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Historical and Political Science Association of the University of Nebraska

Geo. E. Howard

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HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA.

[A Communication from S. D. Cox, Secretary of the Association.]

LINCOLN, NEB., Jan. 12, 1886.

Geo. E. Howard, Sec'y of the State Historical Society:

DEAR SIR:—I have the pleasure to transmit herewith a brief history of the organization and transactions of the Historical and Political Science Association of the University of Nebraska. As the object of the Association is the study of economic and historical problems with special reference to local questions, its transactions will be of interest to your society, with which it is a co-laborer in a common field.

The association was organized Nov., 1884, with the following charter members: Chancellor I. J. Manatt, Prof. Geo. E. Howard, H. W. Caldwell, Sam D. Cox, Laurence Fossler, Edson Rich, W. P. Sullivan, A. W. Foote, N. Z. Snell, Flora E. Frost, Clara Parks, and H. H. Wilson.

The following additional names have been added to the roll of membership by election: Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Field, Mrs. Geo. E. Howard; and Miss M. A. Treeman, E. J. Churchill, A. G. Warner, and C. G. McMillan have become members as post-graduates.

Honorary members have been elected as follows: C. H. Gere, Albert Watkins, J. D. Calhoun, W. W. W. Jones, Mr. and Mrs. S. B. Pound, Mrs. J. L. McConnell, and Mrs. J. S. Dales, of Lincoln; Dr. Jesse Macy, of Grinnell, Iowa, and Dr. Albert Shaw, of the Minneapolis *Tribune*.

The nature and object of the association can not be more concisely explained than by quoting the simple plan of organization, which serves as a constitution and by-laws:

I. The general object of this association shall be the co-operative study of economic and historical problems with special reference to local questions.

II. The membership shall consist of the following classes: (1) Ex-Officio, (a) Professors and instructors in history and political science; (b) Seminary students: post-graduates studying for a degree. (2) Charter members and such other persons as may be elected by the association. (3) Honorary members: (a) Professors and instructors in other departments of the university; (b) Persons interested in

this line of work who may be elected by a two-thirds vote of all the members present at any regular meeting.

III. Officers.—The chancellor of the university, or in his absence, the professor of history, shall be president of the association.

The recording secretary and corresponding secretary shall be elected from the members of the association and shall each hold his office for one academic year.

The association was organized by the election of Sam D. Cox recording secretary and Howard W. Caldwell corresponding secretary.

Six meetings have been held, all of which have been of an interesting and profitable character. Besides the papers, much matter of interest has been brought out in the discussions of the papers and incidental topics. The papers and talks which have been presented before the association have been as follows :

Nov. 16, 1884, a paper by H. H. Wilson on "The Unwritten Elements of the Federal Constitution," and a report by A. G. Warner, "Wampum, Clam Shell Currency, and Indian Records."

Dec. 6, a paper, "The Income Tax in the United States," by Howard W. Caldwell.

April 3, 1885, a talk by Prof. Macy, of Grinnell, Iowa, on the question of "Educational Methods in their Application to Practical Life and Politics." A talk by Prof. Geo. E. Howard on the "Development of the Township and the Evolution of Institutions."

May 28, 1885, a paper by Edson Rich on "The Jews in Maryland." A paper by Prof. Macy, of Grinnell, Iowa, on "The Relation of Schools to Politics," read by Chancellor Manatt.

Nov. 14, 1885, a paper by Prof. Howard on "The Evolution of the County."

It will be noted that the papers that have thus far been presented have not treated local questions. This is due to the fact that most of them have been papers that were in preparation at the time of the organization of the society and were brought out at the earlier meetings when not time enough had elapsed for the preparation of papers *de novo* upon questions of local interest.

It is the object of the association to pursue original investigations of economic and historical questions in a thoroughly scholarly way, and it expects to do work in these lines, the results of which shall be of real and permanent value. We look to the State Historical Society for the collection and preservation of much of the material which our

association shall use in the investigation of local historical questions, trusting that there shall exist between the two organizations a hearty sympathy and co-operation which shall prove to be of great mutual advantage.

THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD IN COLORADO.

[Letter of Hon. J. Sterling Morton to Secretary Howard, Jan. 2, 1886.]

Since replying to your letter this A.M., in looking over a daily journal for 1859, I find recorded on the 5th day of January of that year the advent to Omaha from the Rocky mountains, of Al. Steinberger and Colonel Wynkoop, bringing the first gold from Cherry creek placers, where Denver now stands. The precious metal was in goose quills. The feather end had been cut off below the pith, right where the hollow trunk begins, and into this delicate, translucent receptacle the scale gold had been poured. There were not to exceed six quills full altogether, but there were enough to energize, organize, and enthuse a cavalcade of fortune hunters the succeeding spring which reached from the Missouri river to Pike's Peak.

The indices of Denver, the pointing fingers of fortune, were gloved in those insignificant auriferous feather ends. The marvelous unlocking of nature's safety deposit of silver at Leadville and gold at Georgetown and Golden, which has followed the discoveries of 1859, make the advent of Steinberger and Wynkoop at the old Herndon, in Omaha, on the 5th day of January of that year, a sort of metallic milestone in the development of the mighty mineral resources of the Rocky mountains.*

*The following extract from a letter of Mr. A. G. Barnes, of Lincoln, was published in the *Daily State Journal*, Jan. 15, 1886:

"I notice in a report of the meeting of the Historical Society a letter written by Hon. J. Sterling Morton, wherein he says: 'In looking over a daily journal for 1859, I find recorded on the 5th day of January of that year the advent to Omaha from the Rocky mountains of Al. Steinberger and Colonel Wynkoop, bringing in the first gold from Cherry creek placers.' The coming of these men at that time is true—I knew them well and both were from St. Joe, Missouri—but they were not the first to return from Pike's Peak to the river with gold dust.

"On the 25th day of December, 1858, I landed at Plattsmouth, and in a quill from a mountain eagle I carried about fifty cents worth of gold dust which I had found and panned myself at what was called the Mexican diggings, three miles above the mouth of Cherry creek on the banks of the Platte river.

"At that time there were about half a dozen Mexicans working there and getting from fifty cents to \$1.50 a day per man.

"Moses Stocking, Milo Fellows, and myself, leaving part of our company, started about November 20, 1858, for Plattsmouth, 600 miles distant, with cattle. In about twenty days we