees? Was bonding a generally effective means of keeping postal employees honest?

Students might like to go beyond the questions that the documents suggest, and apply what they have learned in a writing assignment. It is 1885. Last month your aged father in Lakefield, Minnesota wrote you that he was ill and had been unable to work for some time. (Remember, there are no social security benefits until 1937.) The following day, you sent him a registered letter in which you enclosed \$30 cash. Today, you receive a letter from him, written last week, but he does not mention receiving either your letter or the money. Write a letter to the deputy

postmaster in Lakefield and try to find out what happened to your letter and money. If you receive no response, what will you do next? Students might also like to try their hands at being Pinkerton agents. What other sorts of records and sources might be available to help the agents investigate Seeley? Some possibilities include: the United States Census schedules, county birth and marriage records, local newspapers, and local oral accounts. Using the description sent to the Pinkerton Agency as a guide, the "student agents" could draw a picture of Seeley and use it to make a "Wanted" poster. Include all pertinent information in a short narrative passage under the picture.

## Sources

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M-841. Washington: National Archives and Records

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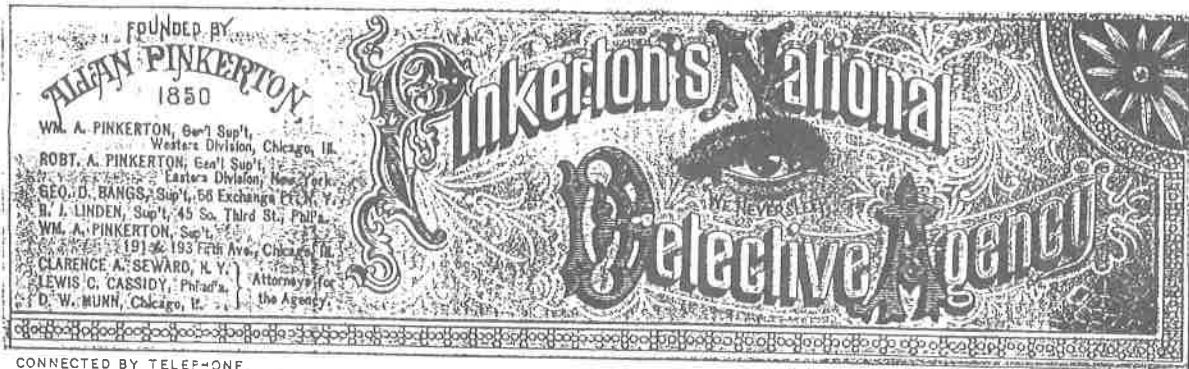
Cambridge, MA, 1924.

*Records of United States Attorneys and Marshalls.* District of Minnesota. Case File 184.

PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENTS FOR A CASE OF FRAUD: DOCUMENTING LIFE IN  
THE MID-WEST DURING THE 1880s

Source: National Archives-Chicago Branch, 7358 South Pulaski Road,  
Chicago, Illinois 60629. [RG 118. Records of United States  
Attorneys and Marshals. District of Minnesota. Case File 184.]

DOCUMENT #1: Letter From W. A. Pinkerton to Inspector of Post Office,  
Chicago, Illinois, Regarding L. Walter Seeley.



CONNECTED BY TELEPHONE.

CHICAGO-JAN-14-1886

J. T. METCALFE ESQ.,

INSPECTOR OF POST OFFICE CHICAGO ILLS,

DEAR SIR; -

I HAVE YOURS OF THE 12-TH ENCLOSING A DESCRIPTION OF  
WALTER SEELY WHICH I HAVE PLACED WHERE IT WILL DO THE MOST GOOD AND  
HEREAFTER WHENEVER ANY OF MY MEN GO OUT ON THE ROAD THEY WILL HAVE  
A DESCRIPTION OF THIS MAN IN THEIR POSSESSION AND SHOULD THEY RUN  
ACROSS HIM WILL NOTIFY THE OFFICE AT ONCE. I AM MUCH PLEASD TO  
HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ENDEAVOR TO BE OF SOME SERVICE TO YOU AND I  
HOPE THE SERVICE WILL RESULT IN SUCCESS. REST ASSURED THAT I WILL  
DO ALL I CAN TO AID YOU IN THE MATTER.

YOURS TRULY,

GENL. SUPT. WEST. DIV.,

M.

Description of L. Walter Seeley, Ex-Ass't. PM at Lakefield, Jackson Co., Minn.:

Age, 38 years. Height about 5 feet 6 inches. Weight about 165 pounds. Of quite solid build, full face, with deep dimple in chin, one eye (the left) gone, uses glass eye sometimes, fair sized bald head, which he carries slightly to the left side and a little forward, owing to an accident he met with by being thrown from a horse thereby injuring his neck (breaking it some say) to such an extent that he has to wear a Steel Collar, without which his head would fall upon his shoulder. Light or sandy complexion, usually wears a mustache, almost red in color. Has red rough hands, Loves to play cards and gambels some, is very talkative and likes to appear smart, has rather a poor address, cracks jokes, drinks some but does not use tobacco.

Transcript of Document

Description of L. Walter Seeley, Ex-Ass't. PM [postmaster] at Lakefield, Jackson Co., Minn.:

Age, 38 years. Height about 5 feet 6 inches. Weight about 165 pounds. Of quite solid build, full face, with deep dimple in chin, one eye (the left) gone, uses glass eye sometimes, fair sized bald head, which he carries slightly to the left side and a little forward, owing to an accident he met with by being thrown from a horse thereby injuring his neck (breaking it some say) to such an extent that he has to wear a steel collar, without which his head would fall upon his shoulder. Light or sandy complexion, usually wears a mustache, almost red in color. Has red rough hands, loves to play cards and gambels [sic] some, is very talkative and likes to appear smart, has rather a poor address, cracks jokes, drinks some but does not use tobacco.

# Abraham Lincoln, Interstate Debt and Material Culture

Keith Barr

*Keith Barr is an historical archaeologist at the Midwest Archaeological Research Center in Normal, Illinois. He has a special interest in nineteenth century material culture.*

One of the record groups which contain important primary source documents in the National Archives, Chicago Branch is that of the Federal District Courts. The Federal District Court records represent a rich and largely untapped source of information for students of material culture. Material culture studies entail the analysis of all those things created and used by people to cope with their environment. Such items, or artifacts, are analyzed by historians, museum curators, archaeologists, and others, to interpret human life in the past.

In a legal sense, material culture can be described as artifacts in the form of both real and personal property. Real estate becomes an artifact when property is landscaped and when houses or other structures are built upon it. Personal property consists of clothing, furniture, tools, livestock, crops, vehicles, heirlooms, stocks and bonds, money; in short, almost everything a person owns other than land. When two different parties disagree over the disposition of either real or personal property involving Federal law, the cases are brought to trial in Federal District Courts.

The area within the State of Illinois was constituted as the jurisdiction of a Federal District Court which was established at Vandalia on March 3, 1819. The court heard Federal cases involving crimes and offenses for which the punishment did not exceed a \$100 fine, imprisonment for more than six months, or whipping in excess of thirty lashes. The records in the archives show that the law suits brought before the court were between citizens of different states, or violators of Federal and even international laws. Other cases dealt with trespass, patent

suits, bankruptcies, and criminal charges. The most frequent type of litigation in the records involved the collection of interstate debts.

When the state capitol moved from Vandalia to Springfield in 1839, the Federal Court was relocated there. By the late 1840s the number of Federal cases from the northern part of the state, particularly around Chicago, had grown to such an extent that a new Federal Court was established. On February 13, 1855, the old court in Springfield became the Southern District Court of Illinois, and a Northern District Court was set up in Chicago.

Nathaniel Pope served as the first justice of the District Court of Illinois between 1819 and his death in 1850. Pope was followed by Thomas Drummond who became the first judge of the Northern District in 1855. Samuel H. Treat replaced Drummond on the Springfield bench. Over the years, many famous Illinoisians practiced law before the Federal Courts in Illinois. Perhaps the most famous of all was Abraham Lincoln, who was admitted to practice before the Federal District Court of Illinois in December, 1839. One of his cases included that of *Robinson vs. Martin*, a suit which was brought against the seller of a piece of land because the buyer claimed there was milk sickness on the property. Milk sickness was an acute disease caused by drinking milk or eating the meat of cattle poisoned by various plants. *Clark vs. Stigelman et al* was a patent suit over the plans for a circular saw mill. The famous "Effie Afton" case was over the right of states to pass legislation causing the obstruction of rivers by the erection of bridges. Most of Lincoln's Federal law practice, however, was in suits for the collection of money across state lines. Twenty-two of the twenty-nine recorded Federal cases in which Lincoln was retained prior to 1855 involved the collection of debts.

The primary Source Document we will examine in this section is a bill for certain merchandise presented in the case of *Uriah H. Lee et al vs. Joseph H. Adams* (1859). The plaintiffs, Uriah H. Lee and Thomas Murphy, were the sole surviving partners of Lee, Murphy and Avery, a New York firm that sold fur, clothing, and other goods. The defendant, merchant Joseph H. Adams, was a citizen of Illinois who allegedly had failed to pay the plaintiffs. The plaintiffs were represented by the law partners of Lincoln and Herndon of Springfield, Illinois. There is no record of the opposing attorney.

The following facts are known. The "goods, wares, and merchandise" listed in the Lee, Murphy, & Avery Company bill were apparently "sold and delivered to the said defendant at his special instance and request" from New York to Illinois on or about September 10, 1857. By May 15, 1859, as stated in Lincoln's brief, Adams had "wholly neglected and refused" to come up with the money he had "faithfully promised the said plaintiff to pay." The case was filed on June 17, 1859, but there is no record showing in whose favor judgment was rendered. There is also no record of the fate of the fur garments.

The amount of the bill, however, was for \$3,461.32. Lincoln and Herndon were asking the Southern District Court of Illinois to award the plaintiffs a judgment totaling \$5,000. This amount included the original sum and damages, out of which the attorneys no doubt expected a fee.

For a student of material culture, this document is interesting because it shows a number of specific items offered for sale at the clothiery of a merchant in a mid-nineteenth century "western" state such as Illinois. It is also remarkable as evidence for the variety of animal furs used as clothing during this period. Seal, beaver, otter, buffalo, white coney [European rabbit], squirrel, stone marten, muskrat, mink, fitch [polecat], were made up

into all sorts of garments and accessories for the fashionable mid-Victorian era lady or gentleman. These garments included caps, hats, umbrellas, cuffs, talmas [short full cloaks], victorines [scarf-like garment], capes, mufflers, gills [women's shoe], gauntlets, and gloves; indeed everything men and women might need to keep warm during the coming winter of 1857-58.

It is unlikely that any of these garments have survived the ravages of the past 130 years. Most things people wear become so soiled or worn that they eventually are thrown away. Clothing remains are found in the ground by archaeologists only under certain extremely dry or unusually wet conditions. Examples of antique

clothing, especially fur pieces, are very rare even in museums due to the difficulties of preserving natural materials of any kind. Therefore, bills such as this one and other documents that present lists of material culture are perhaps the only record we have of the types of clothing that were available at a given time and place in our history.

### Sources

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Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1982.

Schlereth, Thomas J., ed. *Material Culture: A Research Guide*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1985.

Thomas, Benjamin P. "Lincoln's Earlier Practice in the Federal Courts 1839-1854." *Bulletin of the Abraham Lincoln Association* No. 39. [June 1935]:1-9.

PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENT FOR ABRAHAM LINCOLN, INTERSTATE DEBT AND MATERIAL CULTURE

Source: National Archives-Chicago Branch, 735B South Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois 60629.

Document: A Bill Presented for Certain Merchandise Presented in the Case of Uriah H. Lee et al vs. Joseph H. Adams (1859). [RG 21 LPA455. This document from box marked "Abraham Lincoln Documents"].

New York, Sept 10. 1857 <sup>69</sup>

Mr. J. H. Adams  
 Brought of  
 Lee Humphrey & Co

2	Woolen	imitation	Cape	14	28	
1/2	"	Chubbs	fur	24	12	
1/2	"	Red	sh	36	18	
1/2	"	Statue	Praver	41	20	
1/2	"	(11)		11	47	
1/2	"	Red		21	28	
1/2	2	case	in fur	Stiff	21	47
1/2	1	sp		18	1175	
1	"	"	"	"	21	
11	"	"	"	34	106	
7	"	Power	bill	24	118	
1/4	"	Other		24	3875	
3	"	"		30	90	
2	Wool	Jauncy	Cape	11	22	
6	Cam	Umbrella		37	220	
6	"	"		10	3	
6	"	Hook	Hill	20	400	
12	"	Cape		70	9	

1		Riffles	17	15.75
1		Hook	1	
6		Shin	12	7.50
1	Artich.	French Bell	1.50	9
6	Steel frames		1	16
1/2	provision	Mid. Coney Cuffs	4.50	1.15
3		Spotted Clam	2	6
6	Shells	Shore oysters	4	24
3	oysters	Spinal Yectonics	4	12
3	pair	Cuffs	50	1.50
3		Reddy Yectonics	7	21
3	pair	Cuffs	75	2.25
6	Mid. Coney		62	1.86
6		Yectonics	2.50	15
6	pair	Shin Cuffs	87	2.61
6		Yectonics	2.50	15
Total #71363				
6	pair	1/2 Cape	4.25	25.50
6	pair	Shin Cuffs	1	6
4		Yectonics	5.50	22
4	pair	Cuffs	1	4
2			1	2
2		Cape	10	20
3	pair	Mid. Cuffs	50	1.50
3		1/2 Cape	4.50	13.50
18	pair	oyster oysters	1.50	24
9		Shin	4	26
9			5.50	49.50
4			9	25
4	pair	Cuffs	7	9
4	pair	Shin	8	22
6	pair	Cuffs	2.50	15
3		Shin	1.25	3.75
3		1/2 Cape	7.50	22.50
3	pair	Shin Cuffs	1.5	4.5
4		Shin	9	36
3		1/2 Cape	12	36
4		Shin	12	48
9		Shin	15	135
3		1/2 Cape	17.50	52.50
3			21	63
9	pair	Shin	15	135
9	pair	Cuffs	4	36
4			4	16

4	1/2 Capes	18	72
6	1/2 Capes	550	33
4	1/2 Capes	24	180
4	1/2 Capes	450	18
4	1/2 Capes	19	72
4	1/2 Capes	2850	112
12	1/2 Capes	550	66
2	1/2 Capes	3	36
1	1/2 Capes	18	36
1	1/2 Capes		50
1	1/2 Capes		45
		<u>25</u>	<u>900</u>

1	1/2 Capes	15	55
9	1/2 Capes	1.50	13.50
4	1/2 Capes	4	11
3	1/2 Capes	5.50	11.50
3	1/2 Capes	2.25	6.75
4	1/2 Capes	2.75	11
6	1/2 Capes	4	30
3	1/2 Capes	5.50	14.50
10	1/2 Capes	3	36
1	1/2 Capes	28	112
2	1/2 Capes	11 1/2	126 1/2
1	1/2 Capes	21 1/2	69 1/2
1	1/2 Capes	20 1/2	67 1/2
2	1/2 Capes	43	129
1 1/4	1/2 Capes	30	82 1/2
1 1/2	1/2 Capes	24	36
1 Can	1/2 Capes	30	180 75
1	1/2 Capes	19	107 1/2
1	1/2 Capes	14	97 1/2
5 1/4	1/2 Capes	225	11.51
1	1/2 Capes	14	60 1/2

3461.32

Transcript of Document: A Bill Presented for Certain  
 Merchandise Presented in the Case of Uriah H. Lee et al  
vs. Joseph H. Adams (1859). [RG 21 WPA455. This document  
 from box marked "Abraham Lincoln Documents"].

New York Sept 10. 1857

Mr. J. H. Adams Bought of Lee Murphy + Avery

2	Doz	Mens	Imitation Seal	Caps	14	28.
1/2	"	"	Nutria fur	"	24	12.
1/2	"	"	Blk " Seal	"	36	18.
1/2	"	"	Natural Beaver	"	48	24.
1/2	"	"	Otter	"	84	42.
1/2	"	"	Blk "	"	96	48.
2	"	"	Bro fur Stiff Brim	Hats	21	42.75
1	"	"	" " "	"	18	18.75
1	"	"	" " "	"		21.
4	5/12	"	" " "	"	24	106.
2	"	"	Beaver Napt	"	24	48.
1	1/4	"	Otter	"	24	33.75
3	"	"	"	"	30	90.
2	"	Boys Fancy	Cloth	Caps	11	22.
6	Cane	Umbrellas			.375	2.50
6	"	"			.50	3.
6	"	"	Hook Hdl		.75	4.50
12	"	"	Cup "		.75	9.
6	"	"	Buffalo		.875	5.25
6	"	"	Hook		1.	6.
6	"	"	36 in		1.25	7.50
6	Scotch	"	French Hdl.		1.50	9.
6	Steel	Frame			1.	6.
1/4	Doz	Misses	Wht Coney Cuffs		4.50	1.13[sic]
3	"	"	Spotted Talmas [cloak]		2.	6.
6	Setts	"	Stone Martin Gills [shoes]		4.	24.
3	Misses	Squirrel	Victorines [scarf]		4.	12.
3	pair	"	Cuffs		.50	1.50
3	"	"	Belly Victorines		7.	21.
3	pair	"	" Cuffs		.75	2.25
6	Wht Coney	"	"		.625	3.75
6	"	"	Victorines		2.50	15.
6	pairs	Bro "	Cuffs		.875	5.25
6	"	" "	Victorines		2.50	15.
					Ford	\$713.63

[page two]

					Forward	\$713.63
6	Bro Coney	1/2	Capes		4.25	25.50
6	pairs Br"		Cuffs		1.	6.
4			Victorines		5.50	22.
4	pairs		Cuffs		1.	4.
2	"	"	"		1.	2.
2			Capes		10.	20.
3	pairs	Blk	Cuffs		.50	1.50
3			1/2 Capes		4.50	13.50
18	pairs	Wht	Martin Cuffs		1.50	24.
9	"	"	Vic		4.	36.
9	"	"	"		5.50	49.50
4	"	"	"		9.	36.



Transcript Continued (Uriah H. Lee):

4	pairs	"	"	Cuffs	2.	8.
4	Blk	Lynx	"	Vic	8.	32.
6	prs	--		Cuffs	2.50	15.
3	"	Col Musk Rat		"	1.25	3.75
3	"	"	"	1/2 Capes	7.50	22.50
3	Setts	Greenland Fitch	Capes + Cuffs		15.	45.
4	"	Russia	" + "		9.	36.
3	"	"	" 1/2 " + "		12.	36.
4	"	Real	" Vics + "		12.	48.
9	"	"	" " + "		15.	135.
3	"	"	" 1/2 Capes "		17.50	52.50
3	"	"	" " "		21.	63.
9	Mink	Vic <sup>s</sup>			15.	135.
9	prs	"	Cuffs		4.	36.
4	"	"	"		4.	16.
4	"	"	Vic <sup>s</sup>		18.	72.
6	prs	"	No 1 Cuffs		5.50	33.
4	"	"	1/2 Capes		27.	108.
4	prs	Stone Martin	Cuffs		4.50	18.
4	"	"	Vic <sup>s</sup>		18.	72.
4	"	"	1/2 Capes		28.50	114.
12	prs	"	Cuffs		5.50	66.
12	"	Fitch	"		3.	36.
2	Blk Lynx	Capes			18.	36.
1	Mink XX	"				50.
1	Fitch	"				45.

For<sup>d</sup> \$2290.38

[page 3]

					Forward	\$2290.38
1	Fitch	Cape				55.
9	Nutria	Mufflers			1.50	13.50
8	"	"			2.	16.
4	Beaver	"			4.	16.
3	"	"			5.50	16.50
3	Pairs	Hair Seal	Gauntletts		2.25	6.75
4	"	Nutria	" "		2.75	11.
6	"	Beaver	"		4.	24.
3	"	Otter	Gloves		5.50	16.50
12	"	Ladies Fur	Seal		3.	36.
1	Bale 40	Doz Wading			.28	11.20
2	pieces	Blk Silk Plush	41 3/8 yds		3.	124.13
1	"	"	21 3/8 "		3.25	69.46
1	"	Bro	20 7/8 "		3.25	67.84
2	"	Bro+Blk	43 "		3.	129.
1	3/4	Doz Otter	Planter Hats		30.	52.50
1	1/2	"	Beaver	"	24.	36.
6	"	"	Otter	"	30.	180.75
4	"	"	Bro fur	"	27.	109.50
4	"	"	Blk "	"	24.	97.50
5	1/4	"	Victorine Boxes		2.25	11.81
3	"	"	Bro Oberon Hats		20.	60.75
						9.25
						<u>\$3461.32</u>



# The Nebraska Frontier: Dr. Towar, Fort Hartsuff, and the Years 1874-1876

Michael J. Harkins

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As the Civil War drew to a close in April of 1865, the military emphasis of the country shifted to Reconstruction and the Indian situation in the West. Drifters, the unemployed, immigrants, blacks, paroled soldiers from both North and South, and adventurers flocked to the military for a livelihood and to escape the ravages of the post-Civil War period. Many of the fears, frustrations, and troubles associated with the post-war period as well as urban America could be left far behind in the wide open and sparsely settled spaces of the West. For many, the West was fresh, open, without enforceable laws, ripe for settlement, and the last continental frontier. However, this unique part of the country was not without problems and hardships. Many of these were often unforeseen by the military as well as the settlers because the spheres of influence among the settlers, Indians, and military often collided. As these three forces penetrated the West, the stage was set for a major conflict in American history. This conflict centered upon the competition generated by the military, Indian population, and new settlers over resources--especially land. The major institution caught in the middle of this conflict was the military post or fort. The story of the inter-workings of this final conflict can best be examined in central and western Nebraska. The

establishment of posts in both the Loup and Platte River valleys can serve as case studies to the unfolding of these events. One such fort was Fort Hartsuff, Nebraska.

On September 9, 1862, the Acting Governor of the Territory of Nebraska telegraphed the Secretary of War concerning Nebraska's Indian problem. The message stated that powerful bands of Indians had moved into the northern counties of the Nebraska Territory. Governor Paddock noted, "Settlers by the hundreds are fleeing. Important action is demanded."<sup>1</sup> In 1868 with the election of Grant, settlers and citizens looked to the day when messages such as Governor Paddock's would become a thing of the past. A peaceful settlement, often at the expense of the Indians, was foremost in the minds of those in Washington, DC.

Grant, in his first administration, initiated a peaceful settlement with many American Indians<sup>2</sup>. However, his idea of a peaceful settlement of the frontier did not last. From 1868 to 1876, conflict arose throughout the west and eventually developed into a critical period in the settlement of this area. During these years, a military solution became the answer. Indian treatment by the United States government was one of accommodation. These accommodations were often at the expense of the Indians. The Indians were continually pushed from their homes to make room for new white settlers. New forts or posts were created to assist in "spearheading" settlement, keeping Indians on the reservations, punishing those that left, assisting settlers in occupying land, protecting families and small settlements, providing escorts for wagon trains, policing the territories, and establishing law and order. These ac-

tivities often took place at the expense of the Indian. Their land was taken, villages destroyed, and families relocated. Fort Hartsuff, Nebraska, in the Loup River Valley, was a prime example of a military post providing these services. The fort arose on the Loup River, 76 miles from Grand Island, Nebraska, a railroad stop on the Union Pacific line West<sup>3</sup>. In 1876, the discovery of gold in the Blackhills of South Dakota sparked white fortune seekers, prospectors, and settlers to disregard the 1868 Indian treaty with the Sioux. Unfortunately, whites entered the Indian Reservation and broke the treaty. The Sioux responded in the only way possible--armed conflict. Many whites suffered the consequences. This "broken promise" resulted in the destruction of Custer and the infamous 7th Cavalry in Montana in 1876<sup>4</sup>. In order to maintain control, the military increased its presence through new posts. Fort Hartsuff was one of these posts.

In the year 1870, the United States Army selected the site for Fort Hartsuff. The 43rd Congress approved \$50,000 for the construction of the post. The fort received its name from Civil War General George L. Hartsuff who served in the campaign leading to Lee's surrender.<sup>5</sup> The area and physical features surrounding the post had a number of advantages and disadvantages. The open ground, lack of wood, harsh climate, insects, and close positioning to the Sioux provided a formidable challenge to the post. However, unlike Fort Robinson in Sioux County, Nebraska, Fort Hartsuff had walls!

The Loup River valley could easily be adapted to agriculture and grazing. The soil was rich and the grasses very abundant. Yet, the few settlers brave

enough to enter this area did not have sufficient experience or the necessary capital to enter into large scale farming or ranching. In addition, few stores or supply lines existed to replenish initial materials. Subsidy claims of the Burlington and Missouri Railroad also kept settlers from homesteading valuable Nebraska land. In addition to these factors, the severe Nebraska winters and blistering summers could ruin a small farm. The Rocky Mountain locust would destroy what the Nebraska heat managed to leave. During the years 1870 to 1874, the locust destroyed most of the produce of the Loup valley.<sup>6</sup> This contributed to the sparsity of food in the valley for several winters. The settlers had little defense against this reoccurring problem which continued to plague Nebraska well into the next decade. Because of these problems, settlement in the Loup valley was sparse. However, the settlers that stayed were committed to the land and in most cases committed to the removal of the Indian population. In 1875, the total population of the Loup River valley reached 2,500.<sup>7</sup> With the presence of Fort Hartsuff, the situation began to ease as the post assisted in settlement. Conditions for increased settlement improved and the fort became a beacon to ranchers, farmers, and town folks.

Construction on the post began in 1874. The army used concrete in all structures except the Blacksmith's and Carpenter's shops. Boards and shingles composed most of the roofs of the buildings. Metals were not used. Work progressed smoothly and within a year the post was occupied. By 1875 Fort Hartsuff stood almost complete. A well, windmill, permanent supply of water, and post hospital were, however, yet to be completed. The original fort included infantry barracks, headquarters building, commanding officers' quarters, company officers' headquarters, guard house, bakery, latrines, and a set of quartermaster stores.<sup>8</sup> Originally designed for two companies, one cavalry and one infantry, the military, in 1875, reduced the post to one company of infantry.<sup>9</sup> The cavalry was transferred further west. It was thought that infantry would be more beneficial in protecting settlers and

aiding in the settlement of the area directly around the fort. The local population often preferred the infantry since they remained at the fort and could easily defend settlers in the immediate area. The cavalry, on the other hand, might be gone for weeks or months and often could not be contacted if troubles arose. The cavalry unit, however, was more mobile and effective in dealing with the Indian situation farther from the post. Whatever the case, the military removed the cavalry unit. Fort Hartsuff, by 1874, was ready for action.

On Christmas day 1874, Company C of the 9th Infantry moved into their newly completed barracks.<sup>10</sup> Their Christmas celebration was small, but everyone was thankful that most of the facilities were built. Shelter was of prime importance. The officers' quarters, however, was still unfinished. In January of 1875, the newly constructed officers quarters burned to the ground. Fires that were kept burning to dry the fresh plaster, according to the commander's report, started the main fire.<sup>11</sup> In a letter to the Assistant Adjutant General, Department of the Platte, Omaha, Nebraska, Captain Samuel Munson, Commander of the Post, explained:

I had taken all the precautions...necessary. Two men watched the building at night and a dozen worked in it during the day, and one man did nothing but look after the fire.<sup>12</sup>

From Captain Munson's report, it seems all "precautions" were taken. However, military records are often suspect in situations of negligence. In some instances, commanding officers glossed over or never admitted to superiors' gross negligence on the part of their men. Perhaps the night guards fell asleep and let the fire expand, or the weather conditions forced the men inside for protection. Further in his report, Captain Munson noted, "no one regrets this occurrence more than I, but it was one of those events that illustrates human helplessness."<sup>13</sup> Whatever the truth behind the fire, the officers were without shelter and faced a difficult Nebraska winter.

The winter of 1874-75 hit the mid-west, Nebraska and Fort Hartsuff very hard. Acting Assistant Surgeon George Towar, a veteran surgeon of the Civil War from Michigan, seemed to be the only officer keeping a journal of these difficult times. His journal is the only surviving record of the events at Fort Hartsuff and vividly captures the events of this winter. The families of settlers employed by the Quartermaster during the fall of the year, as well as the troops, suffered greatly during this winter. These families were without shelter and had to make dug-outs next to the post and along the creek valley. The women taking care of the post laundry also lived in dirt dug-outs.<sup>15</sup> Dr. Towar, in an examination of the caves, characterized them as "totally unhealthy." According to his medical records, the settlers and their families were "suffering from the closed foul air of underground dens."<sup>16</sup> The living conditions in short were appalling. To make the situation even worse, the drinking water also went bad.

In January of 1875, Towar reported to the commanding officer that Fort Hartsuff's water supply was unfit for drinking and cooking.<sup>17</sup> Bad drainage and pollutants contributed greatly to the poor water. To add to this, Dr. Towar noted that the garrison received little fresh meat and vegetables. Meager game existed in the area. Too poor to be used for food, the beef in the surrounding countryside seemed useless. As a result of these shortages, scurvy developed among the troops and employees of the Quartermaster. Dr. Towar noted, however, that most of the scurvy did "yield readily to treatment."<sup>18</sup> Problems, however, continued to nag the fort. Survival took priority over the settlers and the Sioux.

Since the fire destroyed their quarters, the officers hastily constructed and lived in pine shanties. These poorly constructed accommodations were cold, unheated, small, and not conducive to good health. Colds, scurvy, and lung ailments affected almost all of the officers. In the meantime, the workers were also suffering in earthen dug-outs. Colds, coughing, and congestion were noted in all the journal entries by Dr. Towar. Fortunately, next to these shanties was

the post hospital. Here, those sick officers could receive minor assistance. However, like several other buildings, the hospital was not entirely complete. Also, Dr. Towar lacked the necessary medical supplies to effectively treat all of the illnesses. Irony, also came into the picture for the post physician. Dr. Towar, himself, was lodged in a dirt dug-out. He described it as "a dug-out on a sand hill...and was about as miserable a place as could be imagined."<sup>19</sup> In the spring, conditions did improve but not much. Two hospital tents were pitched near the parade ground. This provided the post with a dispensary and headquarters for workers and several servants of the officers. After their delivery, the Quartermaster housed in his stores some of the more valued and important medical supplies.<sup>20</sup> The hard 1874-1875 Nebraska winter challenged the endurance of the post. Fort Hartsuff, however, managed to keep functioning even though this was in a limited scaled back way.

By late February-early March, the troops were becoming restless. To break-up the long winter that confined the troops, several brief forays into the surrounding valley began at this time. Also, in March of 1875, the troops left the post because of a report of hostile Indians. The Indians had supposedly stolen cattle from some settlers in the valley.<sup>21</sup> The unit searching for the Indians found no signs of Indian activity, and returned to the post. As the Sioux became more active, however, the activities of the Fort increased. After the return of this unit, Captain Munson took out a group of ten men and attempted to locate the Indians. On April 4, 1875, he also returned unsuccessful.<sup>22</sup> In August, the Sioux were again reported stealing livestock and horses in the Loup valley, about six miles above the post. Dr. Towar, out on a patrol, investigated the incident, and noted in his report that the Indians "passed on without doing much devilry barring the killing a couple of calves and breaking into a house and taking blankets."<sup>23</sup> It seems the Nebraska winter had also had a severe effect on the Indians. Captain Munson ordered a troop of 18 men to pursue the Indians. Only a scout managed to locate their village. He reported to Munson, but no action was

ordered. Dr. Towar, in his report, added that on the return march, "the troops...charged a watermelon patch...with great success."<sup>24</sup> The superior number of Indians appears to be what motivated Munson to avoid contact. From the spring of 1875 until the spring of 1876, little documentary evidence of the Indian situation survives from post records. Dr. Towar's journal is also silent. Fragmentary documents allude to the fact that the troops were enforcing local orders, keeping Indians on the reservations, assisting settlers, and escorting wagon trains.

In the spring of 1876, action increased. On April 28, 1876, Lt. C.H. Heyl with nine men left the fort to investigate nearby "Indian trouble" as reported in the post records. Local settlers were determined to wipe out an Indian band to the last man. Dr. Towar noted at this time, "the orders from the Department Headquarters now permits, in fact requires, that the military...punish Indians found away from their reservations."<sup>25</sup> Before the troops located this small band of Indians, the settlers were on their trail. Law and order was now in the hands of these ranchers and farmers.

Ten miles from the post, near Pebble Creek, armed horseback settlers located the Indians. On foot, the Indians found shelter in a high isolated sand knob with a large posthole in the center. The troops under Lt. Heyl arrived on the scene shortly after the settlers. A battle had already ensued. The troops joined the citizens and together they totaled about twenty. The Indians numbered only six.<sup>26</sup> For the remainder of the late afternoon, a violent exchange of gunfire continued without respite. Lt. Heyl informed the party that nothing could be done unless the troops charged the Indian defense. Heyl called on the ranchers and farmers to volunteer. No one responded to his request. Only three non-commissioned officers of the nine he had in the party stepped forward for duty. In the words of Dr. Towar, who was attached to the party, "the duty looked perilous to so small a party...!"<sup>27</sup> Lt. Heyl posted 12-15 sharpshooters in the adjacent hills to protect his advance and that of the three men. When the small unit reached the top of the hill, they

proceeded to the rim where they encountered six Indians. From a place of safety, Dr. Towar recorded, "there was a simultaneous volley from both sides--the result was disastrous to our side. Sergeant William H. Daughtery, a ruddy-faced Irishman of Co. A 23 Infty. was killed instantly."<sup>28</sup> The troops quickly fled from the hill leaving Sgt. Daughtery on the side of the hill. As night approached, Lt. Heyl urged the settlers to charge the hill with his troops. Dr. Towar, in recounting Lt. Heyl's words, noted, "an effort in greater numbers [is needed] so that there would be no question as to the results."<sup>29</sup> Because of the loss of Sgt. Daughtery, the farmers and ranchers quickly dismissed the Lt.'s idea. They argued it was the military's job and not that of local settlers. Whether Lt. Heyl was interested in the victory in which he would receive attention for his actions, or whether he was carrying out orders, cannot be fully determined. The whole situation seemed to be a standoff with little hope of peaceful resolution. It now seems strange for some 20 men to run down six Indians. In the morning, the settlers and troops were astonished. Whoever was on watch failed to note any Indian movements. Yet, the military policy of the period generally condoned or encouraged strict enforcement of its dictums. Common sense would have told both the settlers and troops to attempt some form of communication with the Indians before engaging in a pitched fight. Whatever the case, the policy of the military in this area was not effective and very ill suited for the proud plains Indian. Meanwhile, while Lt. Heyl argued with the ranchers and settlers, the Indians slipped away at night and returned to their village. Dr. Towar, after later examining the Indian defenses, commented that only the tracks of five Indians could be clearly identified. The sixth, wounded, was carried away by his comrades.

In analyzing the incident described above, several major points can be made. First, the endurance of the Indians in running from the settlers and their ability to hold out against twice their number was remarkable. Second, the settlers were slow in pursuing the Indians, and when they did

locate them, failed to mount any major threat. Dr. Towar noted that "the Indians in the situation, the six involved, had the upper hand." Third, the support the military received from the settlers, in the words of Dr. Towar, was "painfully wanting in a critical moment."<sup>30</sup>

In closing his journal, and one of the final entries from him, Dr. Towar exclaimed: "the settlers on the frontier

thought more of his life than avenging the wrongs of a thousand neighbors."<sup>31</sup> So fitting a conclusion for Fort Hartsuff and the West! The instinct for self-survival continued to take priority over communal interests.

While Easterners suspected the settlers, Indians and military were continually warring upon each other because of basic principles, the cast of players in the West knew better. What

emerged in the trial was competition for scarce resources such as land, food, water, minerals, gold, and shelter. Each group was occupied with survival and maximizing their hold on scarce resources. The conflicts emerged in most cases when the competing interests converged on the same resource. In the end, the settlers with the help of the military dominated in the struggle.

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>*A Military History of Nebraska*, Federal Writers Project (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1939), p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas D. Clark, *Frontier America: The Story of the Westward Movement* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), 705-706.

<sup>3</sup>Fort Hartsuff, Nebraska, Abandon Military Posts and Reservations, File 1881-1884, Bureau of Land Management Record Division, Record Group 49, National Archives, Washington, DC.

<sup>4</sup>*Military History of Nebraska*, 17-19. See also Frederic L. Paxson's *History of the American Frontier 1763-1893* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924), p. 556.

<sup>5</sup>John Robertson, *Michigan in the Civil War* (Lansing, Michigan: W.S. George & Co., 1882), p. 979. See also Fort Hartsuff, Abandon Military Posts and Reservations File, National Archives, Washington, DC.

<sup>6</sup>Surgeon George W. Towar, "Medical History of Fort Hartsuff, Nebraska, 1874-1881," Old Military Records Division, Record Group 94, National Archives, Washington, DC, 1.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup>Abandon Military Posts and Reservations File, Fort Hartsuff, Nebraska,

Military Division of Missouri, Outline of the Description of Fort Hartsuff, January 24, 1876, National Archives, Washington, DC.

<sup>9</sup>Surgeon George W. Towar, "Medical History of Fort Hartsuff, Nebraska, 1874-1881," pp. 21-22.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>Quartermaster Records of Fort Hartsuff, Nebraska 1874-1881, Quartermaster General Records Division, United States Military, Record Group, 92, letters from Captain Samuel Munson to adj. Gen. George D. Ruggles, January, 1875.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup>Pension File of Surgeon George W. Towar, Certificate Number 887692, Civil War, Pension Files for Civil War Veterans, National Archives, Washington, DC.

<sup>15</sup>Surgeon George W. Towar, "Medical History of Fort Hartsuff, Nebraska, 1874-1881," p. 24.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup>Military Post Return Records, Military Post Return Records for Fort Hartsuff, Nebraska, 1874-1881, Record Group 393, National Archives, Washington, DC.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup>Surgeon George W. Towar, "Medical History of Fort Hartsuff, Nebraska, 1874-1881," p. 32.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 47-51.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 47-51.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 47-51. See also Military Post Return Records for Fort Hartsuff, Nebraska, 1874-1881, National Archives, Washington, DC.

<sup>29</sup>Surgeon George W. Towar, "Medical History of Fort Hartsuff, Nebraska, 1874-1881," p. 48-50.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 49-51.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

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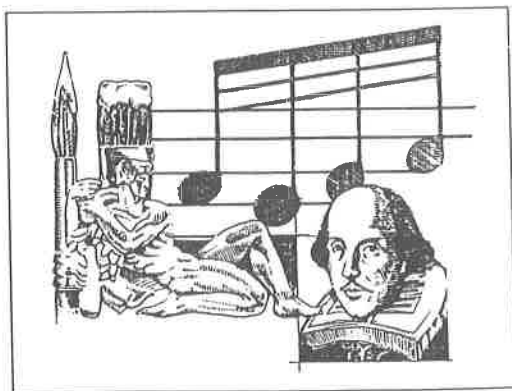
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## Fine Arts Assessment Conference

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April 22, 23, 1988  
Naperville, Illinois

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PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENT FOR FORT HARTSUFF. Source: National Archives Chicago Branch, 7358 South Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois 60629. [Historical Information Relating to Military Posts and Other Installations, Ca. 1700-1900, National Archives and Records Administration, Microfilm Publication M661, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's-1917, Record Group 94.]

Hartsuff Fort

Nebraska

Lat. 40° 40' 30"  
Long. 99° 11' 29"

Named after  
Capt. George  
Hartsuff

In the north fork of the Loup river, 76 miles N.W. from Grand Island, the nearest station on the U. P. R. R. Established Sept. 5, 1874.

On north side of Loup river. Originally decid. by Ex. order Aug. 17, 74. Was decd. as a hay and wood reserve for the fort & a part res. was decd.

of Secs 2 & 10 of township 20 N., range 15 W. containing 1,218.22 acres.

The hay & wood reserve consist of all of Secs. 9 & 15 & all three parts of Secs. 10, 11, & 14, South of the Calumet & South of the N. fork of the Loup river, in Twp. 20 N., range 16 W., containing an area of 2,033.19 acres. Land Law, 1884, p. 1177.

See G. O. 7, Dept. of the Interior, 81, Civ. S. & O. p. 333. Proc. Sup. of Ct. 1856.

Am. Repts. 709 - 45 - 3<sup>d</sup>. Garrison withdrawn. Rept. Sec. of 1<sup>st</sup> sess. 47 Cong. Mo 1848, p. 112.

Abandoned 1881, Post no. 1718, 22. Ex. Dir. No. 1565, p. 2. 4.

Abandoned May 9, 1881.

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# A Teaching Activity Using Bureau of Indian Affairs Documents

*Michael J. Harkins*

The attached letter was written to E.P. Smith, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, DC from L. Edwin Dudley, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, New Mexico Territory, May 5, 1873.

## Teaching Strategy

1. The teacher should first highlight the period of Indian history focusing on the 1870's.

One class period reviewing the Indian situation in the Southwest from 1865 to 1875 would also be appropriate.

The teacher should use several maps to point out the location of the Indian tribes and the advancement of settlers in the Southwest. Appropriate reading assignments should be made from the current history text in use.

The teacher should duplicate enough of the Smith-Dudley letter so that each student can have a copy.

The teacher should then hand out one copy of the letter to each student. The teacher can have the students work in pairs, groups of 3, or individually.

After determining the structure of the class, have the students read the letter.

## Questions

2. After the students have read the

letter, have them complete the following questions.

Suggested time frame: 1 class period - 50 minutes.

- What is Dudley's major concern?
- What is the problem with A.J. Curtis?
- What is the firm of L.G. Murphy and Company doing with the agency?
- Is there a Post Trader?
- Is there an Indian Trader?
- Are Murphy and Fritz reliable? Explain.
- Explain who Agent Bushnell is in the letter.
- Where is this agency located? Sketch a brief map of your interpretation of the Indian Agency.
- What Indians are in question in the letter?
- What is Dudley's major role?

## Closure

3. After the students have answered the questions in #2, the teacher should review their responses. The teacher should then synthesize their responses and place the Smith-Dudley letter into a national context by elaborating on other similar or different situations in the country.

## Follow-up

4. After the teacher has placed the reservation - Indian agent

situation in a national perspective, a follow-up activity should be planned with the class. Again, divide the students in pairs or groups. Have them re-read the letter. Then instruct them to write a response to Dudley assuming that they are E.P. Smith, Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

The teacher should then have the groups or individual students read the letters in class. Students should be encouraged to question, comment, and discuss each letter as it is read.

Suggested time frame: 1 class period - 50 minutes.

## Evaluation

5. The teacher could use a variety of assessment techniques. First, the quality of the students written work and cooperative work within the groups should be evaluated. A scale from 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest (best) score could be used. Secondly, an interpretative essay question could be assigned to measure the knowledge gained and the ability of the students to apply the information and insights from the letter to other similar or different historical situations. Finally, a brief quiz could be used focusing on analysis of the letter.



Transcript of Document: Indian Affairs. Office of Indian Affairs,  
Territory of New Mexico, Santa Fe, New Mexico, May 5, 1873. Source:  
National Archives Chicago Branch, 7358 South Pulaski Road, Chicago,  
Illinois 60629.

Office Superintendent of  
Indian Affairs  
Territory of New Mexico  
Santa Fe, New Mexico  
May 5, 1873

Honorable E. P. Smith  
Commissioner Indian Affairs  
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to forward herewith the first monthly report of S. B. Bushnell, agent for the Mescalero Apaches - In this connection allow me to invite your attention to my letter of February 18th. Especially to the following paragraph therein: - "I found the Agent Mr. A. J. Curtis very unfortunately situated from the fact that he and his wife are obliged to live in a single room, and because there are no agency buildings he is and has been obliged to transact his business through the firm of L.G. Murphy and Co., well known contractors and general manipulators of the Indians business - I was unable to find any specific act of dishonesty on their part, but the impression made upon my mind was that it would be much safer and more economical for the Government to place the Agent in a position where he can act independently by the purchase or erection of suitable Agency buildings."

By reference to my letter relative to the Post Trader, you will see that I have called attention to the fact that there is no one now there who can be appointed Indian Trader, and that while the firm of L. G. Murphy and Co. remain there under the protection of the War Dept. no one else can afford to go there and open a store as Indian Trader.

In relation to the exaggeration of the number of Indians, I must say that I believe it is true, but not to the extent suggested by the Agent - If there were any buildings and a corral, so that we could so place the Indians when their checks are issued as to prevent their doublings, and the Agent were directed to make no issues except to those who presented themselves, in person, or were satisfactorily vouched for, this matter would be entirely remedied.

There is no doubt that both Murphy and his partner, Fritz, have a great influence over these Indians, because while they were officers in the Volunteer Army they often came in contact with them and since they have really managed the business of the Government and been the actual agent. No matter who has held the appointment and were they inclined it is possible that they might induce the Indians to become troublesome, but while they have so large claims pending at the Department (some portion of which seem to be of doubtful character). I have no fear that they will resort to any overt act of this kind against the Government -

In regard to the charges of Agent Bushnell against the late Agent, I am unable to give you any corroboration without further investigation - I know how men in this section of country are sure to make the gravest accusations against public officers they have been unable to control and think it possible that Mr. Bushnell may have formed a too hasty opinion upon charges made by parties who were actuated by a spirit of malice - The purchase of the mules alluded to occurred before my appointment.

In conclusion allow me to urge that you will, as soon as possible, authorize the erection of suitable agency buildings or the purchase of those of L. G. Murphy.

I enclose herewith a plan of those offered by Murphy and Company for \$10,000 - which I supposed were forwarded with my letter of February 18th but was omitted by the inadvertence of my clerk.

Very Respectfully  
your Obt. Servt.  
L. Edwin Dudley  
Supt. Ind. Affrs. N.M.

\*

# The National Archives - Chicago Branch

*Peter W. Bunce*

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If the Smithsonian Institution is the nation's attic, and the Library of Congress the nation's reading room, then the National Archives is its study. The National Archives of the United States is responsible for the acquisition, preservation, arrangement, and description of the historically valuable records of the federal government. Its mission also includes making these materials available for research and promoting their use. To those ends, the National Archives maintains eleven field branches across the country whose holdings are centered around the field office records of federal agencies, and those of the United States District Courts and the Courts of Appeals. A recent audiovisual publication calls them "a national resource in a local setting."

The National Archives - Chicago Branch, one of the eleven, comprises federal records originating in the six Great Lakes area states: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. These records document the federal presence in a region that is dominated by the bustling urban and industrial corridors along the lakes, yet also includes the serenity of the farmlands and rolling hills to the south and west. It is precisely this diversity of landscape and populace, this eclectic cultural heritage of the Great Lakes region that makes the records of the National Archives - Chicago Branch so exciting to discover and examine.

The earliest records held by the branch include ratified Indian treaties dating back to 1722; Papers of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789; and early territorial records, all available on microfilm. The federal influence in the Great Lakes area was felt early, through the Land Ordinance of 1785,

which established the rectangular land survey and enabled the federal government to efficiently administer the sale of lands. It is documented in records from early land offices, including those at Kaskaskia, Vincennes, and Steubenville, which date back to 1800.

The first federal court in this area was established in Chillicothe, Ohio in 1803, when that state was formally admitted into the union. Aaron Burr was arraigned here on a misdemeanor charge, for conspiracy to overthrow the Spanish government and seize the lands west of the Mississippi River in the name of the United States. Transcripts of Burr's coded correspondence with his co-conspirators, along with the key that deciphers the cryptic messages, appear in the leather-bound journals of the court. Here also is recorded President Thomas Jefferson's claim of executive privilege, which he used to deny evidence subpoenaed for the trial, and which was claimed much later and with less success by President Richard Nixon.

Court records of the 1840s tell the story of the young nation's struggle to develop economically through the bankruptcy case files of individuals caught in the Panic of 1837 and the subsequent depression. These records are a rich source for social and family, as well as economic historians. Lists of debts show the slow and inevitable failure of businesses, whose expenses continued after their customers ceased to be able to pay for the goods and services they received. Lists of assets enumerate a family's household furnishings including books, clothing, and even personal items such as toothbrushes and combs that tell much about how they worked and lived.

As the nation regrouped and faced industrial expansion, one can trace the rise of the railroads and how they displaced canals as a major source of transportation through civil,

bankruptcy, and equity court records, and through the records of the US Army Corps of Engineers. The transportation theme can be developed to the present by studying federal aid to highway projects for the Great Lakes states. Population and agricultural schedules from the United States census support research into the growth of the cities and the development of agriculture.

Researchers interested in the home front during the Civil War can consult a seldom-used but significant group of records concerning the confiscation of property, including the steamer "Little Rebel" and "forty-one head of horses," believed to be used in service of the rebellion near Cairo, Illinois. Students of slavery will be fascinated by court records which document the enforcement, or non-enforcement of fugitive slave laws, and slave "rescue" cases.

Accounts of expeditions by the Corps of Engineers follow westward expansion as far as the Little Bighorn River in Montana, where a military expedition commanded by General George Crook confronted Crazy Horse in sub-zero temperatures just three months before General George Custer met his fate at the hands of the Sioux chief's warriors in June of 1876. Branch records from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which date from 1865, document the federal system of Indian superintendencies and agencies, and tell perhaps more about federal attitudes toward Native Americans than about the aborigines themselves, and more about life on the reservations than outside them. The Chippewa, Oneida, Potawatomi, Sac, Fox, and Winnebago are among the tribal groups represented in branch records. Court records from the US District Court at Chicago document the attempt of the Potawatomi to regain ownership of the Chicago lake front in 1914.

Selective Service records, including lists of delinquents and deserters, and

court case files of individuals charged with espionage and sedition, which include familiar names like Eugene V. Debs, William "Big Bill" Haywood, and Rosika Schwimmer recall the high emotion elicited by anti-war factions during World War I.

Prohibition cases from the 1820s and early 1930s include names like George "Bugs" Moran, Frank Nitti, and the Aiuppa brothers, but most of the defendants are the anonymous, "common" people who brewed the beer, drove the trucks, and took the police heat for the gangsters. Al Capone, the biggest mobster of all, is missing from prohibition files because federal agents were never able to put together a strong enough case on him. Capone was finally imprisoned for income tax evasion, and the signatures of the twelve brave men who convicted him are on the jury verdict which is still in his court file. Other notorious figures appearing in criminal court records include John Dillinger, Cassie Chadwick, and Samuel Insull, a protege of Thomas Edison who built a paper empire in public utilities and was charged with criminal fraud when it collapsed.

Students of the home front during World War II will find a wealth of documentation about issues like women in the work force and managing the wartime economy in the records of temporary war agencies such as the Office of Housing Expediter, the War Assets Administration, and the War Manpower Commission. Students of military history who can read German will be fascinated by the branch's microfilm collection of captured German records which include records of the National Socialist German Labor Party, and the Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda. Related records include United States Trial Briefs and Document Books of the International Military Tribunal, and the prosecution exhibits submitted to it; the Diary of Hans Frank; and the Mauthausen Death Books, which contain the names of the 100,000 people who died at that concentration camp.

Study of the post-war era might include flight and aeronautical research in the records of the Lewis Flight

Propulsion Laboratory in Cleveland (in the Records of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration); energy research in the records from Argonne National Laboratory (in the Records of the Atomic Energy Commission), or social programs such as the one in job training carried out by the Employment and Training Administration.

Records in the National Archives are not difficult to use once one has mastered the record group concept. Unlike libraries, in which books are catalogued and organized by subject, National Archives holdings are organized by record groups, which correspond to a series of records of common origin. For example, Record Group (usually abbreviated RG) 21, the Records of the US District Courts; and Record Group 276, Records of the US Circuit Courts of Appeals, are the two largest record groups in the Chicago Branch. Other major record groups include the Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (RG 75) and the Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers (RG 77). The National Archives - Chicago Branch holds approximately 51,000 cubic feet of records created by forty-one federal agencies or courts.

In order to determine which record group or groups are likely to contain the information you need, you must first determine what government agency or agencies handled that function. For example, a study of immigration patterns might utilize the Records of the Bureau of the Census (RG 29), in which population schedules include a person's place of birth; Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (RG 85), which kept passenger lists of vessels arriving at various ports; or the Records of the US District Courts (RG 21), which naturalized new citizens. Research into shipwrecks on the Great Lakes might entail the use of the Records of the US Coast Guard (RG 26), Records of the Bureau of Customs (RG 36), Records of Marine Inspection and Navigation (RG 41), Records of the Chief of Engineers (RG 77), and court records (RG 21). Identifying the appropriate record group for research can be one of the most mystify-

ing aspects of research for those unfamiliar with government agencies. Helping researchers do this is one of the responsibilities of our professionally trained archivists, who are familiar with the record groups and in finding ways through the labyrinth of federal bureaucracy. Finding aids are also available to provide researchers with information about various records.

The records of the National Archives - Chicago Branch are used by historians, political scientists, economists in the preparation of scholarly works, Ph.D. candidates, and college and high school students for research projects. Each year students preparing projects for the Chicago Metro History Fair come to the branch to research their projects. Other frequent researchers include attorneys, screenwriters, and journalists: most recently from the *Wall Street Journal* and "60 Minutes." Recent litigation over Indian treaty rights has prompted considerable research from tribal groups and their legal counsel. The largest group of researchers is unquestionably genealogists, who take advantage of the branch's extensive microfilm collection of census records (which the branch holds for all states, 1790-1910), ship's passenger lists, and indexes to eighteenth and nineteenth century compiled military service records.

As mentioned earlier, the mission of the National Archives is twofold: to preserve the historical record, and to promote its use. It is the latter which justifies the former. In order to promote the use of the records, the Chicago Branch prepares exhibits and conducts workshops for teachers, principals, students and librarians that center around the use of archives-- of original documents--in the classroom. Inquiries about workshops now scheduled or suggestions for future ones may be addressed to the Branch Director. Tours, speeches, audiovisual presentations, and special workshops can be arranged. For more information, contact Peter W. Bunce, Director, National Archives - Chicago Branch, 7358 South Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois 60629; telephone 312/581-7816.



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