

## **NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION RECORD**

RG3508.AM: Burlington and Missouri River Railroad. Land Department (Nebraska)  
Records, 1870-1905  
Size: 38 reels of microfilm, 1 volume & 2 oversize folders

### **BACKGROUND NOTE**

The Union Pacific Land Grant Act of July 1, 1862, as amended by the act of July 2, 1864, granted all odd-numbered sections in every township within 20 miles on each side of the proposed Union Pacific Railroad. In addition, the amended act of July 2, 1864, granted the odd-numbered sections in every township within 10 miles to the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad Company from the Missouri River south of the mouth of the Platte to some point not further west than the 100th meridian of west longitude where the Burlington road should connect with the Union Pacific. In order to insure itself possession of the choicest land in the eastern rainbelt part of the state and because settlement had occurred over some part of the land grant area, the Burlington had gone, in some cases, 150 miles away from its proposed line.

In Nebraska, the Burlington received a total grant of 2,374,090 acres, the Omaha and South Western, 19,004 acres and the Atchinson and Nebraska, 12,842 acres. This was land granted by the federal government from the public domain in lieu of cash payments to subsidize construction of the railroad. The land was then appraised and sold by the railroad on contract to finance their work.

To promote sale of the grants, the railroad set up a land department to promote the land and to handle the bookwork. The Burlington Land Office was opened in October 1863. Sales in Nebraska peaked in the late 1870s. By the mid-1880s, most of the land was sold. Of 24,570 contracts issued by the Burlington through 1903, 23,898 had been acted upon by October 1892. Almost half the tracts were sold from 1878-1892. Late in 1905, the Burlington's last tract was paid for in Nebraska. On December 31, 1905, the Land Department closed its doors.

### **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

This collection consists of 38 reel of microfilm and two oversized folders of the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad Land Department records arranged in the following series: 1) Index to Contract Ledgers, April 1870-October 1903, (Newberry #763.1) and other indexes; 2) Land Commissioners' Record of Land Sales in Nebraska, 1870-1875 (Newberry #764.1); 3) Commissioners' Sales of Nebraska Lands, April 1870-October 1903 (Newberry #764.2); 4) Treasurer's Record of Land Sales, v. 22, Omaha and South Western, 1870-1901 (Newberry #764.3); 5) Treasurer's Record of Sales, Atchinson & Nebraska, 1882-1905, (Newberry #764.8); 6) Land Department Applications; and 7) Miscellaneous.

These records relate to the disposition of land grants by the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad in Nebraska and its subsidiaries, the Omaha and South Western and the Atchinson & Nebraska. Through close cooperation of the Burlington-Northern Railroad and John Aubrey of the Newberry Library, Chicago, the land department records were shipped from Chicago to Lincoln

for microfilming by the Nebraska State Historical Society. **The volumes in Series 1-7 were returned to the Newberry Library after microfilming. The NSHS only has them available on microfilm. The only original materials held by the NSHS in this collection are contained in two oversized folders.**

The index to the contract ledgers will serve as an index to Series 2 and 3 as they, too, are arranged by contract number. Indexes to Series 4 and 5 were prepared by the Archives staff. All names including transfers and administrators were indexed. As best we can determine, the 24,000 plus entries are all those over which the Burlington had responsibility. In addition to listing land sales by contract number, Series 3 also lists cancellations by month. From 1870-1874, Series 2 and 3 overlap although different information is included.

Series 7 contains one reel of microfilm of employee timetables for the Omaha Bridge & Terminal Railway company (see also RG5538 for related materials). The remainder of series 7 consists of one oversized folder of land certificates and a flier advertising land for sale in Nebraska and Iowa, ca. 1872.

**Note:** One letterpress book dating from 1882-1886 was added to the collection in January, 2014.

### DESCRIPTION

Series 1 - Contract ledger, 1870-1903, Index A-Z, Name and Numbers 1-24,570

Volume

1. A-L
2. M-Z and additional index to Series 4 and 5

Series 2 - Land Commissioner's record of land sales in Nebraska, 1870-1875, showing purchaser, description, acres, terms, prices and payments each year, etc.

Volume	Contract #	Date	thru	Contract #	Date
1	1	04-01-1870		1188	10-05-1871
2	1189	10-05-1871		2385	12-02-1872
3	2386	12-02-1872		3565	09-15-1873
4	3566	09-15-1873		4756	02-09-1874
5	4757	02-07-1874		5951	05-26-1874
6	5952	05-26-1874		7147	08-31-1874
7	7148	09-22-1874		7743	no chron. order

Series 3 - Commissioner's Nebraska land sales, 1870-1903, showing purchaser, description, acres, terms, price, payments and agent, commission, voucher, etc.

Volume	Contract #	Date	thru	Contract #	Date
1	1	04-01-1870		6590	06-22-1874
2	6591	05-24-1874		12,490	12-29-1877
3	12,491	03-23-1878		19,055	12-20-1880

<http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/manuscripts/business/BMRR-land.pdf>

4	19,056	02-24-1880	23,898	10-25-1892
5	23,899	01-02-1893	24,570	10-30-1903

Series 4 - Treasurer's record of land sales, Omaha and South Western Railroad Company,

Volume 22 Contract #1, November 18, 1872 thru #147, March 20, 1900

Series 5 - Treasurer's record of sales, Atchison & Nebraska, 1882-1905

Volume 1 1882-1905

Series 6 - Land Department applications, #1-24,570; town lots and misc. included on last reel

Volumes 1-85, #1-24,570

Film Record:

Reel 1 404 shots 808 pgs.	Series 1 761.1 Contract Ledger, April 1870-October 1903, Index A-L and M-Z (2 vols.) Name & Number 1-24,570 Vol.1 A-I Vol.2 M-Z and additional index to Series 4 and 5
Reel 2 781 shots 1562 pgs. #16,753	Series 2, Land Commissioners Record of Land Sales in Nebraska. Vol.1 Contract #1 thru Series 2, Vol.3 pg.149, Contract #2981
Reel 3 867 shots 1734 pgs. #16,754	Series 2, Vol.3 pg.150, Contract #2982 thru Series 2, Vol.6 pg.92, Contract #6317 NOTE: Pages 293 & 294 missing from Vol.3 Vol.3 pg.98 blurred, retaken following frame.
Reel 4 748 shots 1496 pgs. #16,755	Series 2, Vol.6 pg.93 Contract #6318 thru Series 2 Vol.7 complete, Contract #7743. Series 3, Vol.1 Contract #1, Commissioners Sales of Nebraska Land, April 1870 thru Series 3 Vol.3 pg.23 Contract #13,277 NOTE: Series 3 Vol.2 very dim. Series 3 Vol.2 pg.80 blurred, retaken next frame.
Reel 5 656 shots 1312 pgs. #16,758	Series 3 Vol.3 pg.24 Contract #13,278 thru Series 5 Vol.1 Treasurer's Record of Sales, Atchinson & Nebraska. 1882-1905

Series 6 - Land Department applications, #1-24,570; town lots and misc. included on last reel

Reel 1 Vol.1 certificate #1 thru Vol.2 certificate #355

- 960 shots  
1920 pgs.  
#17,716
- NOTE: Missing certificates: #17 thru 48 & 225
- Reel 2  
943 shots  
1886 pgs.  
#17,717
- Vol. 2 certificate #356 thru Vol.3 certificate #633
- Reel 3  
971 shots  
1942 pgs.  
#17,721
- Vol. 3 certificate #634 thru Vol.4 certificate #916  
NOTE: Missing certificates: #789 of Vol.3,  
#824, 868, & 884 of Vol.4  
certificate #889 is numbered as 859 of Vol.4  
certificates #905-907 are missing.
- Reel 4  
998 shots  
1996 pgs.  
#17,722
- Vol.4 certificate #917 thru Vol.6 certificate #1226  
NOTE: Missing certificates: #975, 976, 1016, 1017, 1019, 1021,  
#1022, 1023, 1024, 1046, 1054, 1110, 1154, 1161, 1169,  
#1178, 1185, 1197, 1198, 1222 & 1223.
- Reel 5  
989 shots  
1978 pgs.  
#17,723
- Vol.6 certificates #1227 thru Vol.7 certificates #1542  
NOTE: Missing certificates: #1232, 1234, 1235, 1236, 1253, 1254,  
#1286, 1292, 1293, 1294, 1295, 1307, 1308, 1314, 1315, 1327,  
#1328, 1329, 1330, 1341, 1358, 1359, 1393, 1395, 1416, 1417,  
#1494, 1501, 1502, 1534.  
There are two copies of #1389, the first filmed in the right place and  
the other filmed between #1325 & 1326.  
#1743 is filmed between #1461 & 1462.
- Reel 6  
1001 shots  
2002 pgs.  
#17,724
- Vol.7 certificates #1543 thru Vol.9 certificates #1909.  
NOTE: Missing certificates: #1583, 1584, 1585, 1592, 1593, 1605, 1610,  
1611, 1612, 1730, 1731, 1754, 1757, 1762, 1823, 1897.
- Reel 7  
981 shots  
1962 pgs.  
#17,725
- Vol.9 certificate #1910 thru Vol.12 certificate #2736.  
NOTE: Missing certificates: #1988, 2131, 2178, 2541, 2675.  
Counter number will not follow through as #1925 thru 1972 were  
skipped completely and had to be retaken.
- Reel 8  
1009 shots  
2018 pgs.  
#17,726
- Vol.12 certificate #2737 thru Vol.15 certificate #3651.  
NOTE: Missing certificate: #3257.
- Reel 9  
985 shots  
1960 pgs.
- Vol.15 certificate #3652 thru Vol.18 certificate #4584.  
NOTE: Missing certificate: #3929.

#17,727

Reel 10            Vol.18 certificate #4585 thru Vol.22 certificate #5549.  
1001 shots        NOTE: Missing certificate: #4864.  
2002 pgs.  
#17,728

Reel 11            Vol.22 certificate #5550 thru Vol.25 certificate #6513.  
992 shots         NOTE: Missing certificates: #5613, 6434, 6501.  
1994 pgs.  
#17,729

Reel 12            Vol.25 certificate #6514 thru Vol.28 certificate #7446.  
967 shots         NOTE: Missing certificates: #6601, 6685, 6781, 6787, 7245.  
1934 pgs.  
#17,730

Reel 13            Vol.28 certificate #7447 thru Vol.31 certificate #8238.  
847 shots         NOTE: Missing certificates: #7681, 7683, 7713.  
1694 pgs.  
#17,731

Reel 14            Vol.31 certificate #8239 thru Vol.34 certificate #9156.  
987 shots  
1974 pgs.  
#17,732

Reel 15            Vol.34 certificate #9157 thru Vol.36 certificate #9878.  
792 shots  
1944 pgs.  
#17,733

Reel 16            Vol.36 certificate #9879 thru Vol.39 certificate #10789.  
990 shots  
1980 pgs.  
#17,734

Reel 17            Vol.39 certificate #10790 thru Vol.42 certificate #11702.  
999 shots  
1998 pgs.  
#17,735

Reel 18            Vol.42 certificate #11703 thru Vol.45 certificate #12624.  
961 shots  
1922 pgs.  
#17,736

Reel 19 970 shots 1940 pgs. #17,737	Vol.45 certificate #12625 thru Vol.48 certificate #13556. NOTE: Missing certificate: #13556.
Reel 20 971 shots 1942 pgs. #17,738	Vol.48 certificate #13557 thru Vol.51 certificate #14491.
Reel 21 953 shots 1906 pgs. #17,739	Vol.51 certificate #14492 thru Vol.55 certificate #15409.
Reel 22 955 shots 1910 pgs. #17,745	Vol.55 certificate #15410 thru Vol.58 certificate #16334.
Reel 23 861 shots 1722 pgs. #17,746	Vol.58 certificate #16335 thru Vol.60 certificate #17153.
Reel 24 957 shots 1914 pgs. #17,747	Vol.60 certificate #17154 thru Vol.63 certificate #18079.
Reel 25 924 shots 1848 pgs. #17,748	Vol.63 certificate #18080 thru Vol.66 certificate #18854.
Reel 26 969 shots 1938 pgs. #17,749	Vol.66 certificate #18855 thru Vol.69 certificate #19769.
Reel 27 902 shots 1804 pgs. #17,750	Vol.69 certificate #19770 thru Vol.72 certificate #20641.
Reel 28 970 shots	Vol.72 certificate #20642 thru Vol.75 certificate #21587

1940 pgs.  
#17,758

Reel 29            Vol.75 certificate #21588 thru Vol.78 certificate #22534  
1003 shots  
2006 pgs.  
#17,759

Reel 30            Vol.78 certificate #22535 thru Vol.81 certificate #23489  
997 shots        NOTE: Certificate #23304 is filmed between #23294 and 23295.  
1994 pgs.  
#17,760

Reel 31            Vol.81 #23490 thru Vol.84 certificate #24342  
901 shots        NOTE: There is no number on the certificate between #23859 and 23860.  
1802 pgs.        Because of splicing, the counter numbers will not follow thru.  
#17,766

Reel 32            Vol.84 certificate #24343 thru Vol.85 certificate #24570  
708 shots  
1416 pgs.        Town Lots  
#17,767            Vol.1 #123 Vol.1 #282.

O.&S.W.A.&N.  
Application #10 thru B.&M.N. Land Dept. Applications #108.

Reels #1-32 positives received 2-1-79.

Series 7 - Miscellaneous

Reel 1            Omaha Bridge & Terminal Railway Company, employee timetables, 1900-1910  
#18,002

Advertising flier announcing lands available in Nebraska and Iowa; includes several etchings of Nebraska scenes, and map; c. 1872. (see oversize)

Land certificates (see oversize)

Letterpress book, 1882-1886

nd                06-07-1997  
KFK/dco        09-18-2003  
Revised TMM    05-15-2012  
Revised TMM    01-22-2014

<http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/manuscripts/business/BMRR-land.pdf>

Added entries:

Atchinson and Nebraska Railroad

Burlington and Missouri River Railroad

Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad

Land grants

Land sales and settlement -- Nebraska

Omaha Bridge & Terminal Railway Company (Omaha, Neb.)

Omaha and South Western Railroad

Railroad land grants