

historically speaking

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE HOWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 304 / St. Paul, Nebraska / 68873

Fall Issue 1997

Olga and Irene Lorkosky experience the Chicago World's Fair of 1933.

By Ron W. Sack
(With notes from the late Irene J. Lorkosky)

My family always had high respect for the Lorkosky family. So much so that my great-grandparents William Roman Sidel II and Anna (Lukaszewicz) Sidel named their first daughter, Olga Irene (Sidel) Koiila after Michael and Martha's two daughters. I was fortunate enough to purchase many items from their estate auction last year. Two of the items purchased were scrapbooks, one of which documented their experiences at the 1933 Chicago World's Fair. Promotional materials touted the Fair as being a "feast for the mind and eye."

FINAL LIMIT	
To be punched in Selling Agent	
Jan	Feb
Mar	Apr
May	Jun
Jul	Aug
Sep	Oct
Nov	Dec
1	2
3	4
5	6
7	8
9	10
11	12
13	14
15	16
17	18
19	20
21	22
23	24
25	26
27	28
29	30
31	X
1900	188
30	31
32	33
34	35
36	37
38	

Chicago (Destination)
Form T C 25
H.S. Babinger
Passenger Traffic Manager



Olga and Irene's journey begins here, at the Union Pacific depot in St. Paul, Nebraska. Olga and Irene were publishers of the Howard County Herald newspaper.

Photo courtesy of Marie Iwanke

These tickets allowed Olga and Irene to enter another world.

The two tickets were issued in St. Paul, Nebraska on Aug. 13, 1933.

Travel is an incredible experience for anyone. It allows us to enter another world, broaden our visual senses and open our minds. This is a story about two women and the day they left the Union Pacific depot in St. Paul, Nebraska. Please sit back and enjoy. All aboard!

"Not so many years ago there was no simpler or more intelligible notion than that of going on a journey.

Travel - movement through space - provides the universal metaphor for change."

Daniel J. Boorstin



Holiday Home Tour Scheduled For December.



Cotesfield Post Office Moves To New Zip Code.



Transforming the space we live in.

historically speaking

Oлга and Irene, cont.

Notes from Irene J. Lovinsky

A vacation is usually a recreation -- but to spend a week at the "Century of Progress" could hardly be called recreational -- even though it was a vacation.

Our party, Marie Svantner, my sister Olga and myself boarded the train on Sunday. The trip was no different than any other. We made several acquaintances in our car, as all were headed to the same place. During the evening hours on the train several hours of bridge games were played. The Portland Rose was an hour behind schedule but made up the time and reached the Windy City at 8:35 a.m.

Being rather excited in wanting to see the busiest corner in the world, we walked over to Randolph and State Streets where humanity elbows their way through the streets. In a short time we were at the Dearborn Hotel, and we occupied a room on the seventh floor.

Immediately we were ushered to the press division and after showing our credentials were given our passes and advised on where to go.

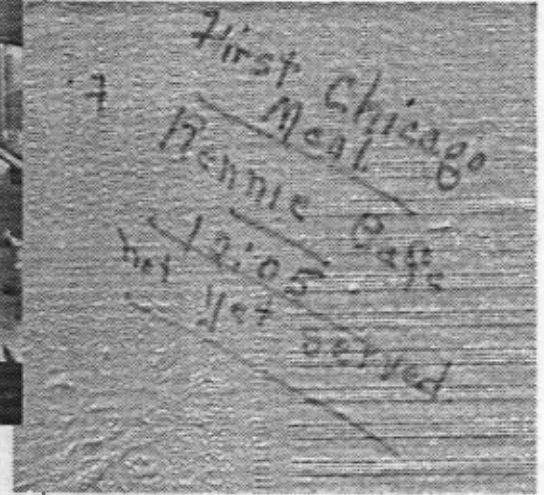
The first people we saw upon entering the grounds were Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Taylor and daughter Maydee from St. Paul.

There are 225 concessions at the fair, 50 buildings which are free. Night time is the



Left: The World's Fair dining car.

Below: A napkin with the inscription, "First Chicago meal. Rennie Cafe." A humorous note was also included: "12:05, not yet served."



best time to view all the buildings. One cannot begin to describe the beauty of the lighting effects. We are told more than 15,000 lamps from 10 to 3000 watts are used.

We went through several buildings and contests: Oregon Log Rolling Contest, livestock buildings, and automobiles.

One of the highlights was the aviation building. We saw the Wright Brothers first plane. It was the first commercial plane built after their experimental model A. The English plane, a Blériot monoplane of 1909, in which Louis Blériot made the first flight over the English channel was there. The Laird plane of 1913 in which Catherine Sünson, pioneer girl aviator, flew over China

and Japan was on display.

On we went to the Seminole Village and then to Ripley's Oddities.

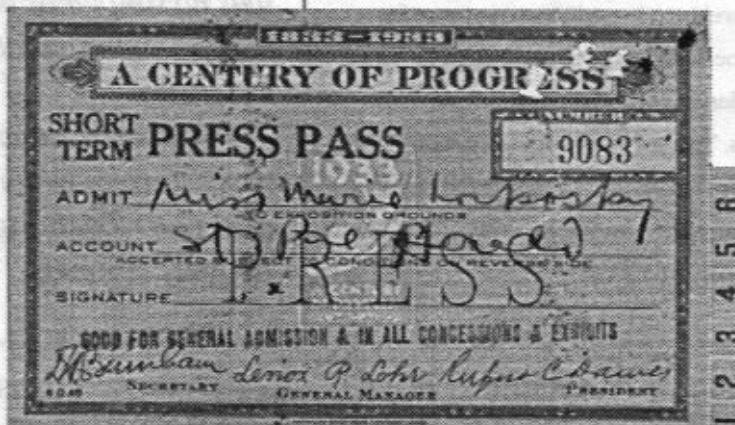
Art treasures from Arabia, Turkey and Persia proved interesting. The great Nassak diamond looted from a temple in India, and illuminated manuscript pages from the ancient Persian Books of Kings were shown.

Another country we went to visit was Morocco -- with its southern atmosphere and low buildings of tiled roofs -- again you could see the wares of the country on display.

Czechoslovakia had displayed products from their fine country. Fine laces, wood work, glassware and dishes were what the country was noted for.

A visit to the Belgian city reminded you that you had been transported to a city of the old world. The architecture of the buildings with the quaint gables and rugged streets made it seem realistic. Wooden shoes were being carved to wear and purchase. Ladies were making lace. Folk dances of the native country were presented for your approval.

Press pass issued to Miss Marie Lovinsky. Could this be the way they let their friend Marie Svantner into the ware fair? Press pass allowed only to the press?



Olga and Irene, cont.



Overhead view of the World's Fair. The large structure connecting both sides was the Sky Ride." It was 628 feet (64 stories) tall. At that time, it was the highest point in Chicago. The height of the roller ride was 219 feet (23 stories). The roller cars on the ride went six miles per hour and could seat 36. It was billed as the supreme ride of the fair. The fair area spanned over three miles in length.

The Chinese exhibit allowed us to view some of the finest jade carving in the world. A miniature pagoda was displayed. It was 51 inches in height and made from a block of jade weighing originally over 18,000 pounds. This pagoda alone was valued at over \$500,000 and took 500 jade carvers 16 years to complete. Oriental splendor could again be seen in the replica of the Golden Temple of Jehol.

In the general exhibits we saw Johannes Gutenberg's original printing press which dates back to 1450 and the first bible printed from moveable type with a value of \$15,000.

Next was the Hall of Religion. Christian, Jewish and other religions explained

their faith. One of the rarest relics of Christianity was on display – the silver chalice of Antioch. It is thought to be the Holy Grail and the earliest known object connected to the Eucharist.

On we went to the Hall of Science, Hollywood exhibits, and live performances. Just opposite Hollywood was a display of 5,000 rose bushes. The outdoor gardens covered four acres. Some of the nation's foremost experts on landscaping designed this area. Here were found 50-foot elms, orange trees, oaks, ash, and fruit trees.

The old Fort Dearborn and Lincoln group were interesting places. Here we saw Lincoln's cabin (his recreated birthplace), along with

other places that documented his life.

Later on we went to the Hall of States, Enchanted Isle for Children and the World of One Million Years Ago. A quilt made by the ladies of this country was on display and was to be given to Mrs. Roosevelt.

The evenings again were incredible. Here many lighted gondolas were in motion. Words failed to describe as they moved to soft poetic music.

Polish, German, Belgian, French, Italian, Chinese and Japanese foods all were available to taste.

Big bands by nationally known entertainers, Paul Ash and Bennie Bennie played from dusk till dawn. The orchestra's played their tunes on a revolving platform.

Outside of the fair we went to many well known places. My favorite was the Art Institute of Chicago.

In the end, we enjoyed our stay in the Windy City and the "Century of Progress." It made us realize how little we and the average citizen know. It gave us the opportunity to see how our nation and world have grown as a people of culture. Time passes quickly and we could have spent more time.

In closing I would say as Brisbane, anyone having the opportunity should not miss the fair. – Irene Lorkosky

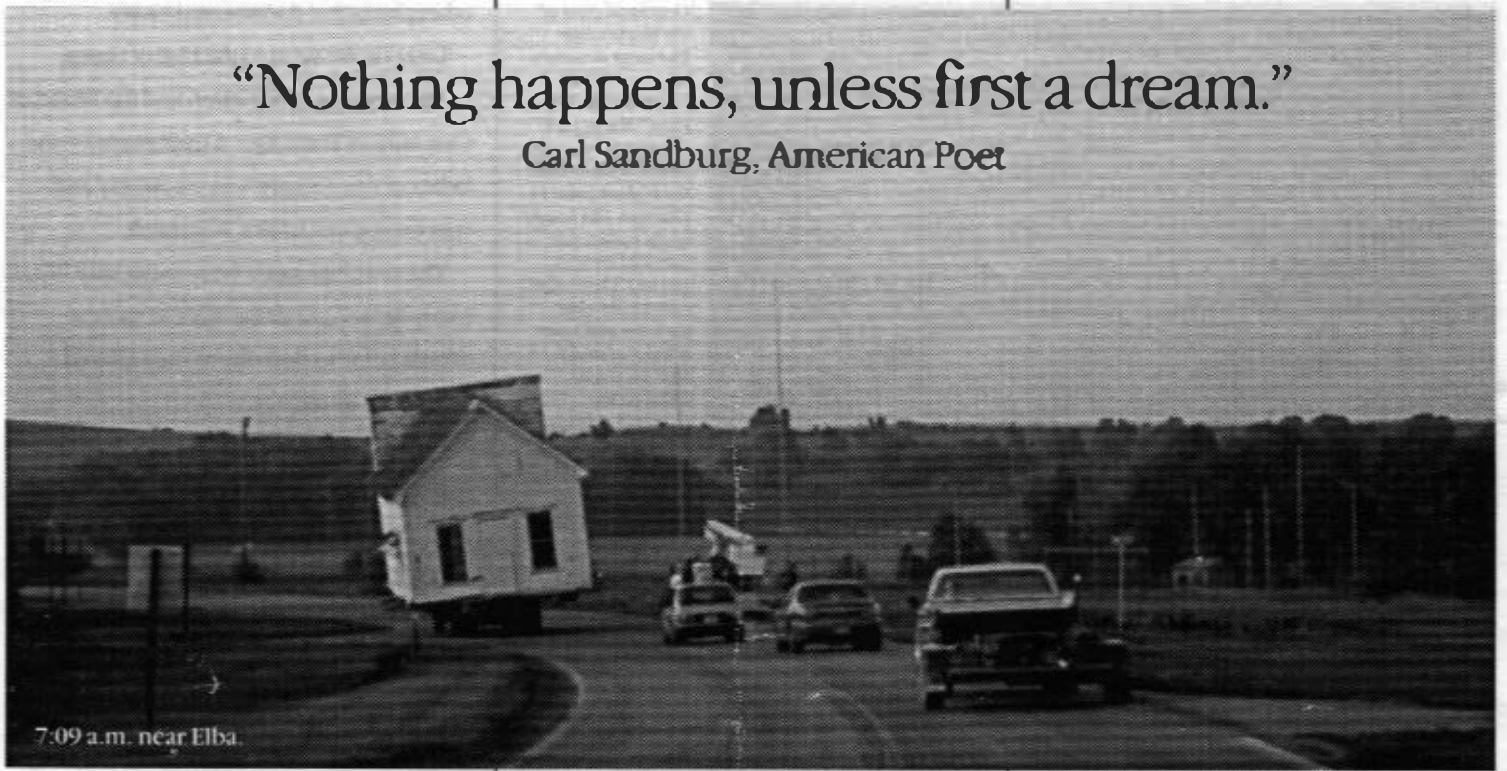
A sixty foot mural depicting coffee from growth to shipping is shown. The mural was one of many works of art on display at the World's Fair. Stewart and Ashby Coffee Company sponsored the mural.



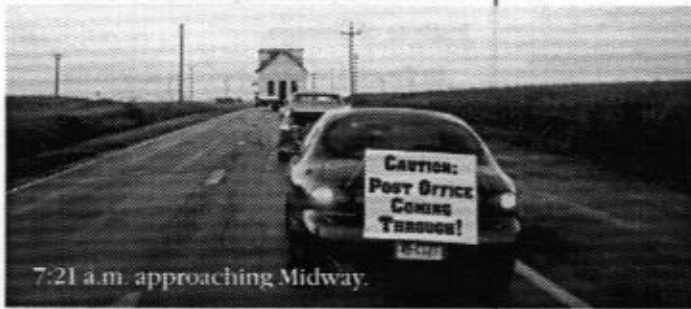
REPRODUCTION OF THE ORIGINAL FORTY-FOOT OIL PAINTING IN THE EXHIBIT OF THE STEWART & ASHBY COFFEE COMPANY AT A CENTURY OF PROGRESS

“Nothing happens, unless first a dream.”

Carl Sandburg, American Poet



7:09 a.m. near Elba.



7:21 a.m. approaching Midway.

Although the press was kind to us (we received coverage on the Cotesfield Post Office through the Grand Island Independent, St. Paul Phonograph-Herald, KZ100 Radio and MTV News, Kearney) we wanted to share additional photos of moving the historic Cotesfield Post Office.

Much of the passion and humor in the move is represented in these photographs. The Howard County Historical Society is forever grateful for the generosity of Joe and Maxine Coufal. We salute your dream!

Anyone wanting to volunteer time or money for this project can contact/send it to the Historical Society. If donating money, be sure to indicate the Cotesfield Post Office on your check.

Top photo: The Cotesfield Post Office meanders through the picturesque Loop River valley near Elba.

Photo above: Several onlookers received a good laugh from the sign displayed on Maxine's car. It read "CAUTION: Post Office Coming Through!" Another humorous sign was placed on the blacksmith shop in St. Paul reading "I like my new neighbor."

Photos courtesy of Martin Bahensky



11:02 a.m. home in St. Paul.

The dream makers.

People, businesses and organizations helping with the two-day move were back row, left to right: Dave Sprague, Joe Coufal, Maxine Coufal, Joey Coufal, Russ Coufal, Martin Bahensky, Terry King, Mike Marwick and Bill Sack. Front row, kneeling: Mona Sprague, Grace Coufal, Liz King and Ron Sack.

Dream makers not shown: Aid Association for Lutherans (Ella Miller, Jackie Scheer and Curtis Lehn), Lutheran Brotherhood (John Heinrich, Dennis Kamprecht, Jerry Kufmann, Clarence Regenstein), City of St. Paul, Village of Cotesfield, Village of Elba, County Yards, S. E. Smith and Sons, TCI Cable, Howard Greeley R.P.D., Marie Nielsen, Andy Masak, Fritz D. Tuma, Cheryl Coufal, Jason Coufal, Ryan Coufal, Frankie Monwee, Martin Krenn, Jerry Jensen, Cody Jensen and Orlem.

Our membership.

By Mena Sprague

For the past three or four years our membership has remained pretty consistent. In 1995 we had 70 members and in 1996 we had 50. This year, prior to our last newsletter and reminders being mailed, we had 56 paid members. Since then, we have received 18 membership renewals, five new members and two renewals for 1998 - included is one life-time membership. We also have two members who are paid through 2001.

If a reminder card is included with this newsletter, your dues for 1997 are not paid. If you feel your dues are paid, please call me at (308) 754-4901 and I will check it for you, or you can write me at 844 20th Ave., St. Paul, NE 68873-3518.

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members: Leona Pflipsen, Gary and Bonnie Clayton, and Bill and Jan Sack.

From our mailbox.

Dear Howard County Historical Society,

We really enjoyed the Civil War Encampment. Thanks!

Excellent community program.
Jimmy and Ruthie Jacobsen

Schenck's continue generosity.

During this summer, descendants of Dan and Irene Schenck continued to remember us with a generous donation. The Society extends our "Thanks."

Horticulturally Speaking.

By Marion Bahensky

*What do honeysuckles and petunias have to do with preservation?
Quite a lot actually. Our mission statement says we will try to preserve our history in a manner that will educate and inspire interested individuals.*

We must do the best we can to attract visitors and present our material in an attractive manner. As a neighbor to the Gruber House, I enjoy the colorful window boxes very much. Any empty or neglected house in any neighborhood is depressing; bright flowers, on the other hand, lift the spirit. So year after year, I donate window boxes, soil, and petunias. My self respect requires me to try and keep my corner of the world clean, tidy, and as attractive as possible. I repeat my apology about the weeds; next year I am sure I can do better. This year my time was devoted to long-neglected home improvement.

One long-range plan for the Historical Village is extremely attractive, partly because of much proposed shrubbery. After seeing the proposed plan, many have called wanting to donate trees, shrubs, etc. We cannot plan permanent landscaping for the Village until we all agree upon a long-range plan. We can improve the overall appearance by making the fence behind the buildings a wall of greenery. (We believe we need the fence to protect the old buildings.) This year the Society Directors authorized me to buy, plant, and maintain vines for the fence. I was not able to find trumpet vine, but honeysuckle was available. I planted 16, one in every other section of the fence. 14 are doing well; two probably will need replacing.

On September 5, I attended a conference on landscaping of public areas, one which might help get us a grant for landscaping the Historical Village grounds. We were taken on a tour of the State Fairgrounds and the University. I have the names of many flowering plants or grasses which could make our site look quite attractive. If we could just get a plan for building placement, I would absolutely love to plan landscaping.

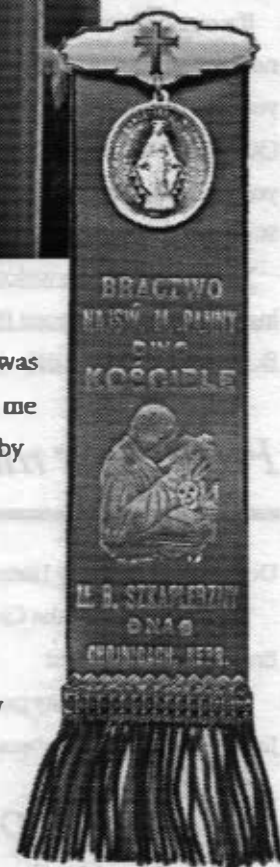
The City has been very helpful about donating trees, and replacing those damaged by "weed-eaters." I am sure they will help us maintain attractive grounds when and if we can agree on a plan for landscaping, and get our permanent buildings in place. Meanwhile, we don't want to disgrace our town by looking unattractive or neglected. We really do miracles with the limited resources and help we have. But we can always do better.

Some towns have Garden Clubs which do wonderful things. The club in Ord keeps flowers around the Court House yard. Cedar Rapids has nice flowers on Main Street maintained by their Garden Club. I will tour Ericson's garden club members' yards on Sept. 30. I was tremendously impressed with the beautiful gardens on our tour last year. Surely, if we all do a little more, we can improve the public land in our town. I care for two plots on Main Street by myself. Could you give an hour or two a week to beautify the town/Historical Village? Your ideas for landscaping are very welcome.



The interior of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church. No date is given on this photo, but research shows the stained glass windows were installed in 1907. Note the plain ones are still present near the altar.

(Photo below: Our Lady of Mount Carmel badge. Badge circa 1900.



Those incredible Polish Catholic churches.

By Ron W. Sack

To know a county's architecture is to know its past and present. Howard County's Catholic churches have rich history that has given them state and national attention. At one time, there were six Catholic churches in the county. They were: St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church at Warsaw, the first Catholic church in Howard County, first built in 1877; St. Libory's Catholic Church in St. Libory, first church built in 1878; St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church

of Posen/Farwell, parish established as a mission to St. Wenceslaus in 1877, present church built in 1887; Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church of Papin (Choynice), church built in 1882; Sts. Peter and Paul's Catholic Church in St. Paul, first church built in 1883, first pastor appointed in 1888; and St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Elba, first church built in 1885.

The two claiming state and national attention are the two which were settled by the Polish: Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St. Anthony of Padua.

Since much documentation can be found on these churches, only a few powerful and poignant stories are shared.

Our Lady Of Mount Carmel

Mt. Carmel stands as the oldest Catholic church structure in the Diocese of Grand

Island. In 1882 a beautiful church was built — a white frame building flanked by two steeples — which appear to reach towards heaven. In 1888 a wind of stormic proportions blew the church about a foot and a half off its foundation. Finally, when a decision had been reached about placing a new foundation to support the church, a wind blew from the opposite direction and settled the church back on its foundation.

Also in the 1880s, a severe diphtheria epidemic broke out. Some estimate that one-hundred children died within one year in a community a little over six miles square. Many of the parents, on coming home from the funeral of one child, would find one or two more dead. The lower portion on the west side of the cemetery contains the graves of the children who succumbed to this dreaded disease. It is a sobering experience to stand in the little cemetery looking down the rows, and realizing that so many children died in such a short time period in a small community. What a long lasting effect it must have had on the entire community.

St. Anthony of Padua

St. Anthony of Padua has received state/national attention by being the oldest Polish Catholic church in Nebraska and

quite possibly the oldest west of the Mississippi. One story that comes to mind emphasizes the word commitment. During Father Ladislus Sebastyanski's tenure, a rectory and then a school were built, but the combination church, school and living quarters were destroyed by fire. With the help of the faithful, a larger church -- with two towers and two large bells -- was built. But before completion, it too was destroyed by fire. Undaunted by their misfortune, Father Sebastyanski and his parishioners were determined to have their church. This time they hauled lumber from Dannebrog, and built the church on the same foundation. The first mass offered in the new church was on August 7, 1887.

Both churches remain standing and are well preserved -- adding much to the rich architectural fabric of Howard County.



Photo above: St. Anthony of Padua badge, circa 1900.

Left photo: St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church of Pitzer/Panwell

The Catholic School was organized in the 1880s. A study by the Chartery Office in Grand Island from 1935 shows there were 39 pupils. The school was staffed then by four Polish Sisters

St. Anthony of Padua photo courtesy of Marie Iwanicki Badges and Miami Carmel photo courtesy of Ron W. Sack

Source material provided by the Nebraska Catholic Register



Americans have always respected newness and youth. We are, after all, a new people, a young people: the inhabitants of a New World where old tyrannies have no place and where a man can make himself out of the stuff of his opportunities. The American Dream – brought here in the baggage of millions of immigrants – is a dream, above all, of this newness. Here the past is another country, its citizens other people left behind. An American from the first is a child of the future, a person who starts from scratch. This is the great gift we've been given by those Americans who have preceded us: we are allowed, like no other people on earth, to invent our own personal destinies. We're free to make ourselves up as we go along.

We Americans pay a price for this gift, though: we forget with too much enthusiasm what has come before us. Intent on the future, we throw away the past as it's used up; we are wasteful of memory. We fail to ask our parents and grandparents, before we lose them, the questions we wish we had asked – not “*What happened in your life?*” but “*How did it feel?*” and “*What was it like?*” We fail to search for, in them, what we look for in ourselves as we too grow older: a sense of continuity, a sense of belonging, of being part of the stream. We look for a genealogy of names. But what we finally want is a genealogy of feeling. We want emotional roots in a history that we ignored when it was available.



What's true of us as individuals is true of us as a people. American history, for most of us, is an old distant legend full of mythic figures. With the present – like the future – clamoring for our attention, we don't recognize how close our history really is, how new and, in one sense, how ordinary. America has had its share of great men and women. But the history of the American democracy is itself a democratic history. It's been made – more than in any other society – by ordinary people: the immigrant, the preacher, the schoolteacher, the farmer, the store owner, the blacksmith, the postmaster, and the depot agent. These people were ordinary, like us. And they're nearer to us than we think.

Old people and old buildings – declining in numbers as we reach the end of the century – are a special resource, a resource that, for our own sakes, we should not waste. For they carry within them the sources for our identity and our history. They are witness to a time that will never come again. They are living chronicles, the elders of the American experience. And we would do well to listen, to remember, and to preserve.