

## ARCHIVES RECORD

RG0001.SG010  
& microfilm

Furnas, Robert Wilkinson, 1824-1905

Papers: 1832-1906

Governor of Nebraska, 1873-1875

Cubic ft.: 26.5

Approx. # of Items: 22,300

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Robert W. Furnas was one of the early territorial pioneers who came to Nebraska from Ohio, arriving April 6, 1856. Shortly after arriving he began the publication of the Brownville Nebraska Advertiser, one of the most influential early newspapers. He continued as editor and publisher until 1867.

Formerly a Whig, Furnas joined the newly formed Republican Party. He was particularly active in political affairs, and served four terms in the territorial Legislature.

During the Civil War he was a colonel in the Army, commanding three regiments of Indian troops in Indian Territory. He resigned his command and returned to Nebraska to organize the Second Nebraska Cavalry which saw service against the Sioux on the western frontier. After his regiment was mustered out, Furnas was appointed agent of the Omaha Indian Agency and held that position from 1864-1868.

Furnas' one term as governor was not particularly successful, and feeling that he didn't have a chance at re-election, he withdrew from active participation in politics at the end of his term, spending the rest of his life in the nursery business and as a proponent of better agricultural methods in Nebraska.

He was instrumental in creating the State Board of Agriculture and served as its first president and later as its secretary for approximately two decades. The latter position consisted almost entirely of planning and arranging for the Nebraska State Fair held annually in September. In addition, he served as a commissioner to several national and international expositions. He was an active participant in several agricultural, horticultural and other related

organizations and served as president of the International Fairs and Expositions and the American Fair Association. Furnas was one of the organizers of the Nebraska State Historical Society and for many years served as its president.

Robert W. Furnas is the author of numerous agricultural pamphlets, several articles in Proceedings and Collections of the Nebraska State Historical Society and editor of Arbor Day.

Furnas and Mary Elizabeth McComas were married on October 29, 1845. They became the parents of eight children. Mrs. Furnas died on April 1, 1897. He then married Susannah Emswiler Jameson on December 25, 1899.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of forty-one manuscript boxes and oversize material arranged into eight subgroups: 1) Incoming Correspondence, 1844-1906, includes chronological index to incoming correspondence, 1881-1905; 2) Outgoing Correspondence, 1845-1904; 3) Journals and Ledgers, 1864-1883; 4) Documents on microfilm, 1844-1905; 5) Scrapbooks, 1872-1904; 6) Accounting Records, 1862-1878; 7) Furnas Family Personal, 1832-1906; and 8) Miscellaneous, 1850-1904.

Subgroups One through Four exist on 13 reels of 35mm microfilm. The collection was microfilmed by the Nebraska State Historical Society under the auspices of the National Historical Publications Commission, 1965-1967. A guide to this microfilm collection can be found in the file for Furnas shelved in the Reference Room. Patrons are encouraged to use the microfilm edition. Consult reference staff if there is a necessity to use the original records. A printed index to correspondence in the collection, 1881-1899 is available.

Subgroup Five contains 26 scrapbooks kept by Furnas, 1872-1904, on a variety of subjects including Agriculture, the silver issue, politics, grasshoppers, fairs and expositions, and prominent men of the United States, 1880-1894.

Subgroup Six contains accounting records for the office of Governor, 1873; the 2<sup>nd</sup> Nebraska Vol. Cavalry, 1862-1864; the Omaha Indian Agency, 1864-1866; fairs and expositions; and personal accounts, 1863-1895.

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Subgroup Seven contains miscellaneous correspondence and records kept by Robert Furnas. They concern his business records, his term as Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture, as Commissioner of Agriculture, and his term as Governor.

Subgroup Eight includes Newspaper clippings, 1850-1904; Printed Matter, 1834-1902; ledgers, account books; and personal memorabilia.

## DESCRIPTION

### film

#### **SUBGROUP ONE            INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE, 1844-1906**

- B. 01A            Index Book: Chronological Index to Incoming  
Correspondence  
Feb. 1881 thru Feb. 1905
- B.01            Incoming Correspondence, 1844 - September 1872  
includes a prospectus of the Nebraska Farmer, 1857  
Railroad affairs  
Recommendations of Furnas for Supt of Indian Affairs  
letter from Brig. Gen. Sully re Indian depredations  
letter W. P. Dole, Commissioner of Indian Affairs,  
re trade with the Indians  
information on Winnebago and Omaha Indians
- B.02            Incoming Correspondence, 1872 - June 1874  
includes appointments as Governor, county  
organization; insane warrants; and extraditions  
information on Governor's race of 1872  
Congratulations  
Libel Suit  
Nebraska State Board of Agriculture  
U.S. Land Grants for Nebraska  
Coal Explorations  
Immigration  
Sioux Indians  
Militia Organization in Red Willow County

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B.03 Incoming Correspondence, July 1874 - Dec. 1883  
concerns agriculture, the university, Nebraska  
State Horticultural Society, Dixon County history  
correspondents include Thomas P. Kennard; J. W. A.  
Roberts; J. C. McBride (Nebr Farmer Magazine);  
Albinus Nance; E. B. Fairfield (UNL)





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**SUBGROUP FOUR DOCUMENTS ON MICROFILM, 1844-1905**

NOTE: This box has been rearranged since microfilming the collection which has poor organization on microfilm. records within folders are filmed chronologically and not in this order.

- B.15 (cont) Certificate appointing Furnas Commissioner to Chicago World's Fair, 1890  
Documentation by Furnas of Cross found near Peru and Brownville in 1860
- f.2 State Board of Agriculture, 1873-1895 including some documents from other folders material concerning state fairs, contracts for fairgrounds, premium classes and winners lists (1880's); and annual reports of the president.
- f.3 Brownville Advertiser  
Agreement to publish newspaper in Brownville, Apr. 1856  
Transfer of property of paper, 1870
- f.4 Brownville and Hamburg RR Co.  
Articles of Incorporation  
Brownville & Hamburg RR Co. 1871  
Articles of agreement, Brownville and Hamburg RR Co. (typed copy), 1871  
Resolutions, Brownville & Hamburg RR Co.
- f.5 Brownville and Missouri River Transfer Co.  
Minutes & subscriptions, 1871-1872
- f.6 Brownville, Ft. Kearney & Pacific RR Co., 1870-72  
Articles of Incorporation and agreements with Brownville Transfer Co. and City of Brownville; Agreement for construction, 1870
- f.7 Brownville Home Guards  
Bond concerning artillery for Brownville Home Guards, 1861

**SUBGROUP FOUR            DOCUMENTS ON MICROFILM, 1844-1905**

- B.15 (cont)
- f.8            Brownville Hydraulic, Gas Light & Coke Company  
                  Act to incorporate Brownville Hydraulic  
                  Gas Light and Coke Co., Jan. 1860
  
  - f.9            Brownville Stone and Stone Coal Company  
                  Articles of Incorporation, 1857
  
  - f.10           Burches (E.H.) and Company  
                  Dissolution of Co-partnership  
                  E. H. Burches & Co., 1867  
                  Agreement re financial obligation of  
                  Furnas and Burches, 1867
  
  - f.11           Educational Lands and Funds  
                  Clear List of Lands, 1874  
                  Resolution for inspection of public  
                  buildings and grounds, Jan. 1883  
                  Resolution for inspection of  
                  institutions, Feb. 1883
  
  - f.12           First Indian Regiment  
                  Contract of Andrew S. Holladay as medical  
                  officer for 1<sup>st</sup> Indian Regt, June 1862  
                  Documentation of Union engagements  
                  concerning Indian Regiments,  
                  Kansas Regiments, and Cherokee Indians  
                  on the Missouri & Arkansas rivers
  
  - f.13           First Nebraska Cavalry  
                  Order to seize Govt property at Omaha  
                  Agency, N.T., 1/29/1866
  
  - f.14           Second Nebraska Cavalry  
                  Muster Roll, 1862-1863  
                  Receipt for supplies, 12/13/1862  
                  Affidavits re issuing revolvers, 1863



**SUBGROUP FOUR            DOCUMENTS ON MICROFILM, 1844-1905**

B.15 (cont)

- f.15            Miscellaneous Indian Rolls
  - List of Omaha Chiefs n.d.
  - Roll of Winnebago at Omaha Reserve  
March & June 1864
  - Arrivals at Agency June 13
  - List of Half Breed Patents  
Nemaha Agency, Dec. 1865
  - Census, 1864
  
- f.16            Indian Treaties and Resolutions, 1864-1866
  - Appropriation for treaty of March 1863
  - Agreement, Furnas w/ John Patrick, Omaha  
for supplies, 4/7/1864
  - Treaty with Omaha Tribe, 3/6/1865
  - Appointment of "No Knife" as chief of  
Omaha Tribe, 1866
  
- f.17            Insanity Warrants, 1872-1873
- f.18            Ketchum, Charles, 1874 (concerning pardon)
- f.19            Land Warrants and Deeds (Furnas Family)  
1856-1895
- f.20            Legal, 1860-1892 & n.d.
  - Gdn. of Fontanelle minors (p.3), 1860
  - Timber Claim affidavit, n.d.
  - Mary Sic vs. Arthur Furnas, 1872
  - Isaac N. Stewart vs. Furnas, 1876
  - Affidavits on birth of foal "Bashaw" 1885
  - Call for receiver of State Bank of  
Nebraska, Crete, Sept 2, 1892
  - "Questions that the people of Brownville  
Would Like to have answered,"  
concerning estate of father of  
John S. Furnas, n.d.
  
- f.21            Legislature, 1872-1883
- f.22            Legislation
  - S298, n.d. concerning railroads
  - S.372, U.S. Senate (Brownville, Ft. Kearny  
and Pacific RR Co.), 1868

**SUBGROUP FOUR            DOCUMENTS ON MICROFILM, 1844-1905**

B.15 (cont)

f.22

Legislation

2/15/1869 draft of legislation (p.1 missing)  
concerning railroad land for internal  
improvements.

S680, U.S. Senate (Timber act), 1872

H.R.5359, U.S. regarding postage

"New School Laws of Nebraska," 1901

A bill for an act to vacate streets and  
alleys in Brownville, n.d.

f.23

Miscellaneous

Story of Nockamixon Stabbing case in  
Bridgeton Dist., 1855

California U.S. Senate contest of 1863

Report of H. Davis on RR Bridge, 1860's

Coroner's inquest on George G. Randall,  
Johnson County, June 1873

Acreage Report, Washington Co., 1878

Oath of William Adair, Commissioner, 1873

f.24

Omaha Indian Agency

Bond of James Miller for construction  
of steam mill at agency, 1859

f.25

Omaha Indian Agency Accounts, 1864-1865

mostly receipts for supplies to Indians

f.26

Omaha Indian Agency Accounts, 1866

f.27

Omaha Indian Agency Reports, 1864-1866

f.28

Omaha Indian Agency Rules & Regulations, 1864

f.29

Petitions, 1872-1881 & n.d.

Letter of recommendation for George W.

Whitehead, secy of Gov. James, 1872

Recommendation for John H. Alford

as Furnas' private secy, 12/2/1872

Petition for protection from Indians

Beaver Creek, 2/17/1873

Petitions for organization of Hitchcock

County, 1873

Petition for appointment of G. H. Black as

Registrar in Plattsmouth, 8/13/1873

**SUBGROUP FOUR DOCUMENTS ON MICROFILM, 1844-1905**

- B.15 (cont)  
f.29 (cont) Petitions  
Petition for clemency of John C. Phelps  
for crime of manslaughter, 5/27/1873  
Petition for pardon of Harvey Sage, 1874  
Petition for organization of Keith Co., 1873  
Petition against proclamation for  
organization of Furnas County, 1873  
Petition for organization of Valley Co. 1873  
Recommendation of J. R. Maltby to  
Centennial Convention, 2/23/1874  
Petition for relief, Furnas Co., 1874  
Petition for I. J. Hillman, Feb. 1874  
Petition for relief, Harlan Co., Mar 1874  
Petition for relief of M. O'Sullivan, 1874  
Recommendations for Furnas as Commissioner  
of Agriculture, 1881  
Valuation of Land - Young Loan 1886  
Recommendation of E. E. Ebright as warden  
of State Penitentiary, n.d.  
Pledge list for Furnas to go to  
American Pomological Society, n.d.  
Petition for removal of Mr. Munger(?)  
as registrar at Omaha, n.d.  
Recommendation for appointment of  
H. C. Dawson to Board of Livestock  
Sanitary Commissioners  
Petition for organization of county south  
of Dawson Co. and west of Phelps Co.  
Petition for payments by U.S. Treasury to  
State of Nebraska, n.d.
- f.30 Removal of Capitol  
Resolution concerning removal of  
Territorial Capitol, 1857  
Testimony concerning capitol dispute
- f.31 St. Louis & Nebraska Trunk RR, 1869-1872

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**SUBGROUP FOUR DOCUMENTS ON MICROFILM, 1844-1905**

B.15 (cont)

f.32

Speeches

Speech on Immigration (23 pp. n.d.)  
(written in territorial period)  
Furnas Inaugural Address, 1873  
Nebraska Campaign of 1874  
(excerpts from Beatrice Express)  
Agricultural Address, 1874 Fair Tour  
"Nebraska's Inducements to Home Seekers  
and Home Builders," n.d.  
Speeches before Board of Agriculture  
1886-1887  
Address of the Pres. of the Historical  
Society, n.d. (typed copy)  
Further "Echoes of the Bounty Row,"  
Daily State Journal, n.d.  
"Some Suggestions as to Experiments with  
Wild Grasses," Charles E. Bessey n.d.  
State Farmers Alliance of Minnesota, n.d.  
Papers on tree varieties, n.d.

f.33

Standard Sugar Co., California, 1881  
Agreement, Robert Teare & Co., 1867

f.34

Teare (Robert) & Co.,  
Licenses to trade on Omaha Reservation,  
Robert Teare, 1864-1866  
Indians in acct with Robert Teare, 1866  
Agreement, Furnas & Teare, 1867

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**Robert W. Furnas Papers, 1844-1905 - Microfilm Record**

NOTE: Guide to microfilm collection is shelved with inventory  
in the reference room at 1500 R Street, Lincoln, NE

- Roll #1            Subgroup One, Box 1, Incoming Correspondence  
                      December 1844  
                      thru  
                      Subgroup One, Box 1, Incoming Correspondence  
                      September 1872
- Roll #2            Subgroup One, Box 2, Incoming Correspondence  
                      October 1872  
                      thru  
                      Subgroup One, Box 2, Incoming Correspondence  
                      June 1874
- Roll #3            Subgroup One, Box 3, Incoming Correspondence  
                      July 1874  
                      thru  
                      Subgroup One, Box 3, Incoming Correspondence  
                      December 1883
- Roll #4            Subgroup One, Box 4, Incoming Correspondence  
                      January 1884  
                      thru  
                      Subgroup One, Box 4, Incoming Correspondence  
                      April 1885
- Roll #5            Subgroup One, Box 5, Incoming Correspondence  
                      April 1885 cont.  
                      thru  
                      Subgroup One, Box 5, Incoming Correspondence  
                      September 1887
- Roll #6            Subgroup One, Box 6, Incoming Correspondence  
                      October 1887  
                      thru  
                      Subgroup One, Box 6, Incoming Correspondence  
                      March 1889



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**Robert W. Furnas Papers, 1844-1905 - Microfilm Record**

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Roll #13        Subgroup Four, Documents on Microfilm  
                  Miscellaneous Indian Rolls, 1864-1866  
                  thru  
                  Subgroup Four, Documents on Microfilm  
                  Miscellaneous (chronological), 1844-1905

NOTE: Filming Order for Box 15  
Original box reorganized after microfilming  
(see inventory for detailed listing of this box)

f.1            Miscellaneous Indian Rolls  
f.2            Miscellaneous Land Warrants & Deeds, 1856-1889  
f.3            Miscellaneous Speeches  
f.4            Miscellaneous Petitions, 1858-1866  
f.5            Miscellaneous Indian Treaties and Resolutions  
f.6            Legislation, 1868-1901 & n.d.  
f.7            Agreements and Resolutions  
f.8            unidentified (chronological misc. documents)  
f.9            Miscellaneous not identified (chronological)

**SUBGROUP FIVE            SCRAPBOOKS, 1872-1904**

B.16  
    v.1-3        1872-1873        Furnas-Omaha Herald Libel Suit,  
                  Agricultural reports, editorial  
                  from the Herald

B.17  
    v.4-5        1873-1874        Agriculture stats, silver issue

B.18  
    v.6-7        1873-1874        Furnas-Omaha Herald Libel Suit,  
                  editorials on taxation,  
                  grasshopper invasion

B.19  
    v.8-9        1873-1875        Party politics, frontier life,  
                  state conventions







**SUBGROUP SIX ACCOUNTING RECORDS, 1862-1878**

**SERIES ONE OFFICIAL FINANCIAL RECORDS, 1862-1878**

- B.33 Nebraska State Board of Agriculture  
Cancelled Checks & Entry blanks
- B.29 f.1 Omaha Indian Agency Reports, 1864-1866  
f.2-10 Omaha Indian Agency  
Quarterly Reports, 1864-1866
- OV v.1 Omaha Indian Agency Account Ledger, 1864  
v.2 Omaha Indian Agency Account Ledger, 1865  
v.3 Omaha Indian Agency Account Ledger, 1866  
v.4 Omaha Indian Agency Ledger, 1864-1866
- B.30 f.1 Omaha Indian Agency Reports, 1864-1866  
f.2 Omaha Indian Agency, 1865-1866  
f.3 Receipt Books & Cancelled Checks  
f.4 Indian Census & Annuity Requests, 1865-1866  
f.5 Cancelled Checks, 1865-1866  
f.6-12 U.S. Vouchers, A-W, 1864-1866
- B.31 Robert Teare and Co., 1864-1866  
Furnas Pay Stubs, 1864-1865  
Teare Accounts, 1864-1866  
Indian Vouchers for Goods, 1865-1866  
V.1 Indian Account Ledger, 1864-1865  
V.2 Indian Account Ledger, June-July n.d.  
V.2 Teare Account ledger, 1865-1866

**SUBGROUP SIX ACCOUNTING RECORDS, 1862-1878**

**SERIES TWO FURNAS PERSONAL ACCOUNTING RECORDS,  
1853-1901**

- B.32 f.1-2 Personal Accounts, 1853-1901  
f.3 Account & Bank Books, 1853-1886  
f.4 Orphans School Fund, 1870-1888  
f.5 Taxes, 1858-1879  
f.6 Bank Statements, 1889-1891  
f.7 State Bank, Crete Report, 1892
- B.33 Cancelled Checks, Furnas Family, 1870-1905

**SUBGROUP SIX ACCOUNTING RECORDS, 1862-1878**

**SERIES TWO FURNAS PERSONAL ACCOUNTING RECORDS,  
1853-1901**

B.39 Account Ledger, 1853-1860  
Account Ledger, 1858

**SUBGROUP SEVEN FURNAS PERSONAL PAPERS, 1856-1906**

B.34 f.1 Miscellaneous Partial Documents  
(may compliment records on microfilm)  
f.2 Transcribed correspondence, 1871-1881  
f.3 Misc. correspondence, 1875-1896 & n.d.  
f.4 Brownville School, 1857-1873  
f.5 Governor Furnas misc., 1873-1874  
f.6 Insane Warrants, 1873  
f.7 Nebraska State Board of Agriculture  
1884-1906  
f.8 Brownville Advertiser  
f.9 Commissioner of Agriculture, 1881  
f.10 Fairs and Expositions  
f.11 Insurance Papers, 1868-1877  
f.12 Land Records, 1857-1886  
(see also Box 15 on microfilm)  
f.13 Maps (non Nebraska)

**SUBGROUP EIGHT MISCELLANEOUS, 1832-1906**

B.35-36 Newspaper Clippings, 1850-1904  
B.37 f.1 Misc. Notes and Reports, 1857-1882 & n.d.  
concern family history, agriculture,  
horticulture.  
f.2 Printed matter, 1834-1904  
concerning railroad fares, agriculture,  
horticulture, religion  
f.3 Printed matter, 1873-1902  
f.4 Printed matter, misc. n.d.  
mostly pamphlets on agriculture

