



Homestead National Historical Park

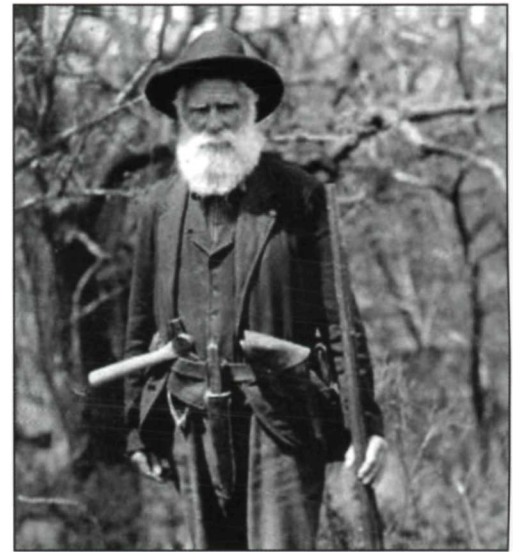
The Not-So Junior Ranger Program



Paule Renn and his sister, Eastern Montana. Circa. 1918
Photograph by Evelyn Cameron
Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT

Explore, Learn, Protect Be a Not-So-Junior Ranger

Homestead National Historical Park was established to commemorate the Homestead Act of 1862. This law offered citizens, and people who promised to become citizens, up to 160 acres of “free land.” All they had to do was be 21 or the head of a household, farm the land, make improvements on it, build a home, and live there for five years. The Homestead Act had major impacts on the United States, including changes in immigration and migration, changes to Native Americans, and changes in industry and agriculture. This National Park Service site, located on one of the first homesteads claimed under the Act, the Daniel Freeman claim, memorializes the lives and accomplishments of all homesteaders and the changes to the land and to people brought by the Homestead Act of 1862.



Daniel Freeman

You can find out more about **Homestead National Historical Park** by becoming a **Not-So-Junior Ranger**. Your mission is to explore, learn, protect, and have fun while visiting Homestead. To become a **Not-So-Junior Ranger**:

1) Take care of the park by following these guidelines:

- A. Explore the displays, but please don't touch.*
- B. Discover the tallgrass prairie, but please don't pick plants or collect things.*
- C. Help keep **Homestead National Historical Park** clean. Put litter in its place.*
- D. Avoid ticks, poison ivy, and stinging nettles by staying on the trails.*
- E. Tell your family and friends about **Homestead National Historical Park!***

2) Learn about the cultural and natural history of Homestead National Historical Park by **completing four to seven (4-7) activities** in this book.

3) Take your finished book to a Park Ranger at the Homestead Heritage or Education Centers for review and receive your award!

Homestead National Historical Park is administered by the National Park Service. For more information, visit our website: www.nps.gov/home

Or, contact:
Superintendent
8523 W State Hwy 4
Beatrice, NE 68310
(402)223-3514

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**Official Not-So-Junior
Ranger**

Experience Your America
Revised 2021

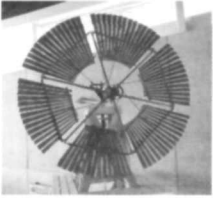


Homestead Scavenger Hunt - Trivia

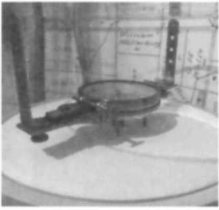
There are many fun places to explore while at **Homestead National Historical Park** such as the Homestead Heritage and Education Centers, the historic Palmer-Epard Cabin, Freeman School and the trails on the tallgrass prairie. As you visit and explore, look for the items and photos below and answer the questions. Have fun exploring !



What was a 'Cold Roller Mangle' used for? Watch a video to learn how it was used (ask a Ranger to show the video).



Why was the windmill important to Homesteaders?



What is the instrument pictured here? _____
How did Homesteaders know what land area they could stake as their claim?



Explain the historical origins of the Homestead Act and the role of Abraham Lincoln:



Visit the Palmer-Epard Cabin. What was the size of the cabin? _____
How many people in the family lived in this cabin? _____



Who made the first Homestead Claim? _____

Who was the last Homesteader? _____

What were the years that the Homestead Act remained in effect? _____



Traveling in the Footsteps of Homesteaders

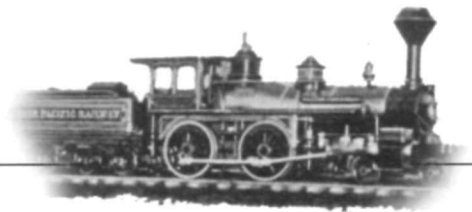
Homesteaders came from areas within the United States while others immigrated here from countries around the world.

About how many people are descendants of Homesteaders?

How many acres of land were Homesteaded? _____

How many states had Homestead claims? _____

From how many countries did people immigrate to the United States to Homestead?



By what means did Homesteaders travel to reach an area to stake their claim?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What kinds of animals, birds, and plants might they have encountered while they traveled across the Tallgrass Prairie?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____



Start the Journey to Your Homestead

Immigrants coming to the United States to homestead often had to travel through *Ellis Island* in *New York Harbor* as part of the process to gain entry into America. What obstacles or unfamiliar animals might the new immigrants encounter on their way to a new homestead here in Nebraska?



How Long Did It Take

In the early days, people rode trains, walked, or rode on wagons pulled by animals to get to their new homestead. If you had to make your way from New York City to Nebraska in the 1870s, as many immigrants did, you would have to travel

1,295 miles.

Between walking and riding, if you traveled 4 miles per hour, 10 hours a day, how many hours and days would it take you to travel that distance?

Hours

Days



Crowded Cabin Word Search

One of the first tasks a homesteader had to do when they arrived on their claim was to build a home. Can you find the words in the puzzle below, of the things a homesteader might need in their cabin? (tip: Visit the **Palmer-Epard Cabin** at the **Heritage Center**).

C	O	T	A	S	N	A	G	B	L	K	X	B	V	G	J	U	M	D	Q	S	Z	Z	H	D	Q	S	I	R	M
Y	M	H	U	X	J	K	K	W	P	H	Y	R	G	K	W	R	P	Z	R	R	L	X	S	I	K	M	V	O	Y
I	A	T	O	P	R	E	B	M	A	H	C	C	D	D	L	A	I	I	P	K	Y	P	V	W	J	X	G	T	G
U	H	U	A	Z	S	R	I	A	T	S	I	U	V	C	T	F	V	L	U	C	H	V	T	K	E	C	K	B	T
G	R	P	H	B	H	O	T	M	E	U	H	P	T	E	P	Z	Y	G	R	H	V	K	U	L	E	I	K	J	E
C	B	V	T	T	L	S	C	O	N	C	E	B	C	E	V	M	M	Q	U	U	F	Q	L	C	Q	L	B	M	E
B	Q	P	Q	I	J	E	V	O	T	S	D	O	O	W	Q	K	B	U	O	Q	Y	A	Q	L	M	T	N	N	D
G	A	N	W	U	K	N	U	R	T	D	H	A	B	A	E	P	F	L	U	B	X	L	X	T	H	H	L	D	K
J	H	J	M	D	I	E	H	B	V	W	W	R	M	T	R	I	A	H	C	G	W	B	Q	B	Z	N	F	S	H
G	I	N	G	F	W	L	P	M	R	B	E	D	T	C	P	D	R	W	J	J	P	O	H	U	A	J	W	H	Z
H	X	D	C	O	K	A	T	T	E	V	K	L	P	D	I	Z	D	F	M	L	U	F	Y	A	P	H	I	L	Z
E	N	I	H	C	A	M	G	N	I	W	E	S	R	V	A	K	C	P	Y	Z	U	U	T	M	L	K	F	K	A
U	D	U	T	C	U	P	J	T	F	J	B	M	U	U	T	S	M	S	D	R	U	R	X	J	O	V	K	K	H
M	B	Q	J	J	N	L	Q	O	U	C	J	K	S	N	B	X	P	W	B	Z	I	Z	Z	Q	K	R	M	P	L
I	O	U	Y	T	P	R	E	M	G	J	L	B	Z	D	J	P	J	G	X	X	E	W	Y	I	H	K	U	L	G

BED BROOM CHAMBER POT CUPBOARD WASHBOARD CHAIR
STAIRS PATENT QUILT WOODSTOVE SCONCE KETTLE TABLE
TRUNK SEWING MACHINE KEROSENE LAMP



Visit the Palmer-Epard Cabin and see if you can spot all of these answers.



Farming on the Homestead

The Homestead Act unleashed an agricultural revolution. For thousands of years people relied on animals and their own strength to work the land. But in 50 years, from 1860 to 1910, all that changed. Learn about farming equipment and agricultural changes brought about by the Homestead Act by visiting the *farm implement displays* at the Education Center, the Palmer-Epard Cabin, and the *National Homesteading Museum* at the Heritage Center, and answer the questions below.



In what year was the McCormick Reaper invented?

Animal and people power were replaced with what?

What farm crop was “king” in the Midwest?

What hand tool was used for threshing grain?

What farming tool loosened soil around plants and removed weeds?

How many miles would a homesteader walk to plow 10 acres of farmland?



How the Homesteader Found A Homestead - Part 1

Before the **Homestead Act** became law on January 1, 1863, the *Government Land Office* was busy surveying America. In what was called the *Public Land Survey System (PLSS)*, surveyors began dividing land (**Aliquot System**) into smaller portions based on defined parcels or (**Cadastral Survey**) boundaries.

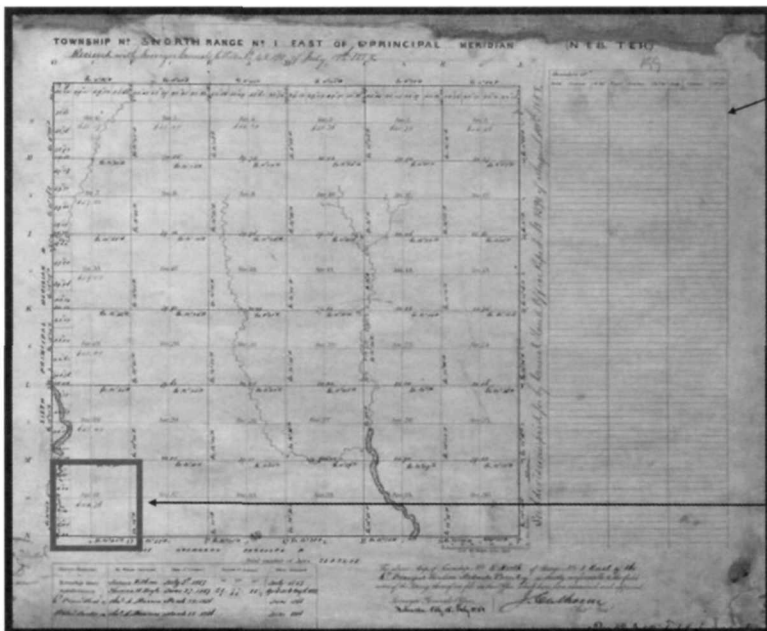
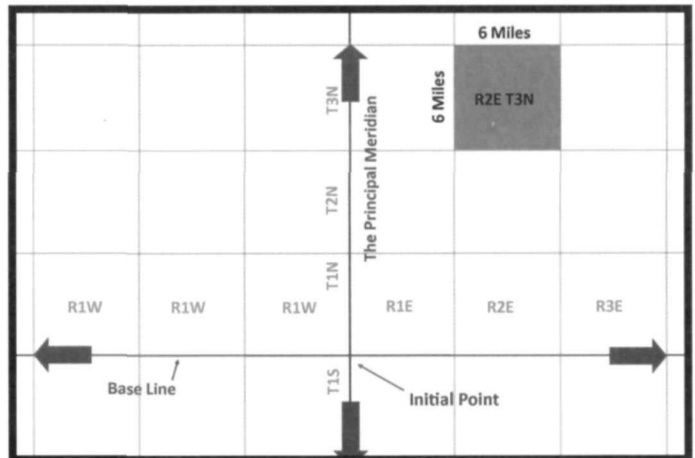
Every PLSS survey began with an **initial point** which was often arbitrary. Through an initial point running East and West was the **base line** and was always parallel to a line of **latitude**. From the initial point and running North and South there was a vertical line and column of townships which was the **Principal Meridian**, and was always parallel to a line of **longitude**.

The first divided portion of land was called a **township** which was approximately 6 miles square containing 36 sections. Some townships were laid out smaller than 36 sections when barriers, such as rivers or canyons, blocked the way.



The aliquot system started with two known reference features - **latitude** and **longitude**.

Through an initial point running East and West was the **base line**. Running North and South there was a vertical line and column of townships which was the **Principal Meridian**.



No claim registration yet!

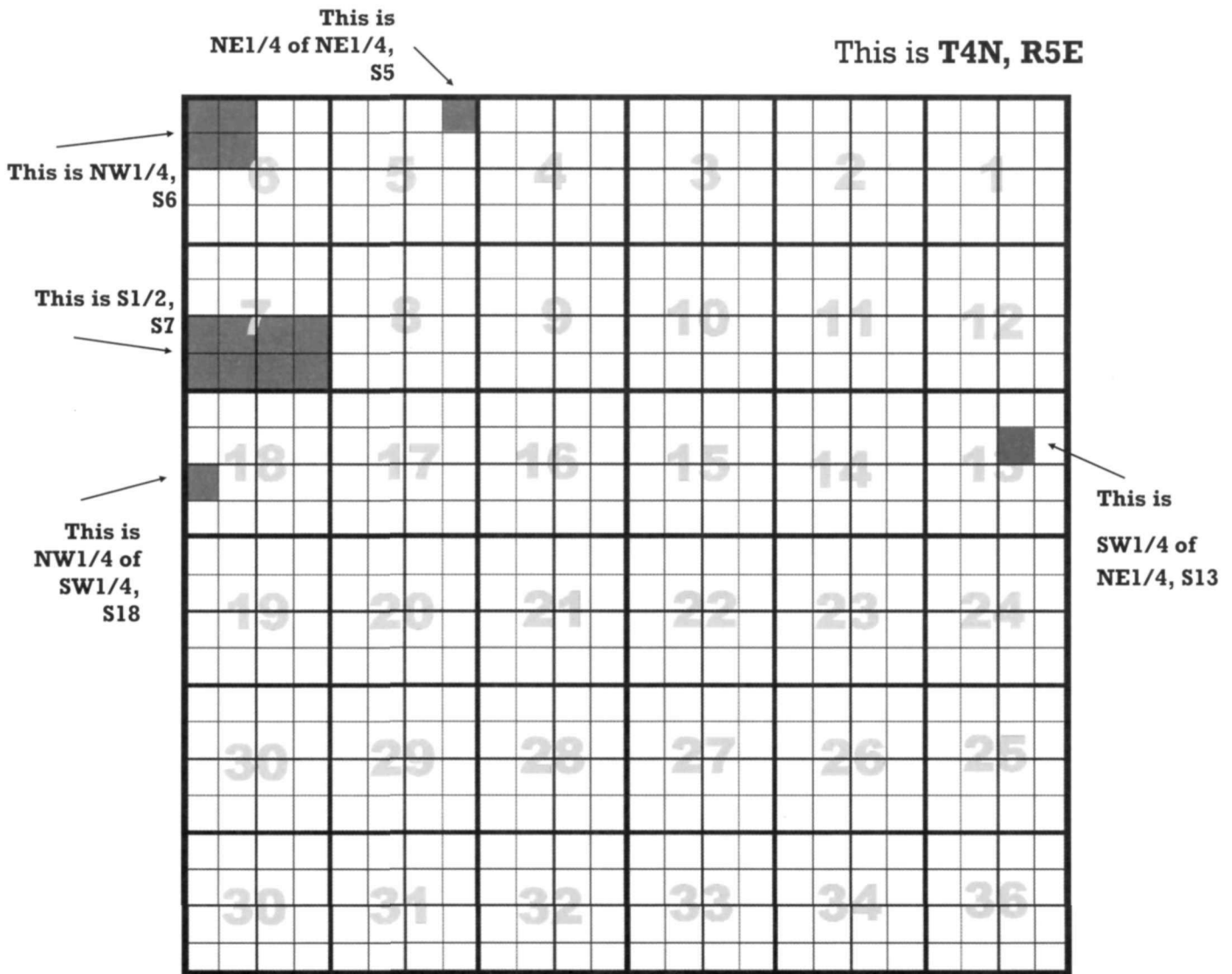
This is the plat map (Range 1E, Township 3N and Section 31 - legally described as R1E, T3N, S31) of land sections in the Nebraska Territory in what was to become Saline County, Nebraska. The survey was filed in **July of 1858**.

This section would eventually become the home location of **Tobias, Nebraska**.



How the Homesteader Found A Homestead - Part 2

If you were an immigrant, farmer, woman, or freed slave you were eligible to file a claim for a 160 acre homestead immediately after the Homestead Act became law. The process would start at the nearest Government Land Office (GLO) where you would meet the Land Office Clerk, locate the available areas (usually in 40 acre tracts), and file your claim on application forms.



Locate and shade the homestead claim in T4N (Township), R5E (Range):
S1/2 of NW1/4, and NE1/4 of NW1/4, and SW1/4 of NE1/4, S26, T4N, R5E

← Hint: Work backwards



Hidden Homestead Word Scramble

As you explore **Homestead National Historical Park**, and uncover various facts about the Homestead Act of 1862, consider the impact of this legislation on the United States and the world. Over the 123 years the act was in effect, people came from all over the world for the chance to own land; marginalized groups were empowered; technology revolutionized agriculture and industry; people fought for liberties and freedom; and the land was changed forever. Start your exploration by unscrambling the words below and discover interesting facts about the Homestead Act of 1862 and **Homestead National Historical Park**.

1. **MANLANOCAILBHR**

I was the President who signed the Homestead Act of 1862.

2. **NALADRINEFEME**

I was one of the very first homesteaders in the country and I lived on my homestead claim near Beatrice, Nebraska for 45 years.

3. **RLGSATALSREIRAPI**

I was once found across the 140 million acres of the Great Plains and I am an important restoration project of Homestead National Historical Park.

4. **ATPNET**

Once a homesteader "proved up", this is what they received.

5. **IINL3OL9M**

It is estimated there are this many of us descended from homesteaders.

6. **DNAAMRMEICRE**

The Homestead Act made possible the realization of this; an ethos that all people have the opportunity to be prosperous and successful through hard work.

7. **EONRAAOGGSE**

I was a tree used as fencing material and my young shoots were woven together to make me a living fence.

8. **RARCTILOML**

In 1862 the Homestead Act, Pacific Railways Act, and this Act were passed to encourage settlement of the West.

9. **!LEDFNRAE**

This was the homesteading cry!

Background Photo: Pioneer Home of the Wickstrom Family, 1891
Wisconsin Historical Society
Division of Library Archives



Where the Buffalo Roam

American Bison, also called Buffalo, are our nation's *National Mammal* and the largest land animal in North America. They can run 35 miles per hour and keep that pace for half an hour!

Did you know ?

Before settlements of modern civilization, about 30 - 60 million Bison roamed across North America.

Full-grown Bison bulls stand about 6.5 feet and can weigh up to 2,000 pounds.

Bison can jump 6 feet vertically and more than 7 feet horizontally.

Bison are powerful swimmers.

Bison calves are born in the spring and weigh 30-70 pounds.

Wallowing behavior of Bison is important in grooming, sensory stimulation alleviating skin irritation.

But the westward movement of settlers also affected the lives of many people. To the immigrants, the Homestead Act and the promise of free land was a dream come true. To the American Indians, the land was home.

What did homesteading mean to different people?

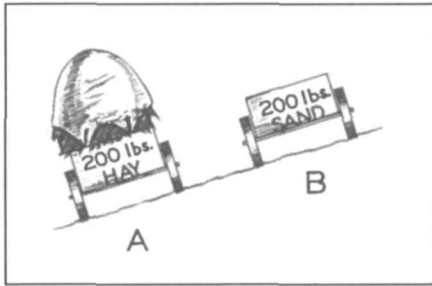
[*Tip*—See the "Opportunity and Displacement" exhibit at the Heritage Center.]

Write your answer in the box below!

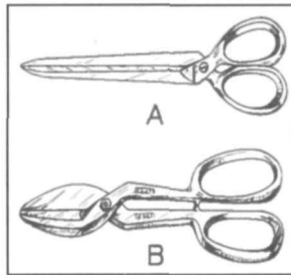


Not Interested in Farming? How About Working in Industry?

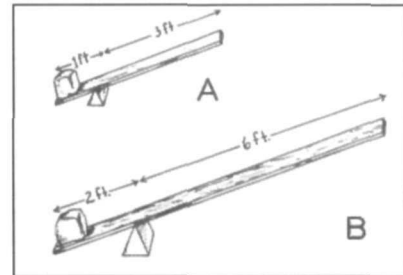
The Homestead Act of 1862 affected our nation and the world in many ways. Industrial sites in different regions produced tools, equipment and materials that improved the lives of homesteaders. Many individuals who did not find success with homesteading found success working in these factories. One of this area's major manufacturers of windmills was the *Dempster Mill Manufacturing Company*. Today, over 1/2 million historic *Dempster* documents are part of the museum collection at **Homestead National Historical Park**. Take the test workers had to take to gain employment at *Dempster*!



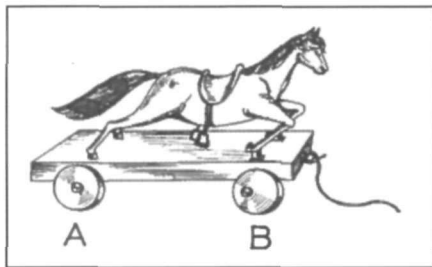
Which wagon is most likely to tip over on the hillside?
A B



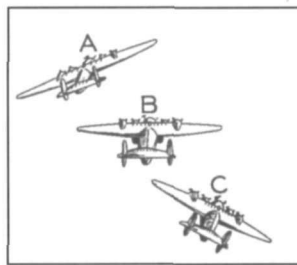
Which shear is best for cutting metal?
A B



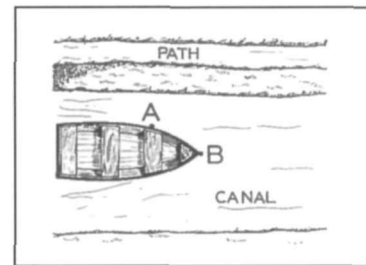
With which arrangement can a worker lift the heavier weight?
A B



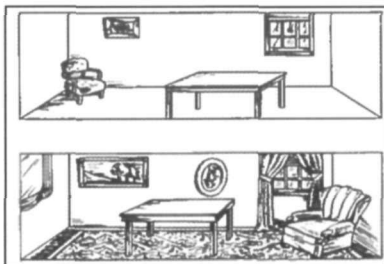
Which end of the toy horse will buck the most when pulled across the floor?
A B



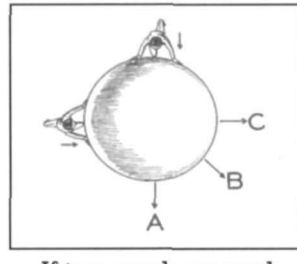
Which airplane is turning to the right?
A B C



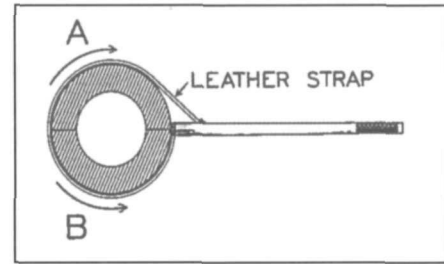
To pull this boat along the canal at which point would you attach the rope?
A B



Which room will have more of an echo?
A B



If two workers push against the pushball in the direction shown, in which direction will it go?
A B C

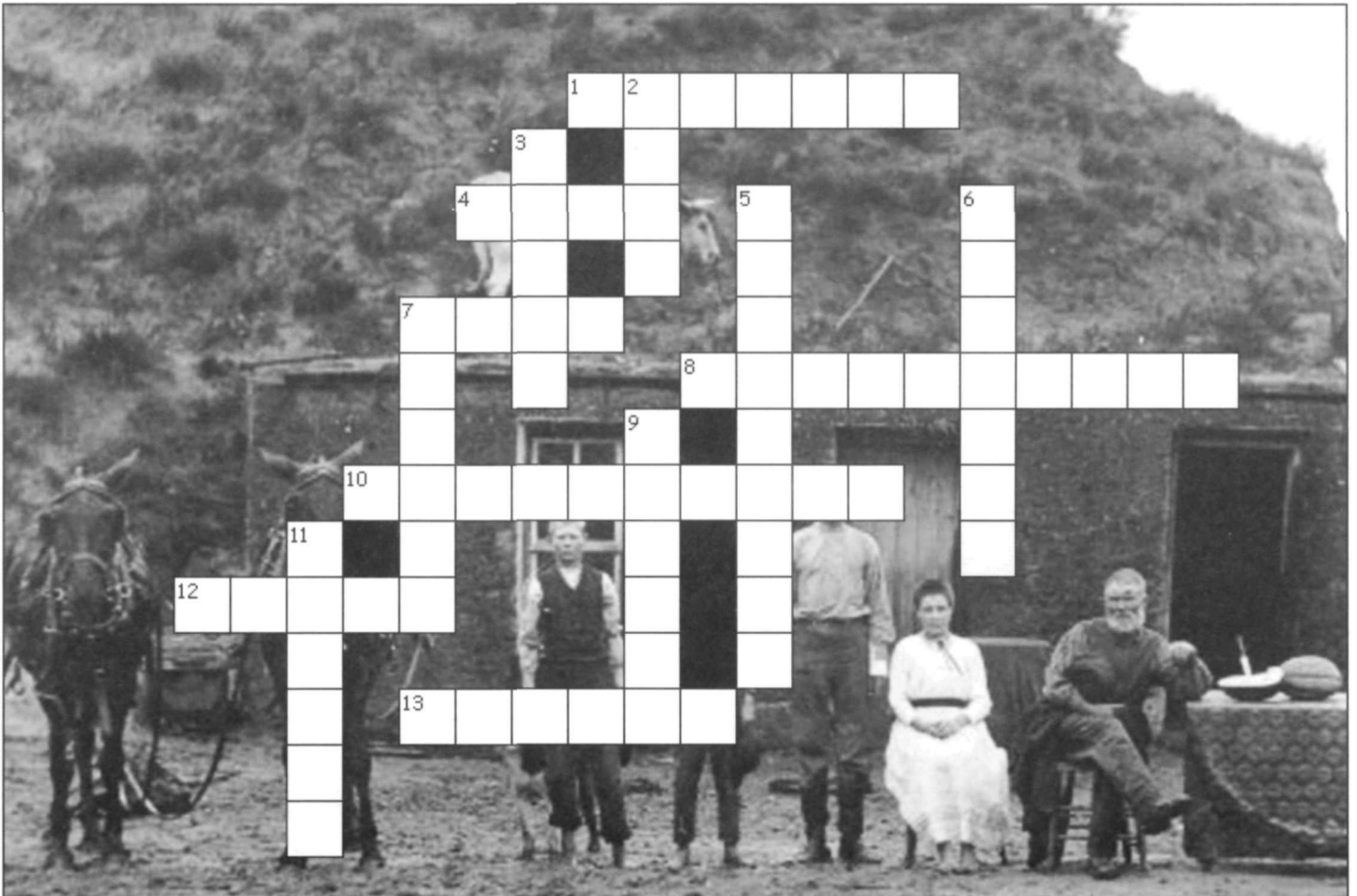


In which direction will the wrench turn this pipe?
A B



Homestead Crossword

We hope you have had fun learning about the Homestead Act of 1862 and homesteading! Test your knowledge by completing the crossword puzzle below (*a hint, you can find many of the answers to this crossword puzzle in the Homestead Heritage Center*).



Across

1. These were swarming insects that invaded homesteads.
4. The number of years a homesteader was required to stay on their homestead.
7. This was used to break the tough sod of the prairie.
8. These were used before television and radio to promote products. (two words)
10. This eased back-breaking work for homesteaders.
12. This was grown to make flour for bread.
13. A churn was used to make this.

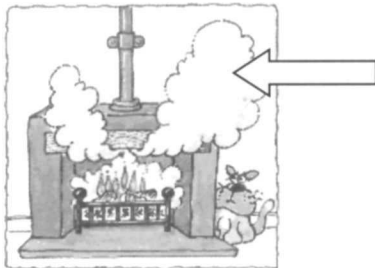
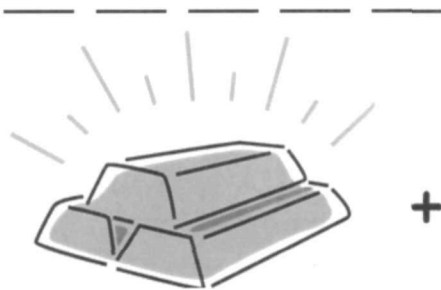
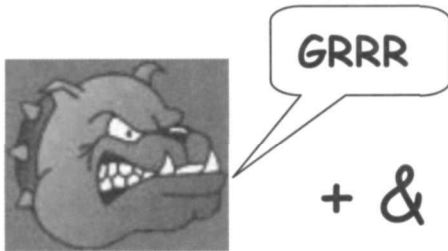
Down

2. Animals that were used to pull a plow.
3. 2000 pound animal that used to roam the American prairie.
5. Last name of the final homesteader.
6. Last name of the president who signed the Homestead Act of 1862.
7. A homesteader received this after proving up.
9. A type of homestead house.
11. This was invented by Cyrus McCormick.

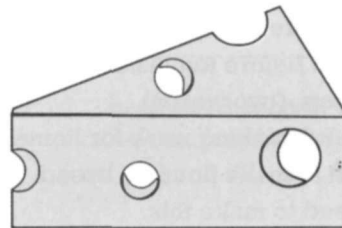


Where have YOU been?

Homestead National Historical Park is a unit of the *National Park Service* (NPS). The mission of the NPS is to preserve the history, plants, and animals of over 400 different sites around the country for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations! Each NPS site tells a different piece of the story of the United States. The “rebus writing” (pictures instead of words) below names several other NPS sites. Have you visited them?



r +



Hint: Say the *r* slowly, and the image fast!

Learn More! Check out your National Parks online at www.nps.gov

GPS Prairie Walk



Homesteaders could stake a claim on government surveyed land. The rectangular survey system was enacted by the Land Ordinance Act of 1785. Now known as the Public Land Survey System, this system divided the western lands into grid-shaped townships and sections. Surveyors would use compass and sextant to map out grids across the country.

Today surveying is done with the use of satellites and Global Positioning Systems, or GPS. At Homestead National Historical Park, you can find history using GPS units.

*To participate in this activity, go to the Education Center and provide a driver's license to borrow a GPS unit. The ranger there will give you instructions on how to proceed. Once you are done, the license will be returned! (If you have your own GPS unit, the coordinates are listed beside each stop sign. Set your datum on your unit to WGS 84.) **Have fun!***

**N40°17'24.6"
W96°49'55.2"**



Go to waypoint *Cabin*

1. Who lived here and when did they live here? _____

2. What did most homesteaders use to build houses?

**N40°17'19.1"
W90°50'00.2"**



Go to waypoint *Plaza*

1. Some birds only live in prairies. Name two you might see at
Homestead National Historical Park.

2. About how many years did it take to build up the top two inches of
topsoil in this area? _____

3. Who was the last homesteader and how did he travel to his claim?

**N40°17'20.8"
W96°50'09.9"**



Go to waypoint *Water*

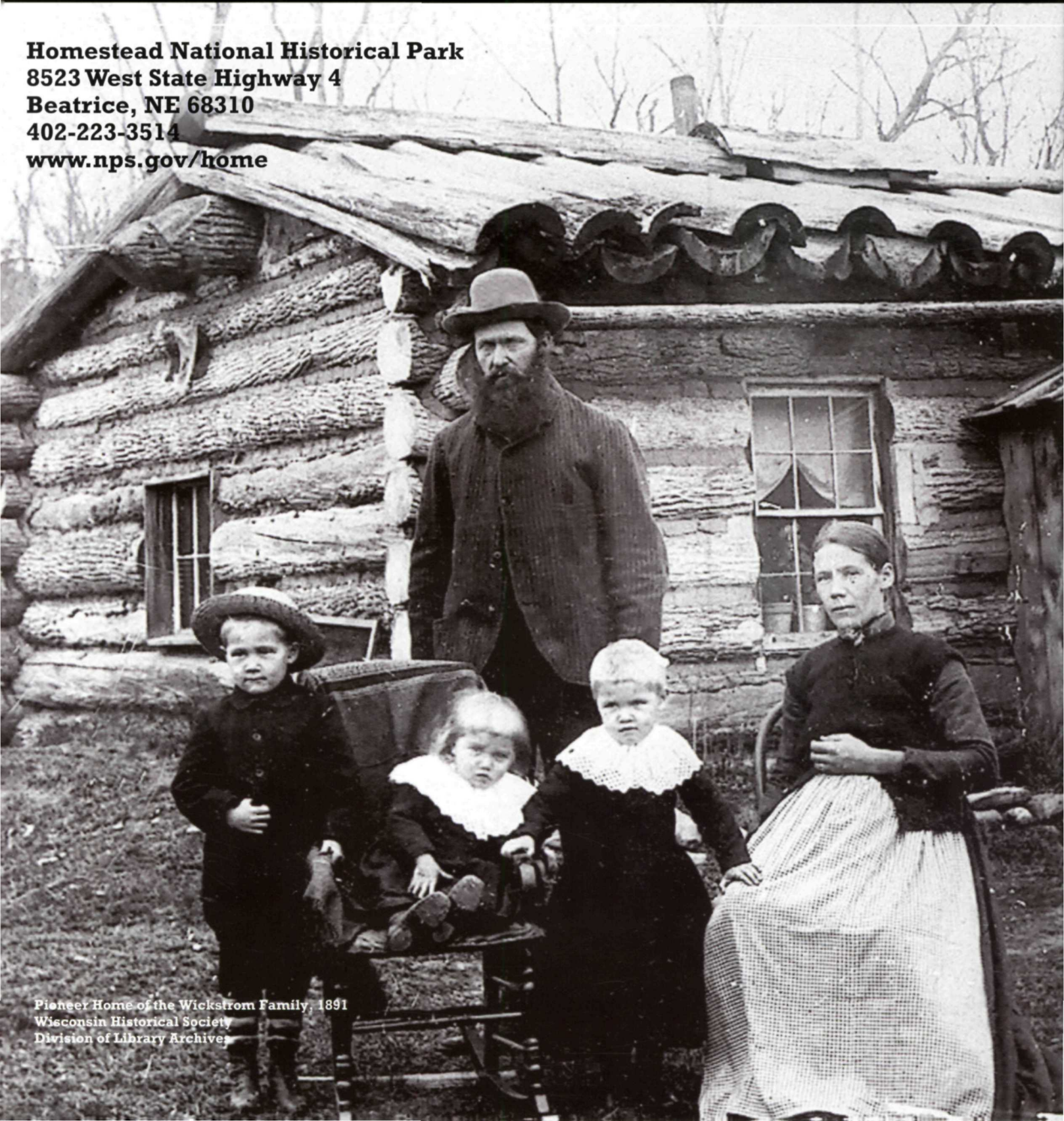
1. When did windmills arrive in Nebraska? _____

2. What makes it possible to farm lands that otherwise could not
produce crops? _____



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Homestead National Historical Park
8523 West State Highway 4
Beatrice, NE 68310
402-223-3514
www.nps.gov/home



Pioneer Home of the Wickstrom Family, 1891
Wisconsin Historical Society
Division of Library Archives