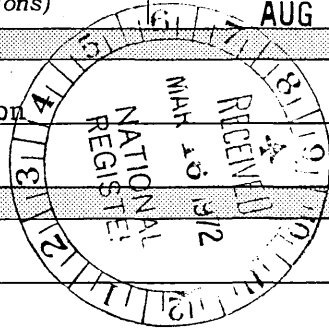


1/22/73

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Nebraska	
COUNTY: Douglas	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	AUG 25 1972



1. NAME

COMMON:
Joslyn (George A.) Mansion

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
3902 Davenport Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Omaha

STATE: Nebraska CODE: 31 COUNTY: Douglas CODE: 055

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Society of Liberal Arts, Joslyn Art Museum

STREET AND NUMBER:
22nd and Dodge Streets

CITY OR TOWN: Omaha STATE: Nebraska CODE: 31

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Register of Deeds, Douglas County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:
1700 Farnum Street

CITY OR TOWN: Omaha STATE: Nebraska CODE: 31

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic Preservation in Nebraska

DATE OF SURVEY: 1971 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Nebraska State Historical Society

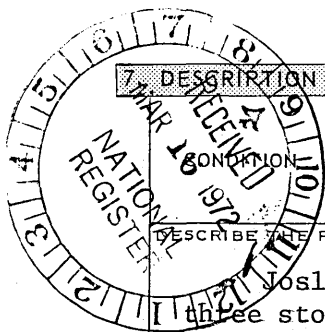
STREET AND NUMBER:
1500 "R" Street

CITY OR TOWN: Lincoln STATE: Nebraska CODE: 31

*First Nebraska Congressional District

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Nebraska	ENTRY NUMBER: AUG 25 1972	DATE: 1972
COUNTY: Douglas	FOR NPS USE ONLY	



DESCRIPTION

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed	
(Check One)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Altered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site
(Check One)	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Joslyn Castle characterizes the height of Victorian elegance. The three story mansion is of Scotch Baronial-Style architecture. It was built in 1903 at a cost of 500,000 dollars by the late George A. Joslyn, president of the prosperous Western Newspaper Union, and prominent real estate investor. It was designed by John McDonald, a successful Omaha architect.

The castle is constructed of silverdale limestone; most of which was shipped from Vermont, the Joslyns' native state. The stone was shipped in huge slabs which were then cut and formed on the site. The design was influenced by houses the Joslyns had seen in the Eastern United States. The plans were started after the architect had finished an inspection trip of the homes in Bar Harbor, Maine, and Newport, Rhode Island. The carriage house and stable, a two-story building repeating the Medieval Scotch Baronial architecture, sets to the rear of the castle.

Joslyn Castle contains thirty-five rooms, five baths, and three half-baths. The central portion rises four stories with flanking turrets on the southeast and northeast corners, and porte cochere on the east. While the Joslyns were there, the basement contained a bowling alley and billiard room.

The entrance, the most impressive as well as the best preserved section of the castle, is entered through an 18 hundred pound wrought iron door hung in a marble frame and costing 1500 dollars in 1902. The walls of the vestibule are mosaic and the ceiling is set with mother of pearl. This serves as an effective transition into the grandiose reception hall which rises one and a half stories and is elegantly finished in Spanish mahogany. A victorian, grand-staircase curves down vignetting a small alcove overlooking the conservatory. Finishing touches are made by a crystal chandelier trimmed with gold plate and the black and gold marble fireplace brought from Palmira, near the Italian Riviera. This grand entrance seconds the lavish victorian character projected by the castle's facade.

The only major change in the house since its original construction was the addition in 1909 of the music room. It is lower than the rest of the house in order to facilitate the organ pipes which would have otherwise extended past the upper story's windows. The organ is now in the Joslyn Memorial's Concert Hall.

The Castle sets on a 5½ acre estate covering four city blocks. It is almost entirely enclosed by an ornate stone and wrought iron fence. The Castle grounds appear to be a veritable forest, shaded by 250 trees of 48 varieties, with many additional shrubs and vines. Among the many plantings are some trees unusual to Nebraska; including a Chinese gingko tree, said to be particularly suited to the Nebraska climate, smoke tree, golden rain or varnish tree, and hop hornbeams. Many of the trees were said to be full size when they were transplanted. The surrounding trees and shrubbery give an effect of natural growth rather than that of formal landscaping.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

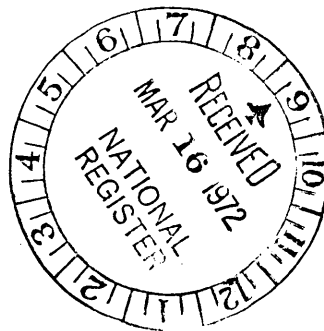
STATE Nebraska	
COUNTY Douglas	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
AUG 25	1972

#7 - Description (Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

In 1940 the house became the property of the Society of Liberal Arts, Joslyn Art Museum, and is now being leased to the Board of Education for use as administrative offices for the Omaha Public Schools. The Society of Liberal Arts Board must approve any changes to be made in the house or on the grounds. Any changes made are carefully studied and carried out so as not to interrupt the original integrity of the Castle.

After the Omaha Public Schools administration moved into the Castle they found it necessary to subdivide some of the large rooms. This was accomplished by erecting removable partitions which can be changed with the future uses of the Castle. An elevator was also installed without altering the original floor plan. It was designed so that it would pass through former closets and an old vault space. The original door casings remain intact and only the doors were removed for the elevator entrances. The only visual alteration is the extension of the elevator shaft pass the roof line of the Castle. Other than this the buildings and grounds have remained virtually unchanged since the time, 1903-1940, that the Joslyns lived in this grand Castle.



8. SIGNIFICANCE

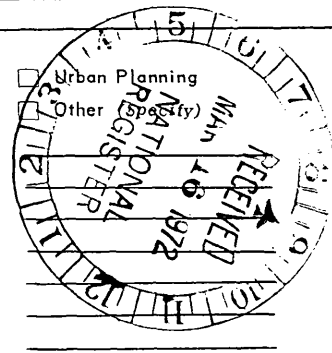
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1903

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

George A. Joslyn was one of Omaha's foremost entrepreneurs. He came to Omaha in 1880 as manager of the Western Newspaper Union. He started with a small interest in the company but with time and hard work he eventually increased his stock, enough to become president. He was well known as a very effective administrator and his company expanded until it covered most of the country. The Western Newspaper Union served thousands of daily and weekly newspapers with patent national and world news sections. His ready print company was the largest of its kind in the United States, and upon his death, in 1916, he had amassed the largest individual fortune in Nebraska.

Mrs. Sarah Joslyn played an important part in her husbands financial success and the Omaha communities cultural development. Upon their arrival in Omaha Mr. Joslyn bought two hotels which Mrs. Joslyn then managed. She was most known for her many philanthropies.

The Joslyn name is most associated with the Joslyn Memorial. After her husbands death, Mrs. Joslyn had a three-million dollar Memorial built in "remembrance of George Alfred Joslyn" which was "given to the people of Omaha." The Memorial contains and exhibits Nebraska's largest art collection. Mrs. Joslyn founded the Society of Liberal Arts to operate the Memorial, and contributed an additional five million dollars for the operation of it. The societies programs include not only the visual arts and sculpture, but also music and dramatic art. According to the Society's articles of incorporation, its purpose is "to promote education in sculpture, literature, painting, music, drama and kindred branches of art, and to carry on appropriate activities conducive to the artistic development of the community."

Mrs. Joslyn was selected as "Omaha's most distinguished citizen of 1928," and continued to devote a major part of the Joslyn fortune to community projects until her death in 1940.

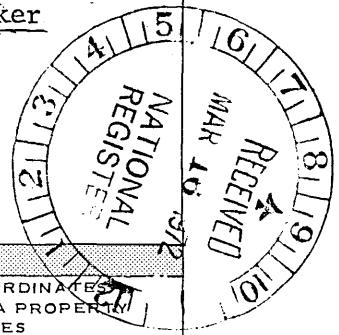
John McDonald was intrusted with the architectural duties of both the Joslyn Castle and again in 1928 for the design of the Memorial. He and his son Alan developed a successful Omaha firm with the help of these two large commissions.

The Joslyn Castle exemplifies the Beaux-art Classicism period of the architectural spectrum. It was built at a time when the architect

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Files - Nebraska State Historical Society
 Federal Writer's Project, Nebraska: A Guide to the Cornhusker State, New York: Viking Press, 1939.



10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
NW	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		95° 58' 17"	41° 15' 42"	
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 5 1/2 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Persijs Kolberg, Curator of Historic Sites

ORGANIZATION: Nebraska State Historical Society DATE: _____

STREET AND NUMBER: 1500 "R" Street

CITY OR TOWN: Lincoln STATE: Nebraska CODE: 31

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Martin O'Knecht

Title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

Date _____

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert A. Utley
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 8/25/72

ATTEST: William C. Knecht
 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	
Nebraska	
COUNTY	
Douglas	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	AUG 25 1972

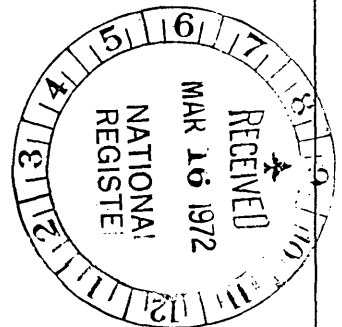
#8 - Significance

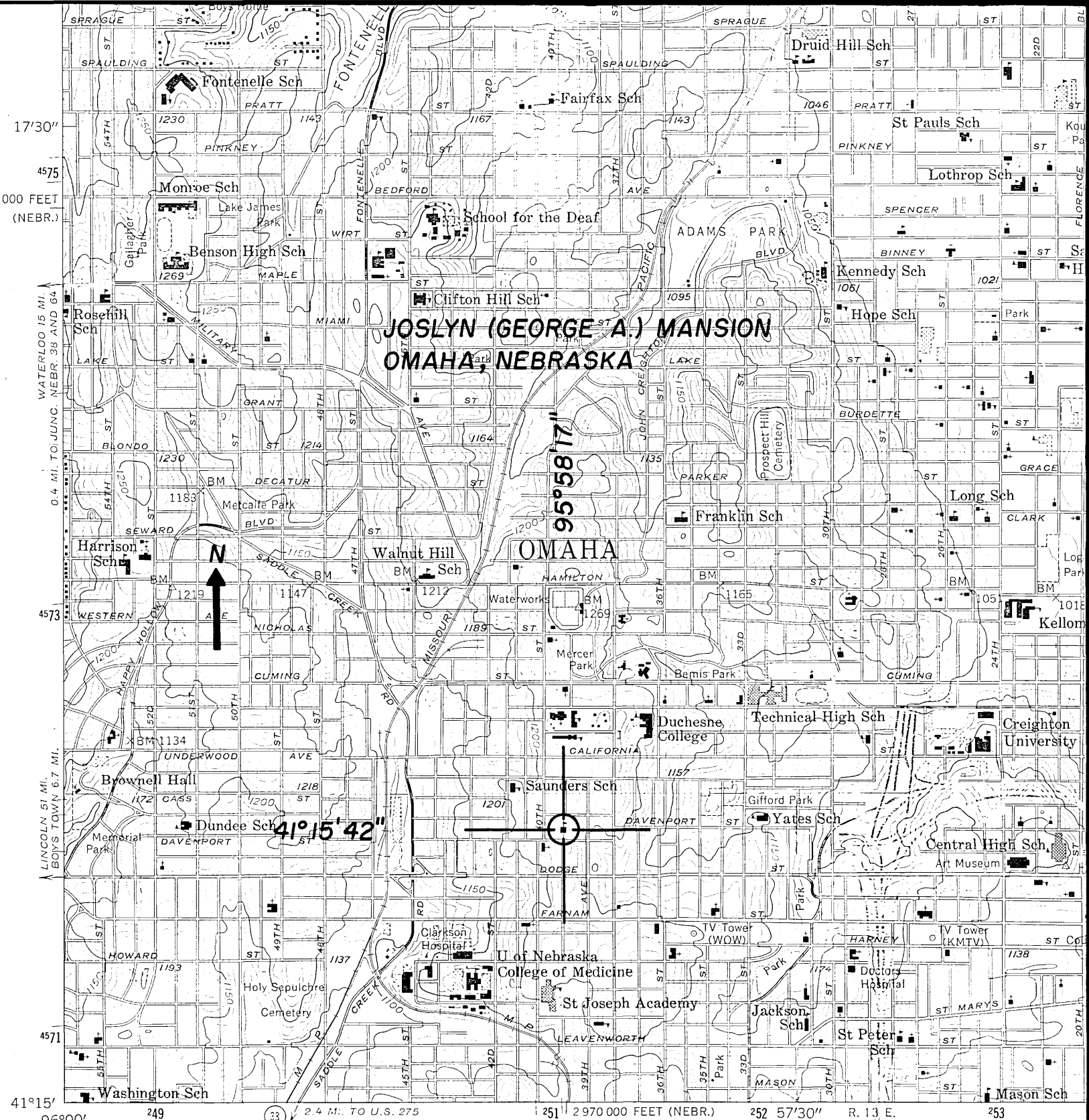
(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

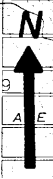
and the client chose an agreeable style. The architect would then vigorously study and apply the underlying principles and details of the particular style chosen, rendering as exact a character as the necessary functions would permit. This period, 1900-1920, coincided with an era characterized by prosperity, a vast business boom, and in general an optimistic outlook on the future. With the financial crisis of the 1930's grandiose homes, such as the Joslyn Castle, were soon to become economically unfeasible and pretentiousness was soon to be overcome by social concern.

The Joslyn Castle portrays a past era not only in architectural conceptions but also in the socio-economic development of American Capitalism.





**JOSLYN (GEORGE A.) MANSION
OMAHA, NEBRASKA**



41°15'42"

95°58'17"

41°15' 96°00' 249 251 252 253 2.4 MI. TO U.S. 275 2970 000 FEET (NEBR.) 57'30" R. 13 E. 1.5 MI. TO INTERSTATE 80

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS

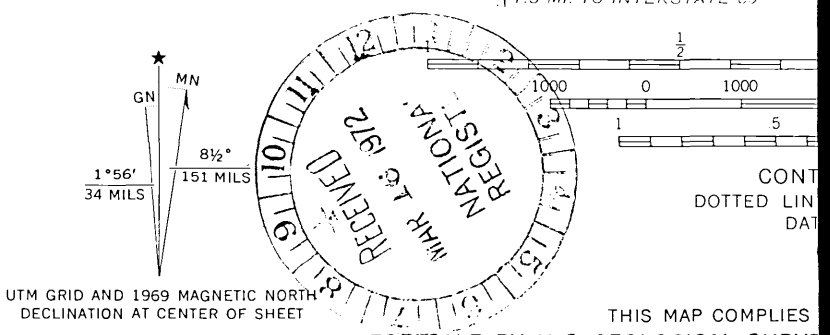
Topography from aerial photographs by Kelsh plotter
and by planetable surveys 1956. Aerial photographs taken 1952

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grids based on Nebraska coordinate system,
south zone, and Iowa coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 15, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1969. This information not field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



THIS MAP COMPLIES
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
AND BY THE IOWA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHY

Form 10-301
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

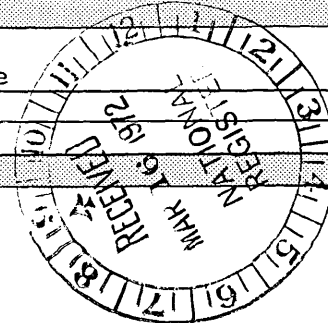
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

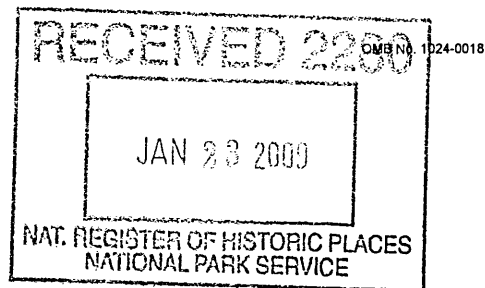
(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Nebraska	
COUNTY Douglas	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER AUG 25 1972	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON:		Joslyn (George A.) Mansion	
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
3902 Davenport Street			
CITY OR TOWN:			
Omaha			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Nebraska	31	Douglas	055
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE:			
U.S.G.S., 7½', Omaha North Ouadrangle			
SCALE:			
1:24,000			
DATE:			
1956			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			





United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable". For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Joslyn (George A.) Mansion

Other names/site number NeHBS# DO09:0321-001

2. Location

Street & number 3902 Davenport Street

Not for publication

City or town Omaha

Vicinity

State Nebraska

Code NE

County Douglas

Code 055

Zip code 68131

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Michael J. Anderson
Signature of certifying official

Jan. 15, 2009
Date

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.

see continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

see continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): _____

Sandra McClelland

3-5-09

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Joslyn (George A.) Mansion
Level of Significance Increase
Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska
County and State

5. Classification

(No change – See Original Nomination)

6. Function or Use

(No change – See Original Nomination)

7. Description

Narrative Description

(No Change – See Original Nomination)

8. Statement of Significance

Amendment to Statement of Significance

See Revised Statement of Significance for justification of increase to National level of significance

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

(See Continuation Sheet)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- Previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- Designated a National Historic Landmark
- Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location for additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

(See Continuation Sheet)

Joslyn (George A.) Mansion
Level of Significance Increase

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Approximately 5.5

UTM References (place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet).

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	15	251056	4571856	3.			
2.				4.			

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jennifer Honebrink, AIA

organization Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture P.C.

date 09/05/2008

street & number 1213 Jones St

telephone 402-341-1544

city or town Omaha

state NE

zip code 68102

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name/title _____

street & number _____

telephone _____

city or town _____

state _____

zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determined eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, (15 USC 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Joslyn (George A.) Mansion
Amendment to Increase Level of Significance

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 8 Page 1

Narrative Statement of Significance

Replace the original Section 8 with this amended version

THE NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF GEORGE A. JOSLYN AND JOSLYN CASTLE

Synopsis

Joslyn Castle is nationally significant under Criterion B in the areas of communication and entertainment for its association with publisher George A. Joslyn, the president and general manager of the most successful and far-reaching media service company in America. In the era before radio and television, the company he built, the Western Newspaper Union (WNU), reached out to millions of Americans on a weekly basis to educate, inform and entertain people in America's rural communities through their local weekly papers, through its support of our nation's rural presses and through the publication of books and pamphlets for local authors, companies, and organizations. Its influence on rural America at a time when two-thirds of the country's population lived on isolated farmsteads has been studied by numerous scholars who focused on such areas as political ideals, serial literature publications and advertising.

Joslyn Castle is also significant under Criterion C at the state level as the work of a collection of Master Builders and at the national level as a rare and excellent example of Scottish Baronial Revival architecture in the United States. As with many of his contemporaries, Joslyn's residence was the center of his social life and his statement on how he wished to be viewed by the world. Developed simultaneously with his initial business interests in Omaha, business acquaintances and friends alike were invited to attend events on the grounds. The mansion, stable, conservatory foundation and grounds survive in good condition today on the original five-acre site, now surrounded by the city of Omaha.

CRITERION B – ASSOCIATION WITH A SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUAL

THE NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF GEORGE A. JOSLYN

National Context of Successful Businessmen in the Gilded Age 1878-1889

In 1850, there were only 19 millionaires in the United States. By 1890 that number had risen to just over 4,000 and by 1920, the number of millionaires in the U.S. had grown to approximately 10,000. This steady rise was due in large part to the Industrial Revolution of the late 1800s and early 1900s, which transformed American life and gave rise to this group of wealthy and influential businessmen variously referred to as "industrial statesmen," "robber barons" and "captains of industry." As the range of their descriptions imply, they have been vilified as greedy, monopolizing tyrants who tricked others out of their fair share of profits; and they have been praised for their business acumen and capitalist entrepreneurship. In a time with few laws governing how large corporations could run their businesses, most successful entrepreneurs of the age saw themselves simply as aggressive businessmen who sought to gain whatever reasonable advantages were possible for their companies. They were used by the people crying foul as often as they themselves pushed business ethics to the limits. Most made their fortunes in nation-wide businesses, such as the railroad industry, automobiles, farm machinery, oil, steel, and finance. Only three percent lived the rags to riches story of Andrew Carnegie.¹ Most

¹ William Miller, *Men at the top - The WASP Elite*, ed. Peter d'Alroy Jones. *The Robber Barrons Revisited* (Boston, Heath, 1968), p. 19.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Joslyn (George A.) Mansion
Amendment to Increase Level of Significance

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 8 Page 2

were born to average American business families. They received good educations, often including some college, and typically set off into the business world with the help of their families by way of introductions and start-up capital. Showing their true nature, at the end of the business day most were also very generous, giving large portions of their wealth to better their communities. Many saw such contributions as part of their social responsibility, having achieved a certain level of wealth and power.

George A. Joslyn



George A. Joslyn was one of these successful businessmen. He was born in 1848 and grew up on a farm outside of Waitsfield, Vermont. After he completed his education at the local two-year high school, he moved to Montreal, Quebec, Canada, returning briefly to his hometown in 1872 to marry his cousin, Sarah Hannah Selleck. Like many other successful businessmen, he began by working in one of the family businesses. He joined his uncles Walter and George Rice in 1872, first working for their paper shirt collar company and then for their newspaper company. In 1878, he left his uncles' companies and moved to Des Moines, Iowa to work for the Iowa Printing Company, (likely due to an offer by the company's owners). By 1880, he had already left Des Moines for Omaha, where he worked as the general manager of the Omaha Newspaper Union, a branch of the Iowa Printing Company. When the Western Newspaper Union (WNU) was incorporated later this same year by W.H. Welch and W.E. Andrews, owners of the Iowa Printing Company, and W.A. Bunker of the Kansas City Newspaper Union, Joslyn continued to develop the Omaha office as a branch of the new company. It appears that Joslyn owned some stock in the company at this point, but how much is unclear.

The WNU was reincorporated in 1890 with seven-and-one half times more capital than its incorporation in 1880 and this time Joslyn owned 73% of that capital. At this time, he became president and general manager of the company. From this point forward, Joslyn steered the development of the WNU. It was said that "the WNU was George A. Joslyn and George A. Joslyn was the WNU."² His business methods and accomplishments are described in further detail later in this narrative.

Like many other successful businessmen, the WNU and its accessory businesses were not Joslyn's only concern. He owned a number of other businesses for short periods of time, including the Metropolitan Hotel and the St. Charles Hotel in Omaha as well as the International Press Association and the Cook Remedy Company in Chicago. Most of these he owned in the early portion of his career and he used the income from them to further invest in the WNU. Additionally, his wife Sarah assisted him with running the hotel businesses and he used these companies to employ a variety of relatives.

Joslyn was also active in the Omaha Chamber of Commerce, the Omaha Club, the Country Club and the Christian Science Church and took an active role in local charity, giving to many local institutions and individuals. "His associates at the WNU recounted that he would often carry several hundred dollars in his pocket for this purpose. If someone approached him with a worthy cause or problem he would give them \$25,

² Elmo Scott Watson, *History of Newspaper Syndicates in the United States* (Chicago, 1926), p. 31.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Joslyn (George A.) Mansion
Amendment to Increase Level of Significance

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 8 Page 3

or \$50."³ On a larger scale, he had a library built in his home town of Waitsfield, Vermont, which still stands. He gave matching grants to the Child Saving Institute and University of Nebraska-Omaha for new buildings and encouraged his friends to support these causes.

When George A Joslyn passed away in 1916, he was the richest man in Nebraska. His property, stocks, and notes were given an estimated value of \$6.7 million for probate purposes. This is likely low, as several notable assets were not included in the appraisal, such as shares in the Western Paper Company and its associated paper mills. Since Joslyn was in declining health for a number of years before he passed, missing assets such as the paper mills may have already been deeded over to one of his companies or heirs.

Since his death, Joslyn's importance, and that of the WNU, has become clear although it was not apparent at first. Immediately after his death, Joslyn was not recognized by the *National Cyclopedia of American Biography* or other national biographies. This could be due to the timing of his death, when many veterans of the Civil War who had become state and national leaders were also passing. Or, it could be due to the anonymity that was part of the marketing strategy of the WNU. None of their features included a by-line or acknowledgement of their role in any newspaper's production; instead, the company simply let the reading public believe the newspaper was all produced by the local editor. Illustrating a growing awareness of Joslyn's importance, however; he was remembered in the *National Cyclopedia of American Biography's* entry of Herbert H. Fish, who became company president after Joslyn's death. This entry pays tribute to Joslyn as the founder and developer of the WNU who made it a nation-wide company. More significantly, most histories of journalism - especially those that focus on rural weekly newspapers - include at least one mention of Joslyn or the WNU, as it is impossible to discuss the history of the rural press in America without talking about the company most responsible for its ability to survive. Furthermore, as historians give further study to frontier life, serial literature, the role of the press in politics, the history of companies for which the WNU printed publications and advertisements, and as court cases in which the WNU was involved persist in being cited in legal briefs, the magnitude of the consequences of Joslyn's business decisions will continue to be revealed.

George A. Joslyn's Peers – the Media Proprietors

To better understand Joslyn's significance with-in the publishing industry, it is helpful to look at his accomplishments in relationship to other early media proprietors. Joslyn's career mimicked the peak of the industrial revolution and lasted from 1877 to his death in 1916. His major accomplishments can be seen as a bridge between those of Ansel N. Kellogg whose career spanned from 1854 to 1886 and those of William Hearst whose career spanned from 1887 to 1940.

Ansel N. Kellogg is credited with inventing the auxiliary newspaper business and with many of its early advances. In 1867 he printed the first political reading material other than a record of a speech; in 1871 he printed the first continued story; and in 1875 he patented a new form of printing plates and their fastenings, revolutionizing production and popularizing their use. An auxiliary newspaper business, under his model, would supply newspaper editors with ready-print (half of the newspaper preprinted with news and miscellany), copy (the text of news and other stories), mats (impressions of photos or text) and plates (blocks of type ready to inset into the press) for inclusion in their own newspapers. These were also known as co-operative newspaper lists

³ Dan Kiper, *The Joslyns of Lynhurst: The true story of George, Sarah and their Castle* (New York: iUniverse, 2006), p.109.

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and newspaper syndicates. They were distinct from press associations such as the Associated Press, which gathered and shared only copies of news stories, and relied on local editors to reproduce them in print, and which did not offer serial stories or other features. They were also distinct from newspaper syndicates as we know them today. These companies served independently owned newspapers and did not own them.

Kellogg also set the precedent for what an auxiliary newspaper should be: a silent partner in the nation's rural presses that was paid for by companies interested in advertising that could reach large audiences. It was not until the late 1890s that stories in ready-print were attributed to anyone. Before this, local people most often did not know that half their paper was printed elsewhere, because these businesses left off all by-lines on their stories, allowing the local editor full credit for the work.

In comparing Joslyn and Kellogg; although Kellogg had some characteristics of a successful businessmen, he is better described as an inventor. Furthermore, the geographic reach of his company paled in comparison to that controlled by Joslyn. At its largest, in 1905, Kellogg's company had nine branch offices and served a total of 1,958 newspapers; only 22% of all the newspapers served by co-operative newspaper unions at the time. In the same year, Joslyn already served 33% of all newspapers using ready-print services.⁴ Additionally, Kellogg made no attempt to vertically integrate his company, leaving the supply of material his company required for its survival vulnerable to prices and availability set by paper mills, paper wholesalers, and printing supply houses, whereas Joslyn created the Western Paper Company to control the raw material his printing houses needed to operate. The two did agree, however, that an auxiliary newspaper business should be an invisible partner in our nation's rural presses – garnering clients through a reputation for well priced products that provided material that was of interest to the rural newspaper's readers.

In stark contrast to the anonymity prized by Kellogg and Joslyn was the celebrity sought by William Hearst. Perhaps the most well-known media proprietor, William Hearst was a successful businessman. Born into a wealthy family and well educated, Hearst received his first newspaper as a gift from his father in 1887 while he was still in college at Harvard. After a short political career, he continued to build his publishing and communications businesses. He was well known for his yellow journalism, sensationalism and reformist investigative reporting and became well known personally through the publicity he generated. At the peak of his career, Hearst owned 28 major newspapers, two wire services, six magazines, a newsreel, and the *American Weekly* (a Sunday newspaper supplement).

Comparing Joslyn and Hearst, there are more differences than similarities. According to the *Encyclopedia of American History*, Hearst's company was actually part of the "Chain Newspaper Era" and distinct from the newspaper syndicates. Chain newspapers were a collection of individual newspapers owned by a single corporation which controlled their content, whereas auxiliary newspaper companies were accountable to individual newspaper editors who bought their services. Having already passed away by the time William Hearst's career began to take off in the early 1920s, Joslyn never attempted to diversify into other areas of media like Hearst did with his newsreels and magazines. They also focused on different markets. Where Joslyn

⁴ These figures were calculated from information collected in the *N.W. Ayer & Sons American Newspaper Annual*, which listed numbers of newspapers subscribing to co-operative newspaper unions and statistics published in *Boilerplating America*. The figures published in the *N.W. Ayer and Sons* lists appear to include only the numbers of newspapers subscribing to ready-print services.

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sold products mainly to rural weekly newspapers, all of Hearst's newspapers were published in urban areas. Additionally, Joslyn followed the precedent set by Kellogg and remained known only to those who needed to know, whereas Hearst's yellow journalism and sensationalism made him a well-known figure in the publishing industry and the population at large. Hearst's notoriety certainly played a role in the appearance that he reached a national audience. Comparable figures show however that Joslyn reached a far greater number of Americans. At its peak Hearst's newspaper chain controlled 28 daily newspapers with a combined circulation of approximately 3.2 million.⁵ However, this is well under the 7,185 weekly newspapers with an estimated circulation of 7.2 million to which Joslyn's WNU supplied ready-print at the peak of this service in 1911. Additionally, since magazines, newsreels, movies, television and radio were not widely available there was less to choose from during Joslyn's era and his impact on the population was much greater.

Altogether, Joslyn was part of an elite group of successful businessmen at the turn of the century in the United States; one of approximately 10,000 millionaires at the time of his death with the money and power to influence large sections of our population. Through his company, the WNU, his business acumen allowed him to build upon the business model Kellogg had established and pass on that advantage to his customers who, in turn, were able to start rural weekly newspapers which served the majority of our country's population. Furthermore, his company was able to do this quietly, in a way that supported the rural press whom it supplied without the yellow journalism and sensationalism that made publishers such as Hearst infamous.

CONTEXT FOR THE NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WNU

The Development of the Great Plains and U.S. Farming

George Joslyn's business methods and accomplishments are best illustrated in a short history of his company, the WNU. Before this can be explored, however; it is equally important to understand the context in which the business operated.

The growth and decline of the WNU essentially mirrors the boom and bust of America's rural population. George Joslyn's involvement and the core development of the company were to a large extent centered in the Gilded Age of America. This was also a period of significant growth for farming in America, as well as the Industrial Revolution. After Joslyn's death, the company continued to thrive under those he had trained. It remained healthy through the Great Depression, WWII, and post-war years; until the lack of rural population (and, as a result, weekly rural newspapers), made the business no longer viable.

The late 1800s were a time when the rapid advances of industrialization combined with the westward expansion and settlement of the Great Plains to form an economic expansion that was unparalleled in any other developing nation at that time. No other country combined the large influx of immigration with the advent of the Industrial Revolution like America did. Because of that immigration, from 1860-1920, there was a steady increase in the number of farms in America. Most of these were in the newly developing Midwest.

Although at first skipped over in favor of settlement in California, settlement of the Great Plains gradually filled in and can be explained through a series of events. The first of these was the Homestead Act of 1862, which

⁵ The *Encyclopedia of American History* states that together, Hearst's and 4 other newspaper chains held 81 newspapers and had a combined circulation of 9,250,000.

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rewarded citizens with 160 acres for living on and working the land for five years. After the Civil War, the development of the railroads, railroad shipping points, refrigerated rail cars, and increases in urban populations in the East made it profitable to raise cattle on the plains and send them to eastern markets, all of which encouraged settlement on the Great Plains. The development of the railroad was followed by increased agricultural settlement from 1880 to 1900, which brought more land under cultivation. By 1890, the Great Plains were settled into the model of family farms that we know today. Finally, the dryland farming boom of 1900-1920 created the Golden Era of farming, which in-filled the more scarcely populated rural areas, and brought many modern conveniences to our rural population, such as automobiles and tractors.

The Homestead Act, which required citizens to live on their claim, created a population who were fairly isolated. Because of the typical size of a homestead, those in rural areas were generally one-half mile from their nearest neighbor, at a minimum. Given the land set aside for the railroad and schools, and that owned by mortgage companies and larger homesteads, this distance was often far greater. That distance was overcome on a regular basis when farmers gathered together for worship at local churches, to help with annual chores such as harvesting, and on special occasions such as barn raisings. As communal as these events were, however; they provided far less social interaction than the average urban citizen experienced. Moreover, different ethnic backgrounds and languages sometimes made these functions more confusing and less relaxing than other activities and left those challenged by language barriers out of the social portion of the event.

On a daily basis, those on rural farms had only those on their own farmstead for company. The additional emphasis on saving money for times of need also meant that there was little money for luxury items such as books. Thus, the only reading material available was often the Bible and the local weekly newspaper. With no radio, TV or internet, the newspaper and musical instruments were the only entertainment available during the evenings. The newspaper was the main source of information about national events, state issues, local items of interest, as well as sales, fashions, and stories of all kinds – from serial stories and Sunday school lessons to mini histories.

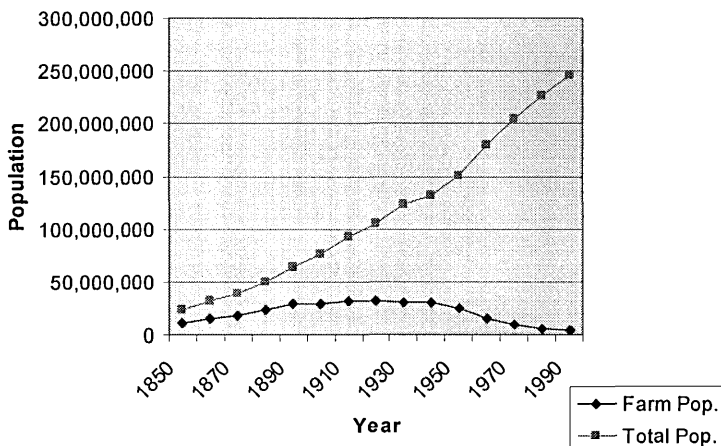


Figure 1: U.S. Population Trends

As the number of farms continued to grow, the balance of the population began to shift steadily from rural to urban. Beginning as early as 1860 the Industrial Revolution enticed young men and women off the farm and into steady wage-paying jobs. After the farm population peaked in 1920, not just the proportion of rural to urban, but the overall numbers of those living on farms began to decrease. Along with this shift in population, the advent of radio, affordability of magazines, and inventions such as the automobile and telephone changed rural life forever and gave those living in the country a connection to the world never possible before. In 1930, 58% of all farms had automobiles, 34% had telephones, and 13% had electricity. Twenty-five years later, in 1954, 70%

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had automobiles, 49% had telephones and 93% had electricity. The period of rural isolation was definitely over and farming had changed from a way of life to an industry.

The National Development of the Auxiliary Newspaper Service

As farming was developing, so were auxiliary newspaper service companies. They came about as a response to the Civil War due to the need for timely, accurate news and the unavailability of labor. In July 1861, Joseph Weirich, a journeyman printer for the *Baraboo Republic* in Wisconsin enlisted in the Union Army, leaving Ansel N. Kellogg to print the paper without him. It was a common enough occurrence during the war. Not able to produce the paper himself, Kellogg made a unique decision and ordered his next supply of paper from David Atwood and Horace Rublee (who published the *Madison Daily Journal*) with the sheets printed on one side with war news, leaving space on the other for his local news and advertisements.⁶ Such half-pre-printed newspapers became known as ready-print or patent insides. Soon Atwood and Rublee were pre-printing sheets for other newspapers in addition to continuing to print and edit their own local paper. Kellogg recognized that the ready-print work could become a business of its own and in 1865 he discontinued his local paper and began a ready-print business marketed expressly to rural newspapers. To help keep his costs down, he solicited advertisers in his ready-print portion of the newspaper.

True competition began in 1870 when two other companies started auxiliary newspaper service companies producing ready-print independent of publishing newspapers. The scope of the work of these three companies was quickly evident when the Chicago fire of 1871 destroyed the offices of two of the three companies and affected almost 200 weekly newspapers in Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota.⁷ Services of all auxiliary newspaper service companies were expanded in the 1870s to include the first serial story, the first illustrated articles, and the first state news. Furthermore, layouts became tailored per customer "varying from four to nine-column sheets, changing from outsides to insides, from four- to six- to eight-page papers, the changing from neutral to Republican or Democratic political matter, the insertion of appropriate state news for newspapers in that state, the omission of news, either general or state, and the insertion of from one to five columns of local advertisements as ordered."⁸ Early on, advertisements were relied upon to keep the price of the ready-print affordable for smaller newspapers. The expansion and customization of the auxiliary newspaper services offset this economy and prices began to rise. However, competition brought the prices back in line, dropping them from 70¢ per quire (25 sheets of paper) in 1865 to 29¢ per quire in 1878.⁹

Between 1880 and 1910 the number of newspaper weeklies in the US more than doubled.¹⁰ Many of these were in the growing West. New communities needed to print homestead claims, mining claims, timber cutting permits, invitations to bid, lists of delinquent taxpayers, and voter registration precincts as required by the government. They also wanted to promote their towns. Each was working to gain an advantage over its neighbor for potential industry and transportation lines. They sought to promote town growth by making themselves seem popular and already well on their way to becoming a great city. The town populations, on the other hand, were so small that there were few (if any) staff at the local newspaper. A typical weekly rural

⁶ Elmo Scott Watson, *History of Auxiliary Newspaper Service in the United States* (Champaign, Ill: Illinois Publishing Co), 1923, p. 7.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹⁰ Dennis Mihelich, "George Joslyn, America's First Media Mogul," *Nebraska History* (Spring 2001), p. 27 col 3.

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newspaper of this era could not have survived, therefore if the editor had not subscribed to an auxiliary newspaper service. By purchasing products from auxiliary newspaper service companies, local editors could turn out a well done paper with a minimal staff, thus keeping their costs down enough to cover their overhead and make their newspaper, and consequently their town, seem larger than it was.

The auxiliary newspaper service grew during this period as well, serving roughly 50% of the weekly newspapers. According to N.W. Ayer and Sons Newspaper Directory, there were three major companies from 1880-1890; the WNU, the A.N. Kellogg lists, and the American Newspaper Union. The use of the word "union" in the name of many auxiliary newspaper service companies was common due to the popularity of the Union after the Civil War. In 1890, the American Newspaper Union split into the Atlantic Coasts Lists, and the Chicago Newspaper Union. While the WNU leap-frogged to the head of the line in terms of number of branch offices and number of newspapers served, the remaining three companies held steady at nine or ten branch offices and 1,200-2,000 subscribers. Another five or six auxiliary newspaper service companies existed throughout this period, but none had more than two branch offices, and none served more than 200 newspapers.

The number of weekly newspapers printed in the United States peaked in 1910 and then began a slow descent. This followed a similar trend in population as the number of people in rural America leveled off and the number of Americans living in cities began to skyrocket. By 1930, half of the United States' population was considered urban, compared to 23% just 50 years before.

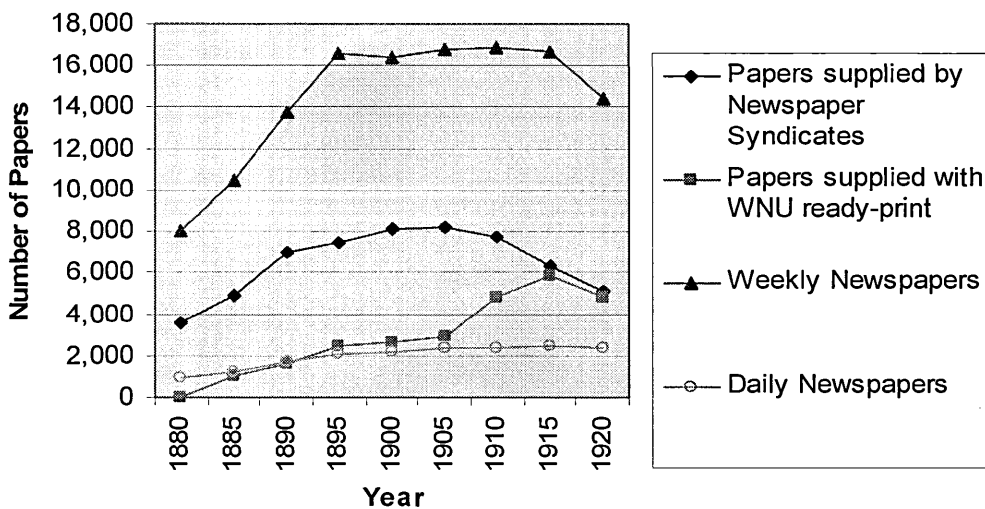


Figure 2: Newspaper Statistics; Numbers gathered from N.W. Ayer and Sons Newspaper Directories

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History of the WNU

Although he did not invent the auxiliary newspaper service, Joslyn took over the WNU and is credited in numerous histories of journalism with its domination of the market.¹¹ He expanded the access to and types of products offered through the company, allowing newspapers to concentrate on local news while the WNU supplied them the remainder of the paper and the supplies necessary to print it. Histories of journalism state that its largest impact was on rural weekly newspapers, which were the majority of its customers. These newspapers could be supported by as few as 300 subscribers, but appeared as substantial papers due to the ready-print they purchased from the WNU and the printing of legal notices required by the government.

The WNU was originally known as the State Printing Company, established in Des Moines, Iowa, in 1872, a time when the Great Plains were still considered to be an unsettled frontier. It was reorganized in 1876 as the Iowa Printing Company. When Joslyn arrived to work as a shipping clerk for the company in 1878, he saw the company's potential for profit if someone would make a few changes. He moved to Omaha, Nebraska, in 1879 to establish a branch office for the company, known as the Omaha Newspaper Union. The timing was perfect. The State of Nebraska was only 12 years old. Omaha had a population of just over 30,000 and a bright future ahead of it. Lying between Des Moines and Omaha was a vast stretch of unsettled land and sparse farmsteads.

The 1880s – Joslyn as Branch Manager

In 1880 W.H. Welch and W.E. Andrews, owners of the Iowa Printing Company, and W.A. Bunker, operator of the Kansas City Newspaper Union formed the WNU to serve the newspapers of the booming Trans-Mississippi area. It is likely that Joslyn owned some shares in the company at this point, but how many is unclear. During the 1880s, Joslyn was "increasingly active in the affairs of the WNU, serving as manager of a branch office, director, treasurer, and vice president."¹² By 1883, the WNU had already expanded to include five more branches in Detroit, Michigan; St. Louis, Missouri; Dallas, Texas; Denver, Colorado; and Topeka, Kansas; for a total of eight branches serving approximately 700 newspapers. At the same time, the number of people for the WNU to serve was increasing. Settlement of the Great Plains was begun in earnest and farms, towns and rural weekly newspapers were springing up everywhere. As each town vied for immigrants, its newspaper attempted to make it seem larger, cleaner and more promising than the next. When the reality was a small population and few people to work the presses, the ready-print, boiler plate and other services of the WNU were there to make the small paper larger, more informative and more entertaining than a single man could make it.

In 1882, Joslyn began the publication of *The Printer's Auxiliary* a weekly newsletter marketed toward rural press editors and filled with information and advice on how to run a rural weekly newspaper, as well as updates on how each subscriber was doing in circulation numbers. He used this journal both to promote the use of ready-print and other services available through his company, and to teach those new to the newspaper industry how to operate this type of business. This was particularly important as many of the newspaper editors on the Great Plains were new to the business, having come from other backgrounds. Concurrently, the WNU produced ready-print, the practice of pre-printing half the newspaper with national news, serial stories, and

¹¹ Histories of Journalism reviewed included, but were not limited to, *American Journalism: 1690-1940*, *Country Journalism*, *The Grass Roots Press: America's Community Newspapers*, *American Journalism: History, Principals and Practices*, and *The Compact History of the American Newspaper*

¹² Elmo Scott Watson, *History of Auxiliary Newspaper Service in the United States* (Champaign, Ill: Illinois Publishing Co, 1923), p. 31.

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advertising and leaving the other half blank for the local editor to fill with his own local news and advertisements. As with many inventions of the Industrial Revolution, the use of ready print was hotly debated in the late 1800s: the efficiency of the machine to save time and money versus the ability of the local editor to remain in complete control of the information being presented in his paper. The practice of using ready-print was not always accepted although *The Printer's Auxiliary* encouraged the use of this process.

In 1888, the WNU also opened or purchased the Great Western Type Foundry and sustained a branch in Omaha that cast type and distributed printing supplies such as type, presses, cases, ink, and paper cutters.¹³ The Omaha branch was run for a short period by Joslyn. In 1900, this company appears to have been folded into the Western Paper Company. This vertical integration proved to be a shrewd move that helped to protect the company during the depression of the 1890s.

During this same period, the A.N. Kellogg and American Newspaper Union also began major expansions. The Kellogg Company grew from five to eight branches, serving up to 1,810 newspapers. The American Newspaper Company grew to 13 branches, serving 2,116 newspapers. Territories of the companies began to overlap as they opened branches in the same states and began competing for some of the same customers.

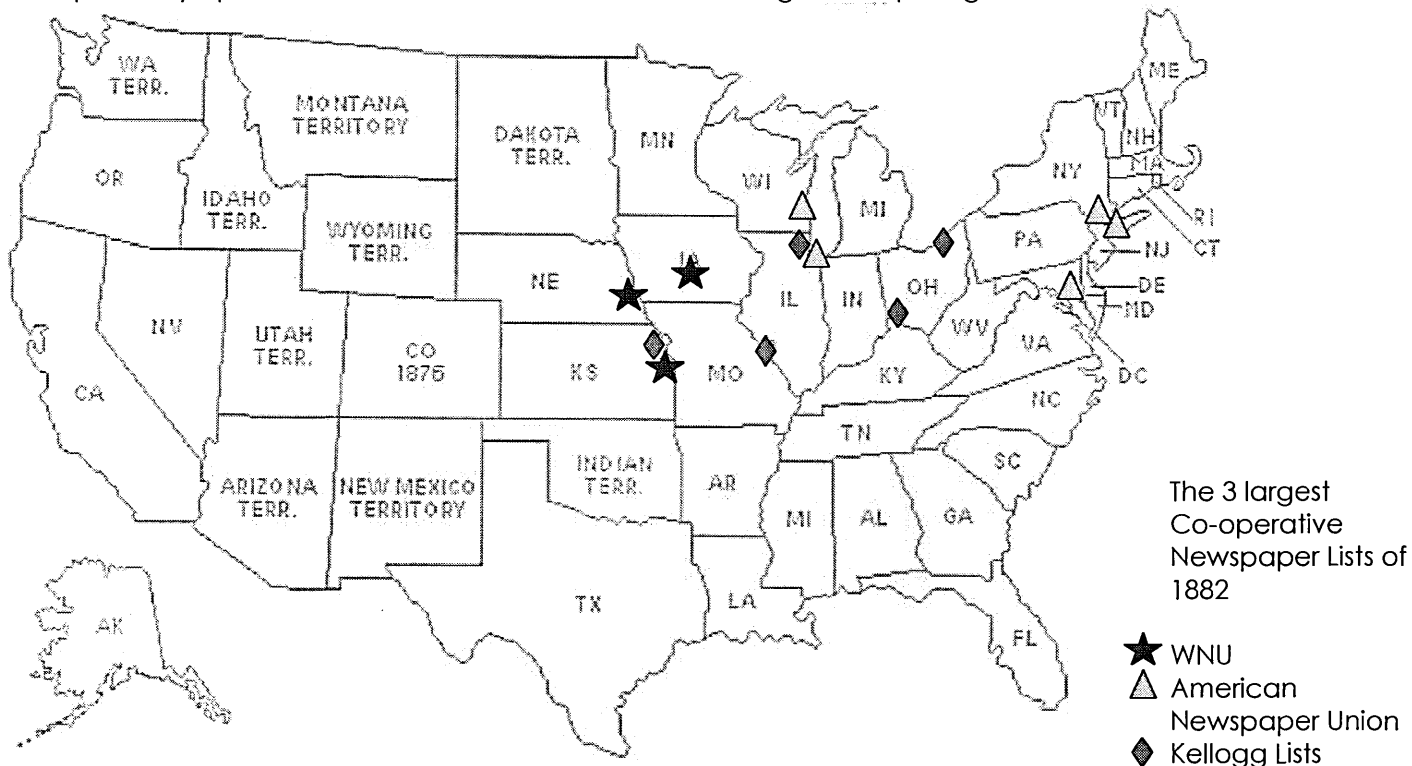


Figure 3 The United States of America - 1880

¹³ *Omaha City Directory*, 1888.

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With the number of farms across America growing, the population could support a limited amount of competition and some overlap was inevitable as different editors tried different services. The population was still too low to support many people working at the local newspaper, so ready-print was still very popular among editors to make their newspapers appear more substantial. It was also popular with the readers who were still scattered over the countryside and who had little else in the way of entertainment on most evenings.

The 1890s – Joslyn becomes Company President

The 1890s were a difficult time for many Americans. Although the vast frontier was filling with new farms those in the rural population were still very isolated from their neighbors on a daily basis and had little in the way of entertainment to relieve the work and stress of daily life. Additionally, many farmers were fighting grasshoppers and drought, making those first years on a homestead more difficult than usual. Furthermore, the country slipped into a depression in the middle of the decade leaving many with little money.

For Joslyn, however, the 1890s were a wonderful time. In 1890, Joslyn became the general manager, majority stockholder and president of the WNU, owning 73% of the company. He reincorporated the company in Illinois, with its national advertising and editorial offices in Chicago and New York, and the main financial office in

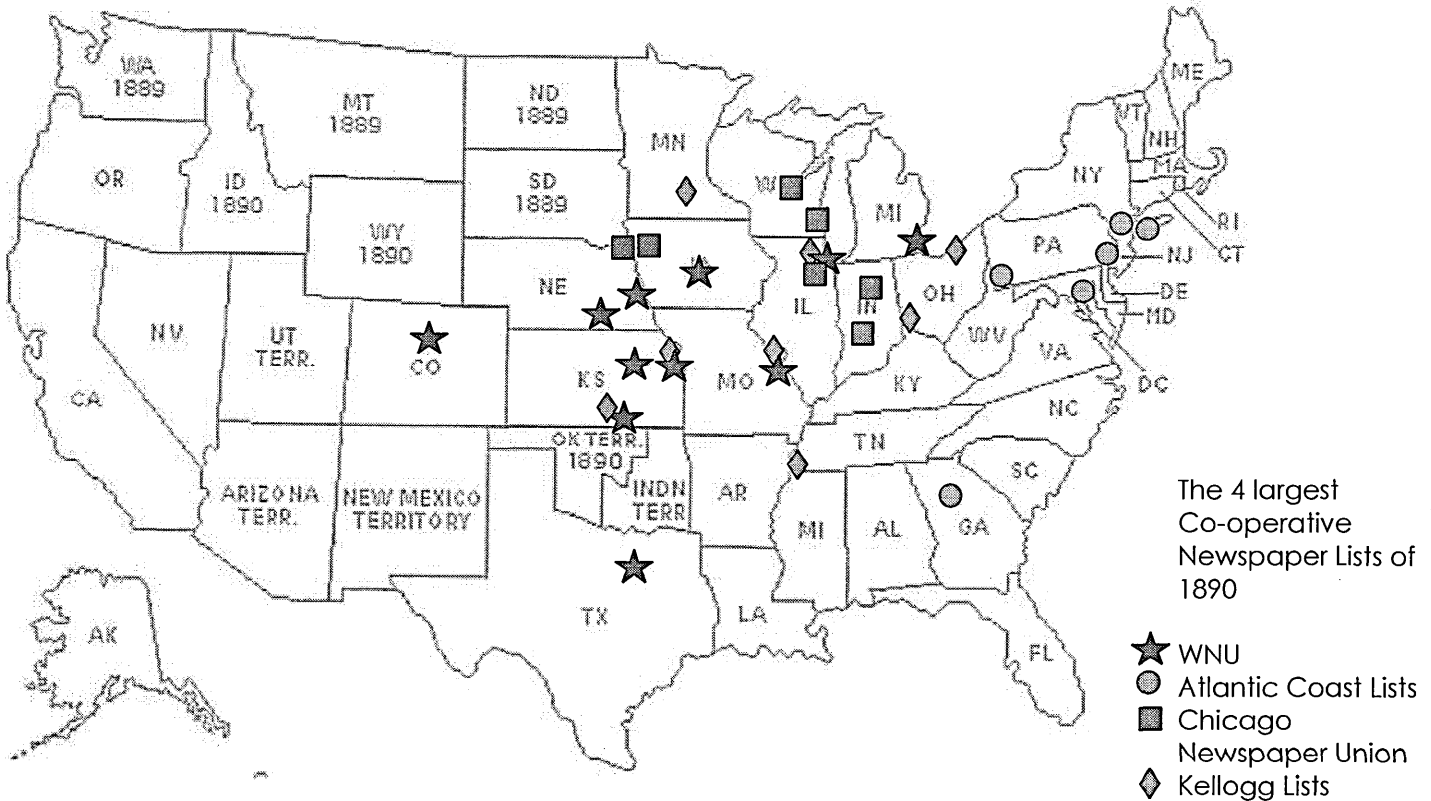


Figure 4: The United States of America - 1890

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Omaha, Nebraska. By this time, the Omaha office Joslyn had overseen personally employed "more than thirty people who ran seven presses that supplied about 250 newspapers."¹⁴ Also by this time, the WNU had become a large, regional firm, having purchased or opened branches in St. Paul, Minnesota; New York City, New York; Dallas, Texas; Topeka, Kansas; St. Louis, Missouri; Lincoln, Nebraska; Winfield, Kansas; Chicago, Illinois and Denver, Colorado. Altogether in 1890, the company had 11 branch offices, and served 1,643 newspapers.

Additionally, in 1890 the WNU purchased the International Press Association – the WNU's first boiler-plate business. The plate business allowed the WNU to expand its customer base to those who weren't interested in subscribing to their ready-print service, and to add services for those who did. For the small rural weekly newspaper editor, this meant that if he were pressed for time or felt he needed more material of one variety or another, he could fill his paper and still maintain its size. The WNU also continued to print its weekly newsletter for publishers, keeping them informed of news in their industry and the latest offerings by the WNU.

Like many other businesses throughout the country during the depression, the WNU's competitors tried to hold on. The American Newspaper Union split into the Atlantic Coast Lists and Chicago Newspaper Union. Both of these companies, as well as the A.N. Kellogg Company quit growing at this point, both in terms of number

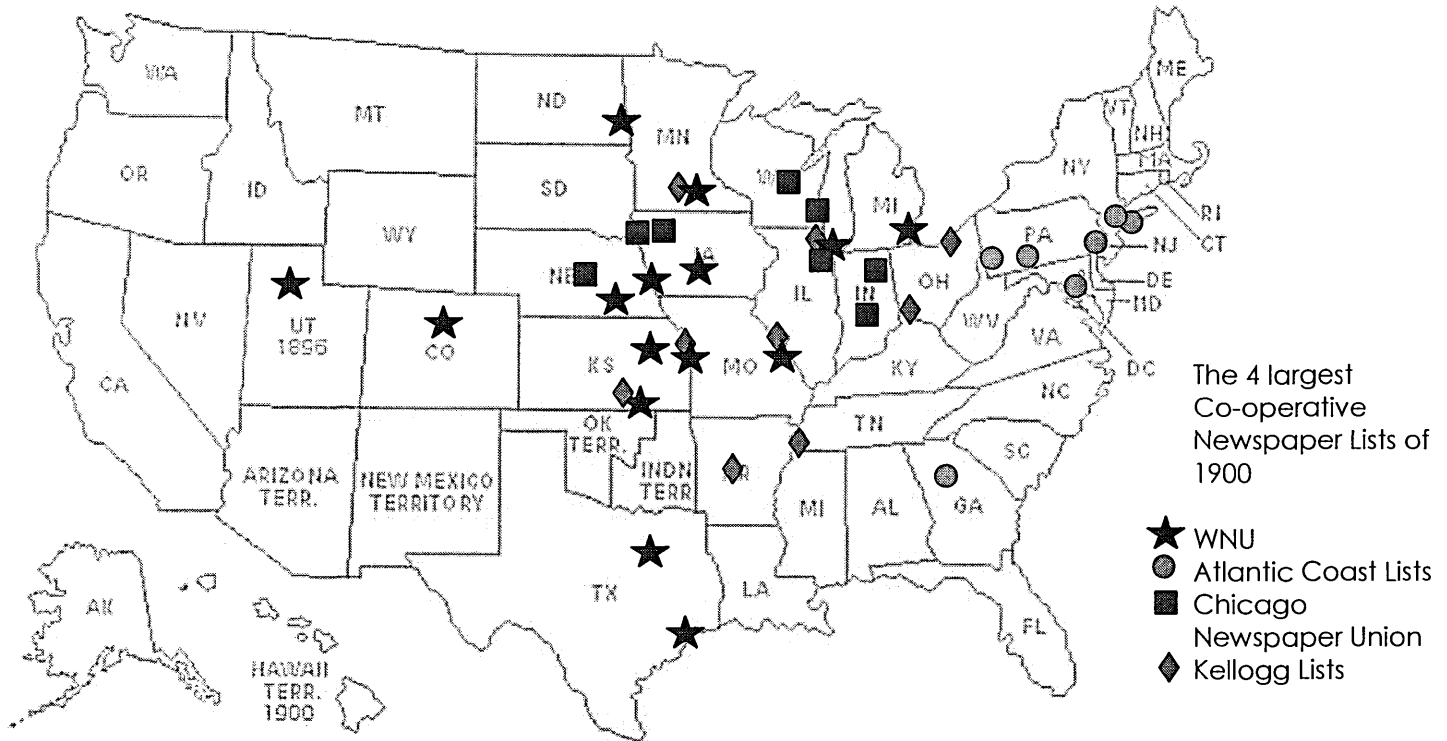


Figure 5: The United States of America - 1900

¹⁴ Dennis Mihelich, "George Joslyn, America's First Media Mogul," *Nebraska History* (Spring 2001), p29, col 3.

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of branches and in number of newspapers served. The WNU, on the other hand continued to expand, acquiring or starting new branches for a total of 15 branches, serving 2,654 newspapers in 1898 – 33% of all newspapers served by ready-print that year.

1900-1917 Consolidation

Furthering the vertical integration of the company, in 1899 Joslyn founded the Western Paper Company. It is unclear if this was a new business, or an expansion and re-naming of the Great Western Type Foundry. The Western Paper Company was a paper and print supply wholesaler headquartered in Omaha whose main customers were the ready-print plants of the WNU. The control of these two companies allowed the WNU to control the supplies necessary to run its main business; tailoring production and setting favorable prices for itself.

From its re-incorporation in 1890, Joslyn continued increasing his stake in the company. In 1906, Joslyn "attained the first objective in his ambition to dominate the syndicate field," when he bought the A.N. Kellogg Company of Chicago, his largest competitor at the time.¹⁵ This gave him the largest boiler-plate department of any company then in business, as well as increased the WNU's ready-print business to 22 branches and 2,764 subscribers. By 1914, Articles of Incorporation for the Central West Publishing Company, a holding company for the WNU, show that he owned 99% of the stock in the WNU. As essentially the sole proprietor of the company, he was ultimately responsible for the direction of the company, including the acquisition of competitors, expansion of products offered to customers, and ultimately the tenor and content of the ready-print and boiler-plate.

The content of the ready-print became more important during this period. The dryland farming boom from 1909-1920 increased the density of farms in rural America. Although social interaction was still difficult, it was more common. Additionally, during this period the popularity and number of magazines to choose from meant that the weekly rural newspapers gained significant competition as evening entertainment. They were still the only source of timely local news, however. Joslyn kept Wright A. Patterson, Kellogg's editor-in-chief when he bought the Kellogg List. Patterson had just developed a marketing plan for the A.N. Kellogg Company that laid out the circulation territories for each newspaper and ensured the exclusive use of material in each territory by tracking the features and articles sold to each newspaper through any medium sold by the company – ready-print, plates, mats, or copy. It is assumed that this system was incorporated into the WNU marketing plan upon Patterson's hiring. This would ensure that there would always be something new in the weekly newspaper and different in another weekly newspaper if a family subscribed to two, making them more appealing against their increased competition.

Although most newspaper men came to the business during this time with a background in it, the WNU continued to print *The Printer's Auxiliary*, changing its name to *The Western Publisher* in 1902 and then to *The Publisher's Auxiliary* in 1915. The focus shifted with the new market, concentrating on industry news and, as always, the products the WNU could supply to make the rural weekly newspaper editor's life easier.

¹⁵ Elmo Scott Watson, *History of Auxiliary Newspaper Service in the United States* (Champaign, Ill: Illinois Publishing Co, 1923), p. 52.

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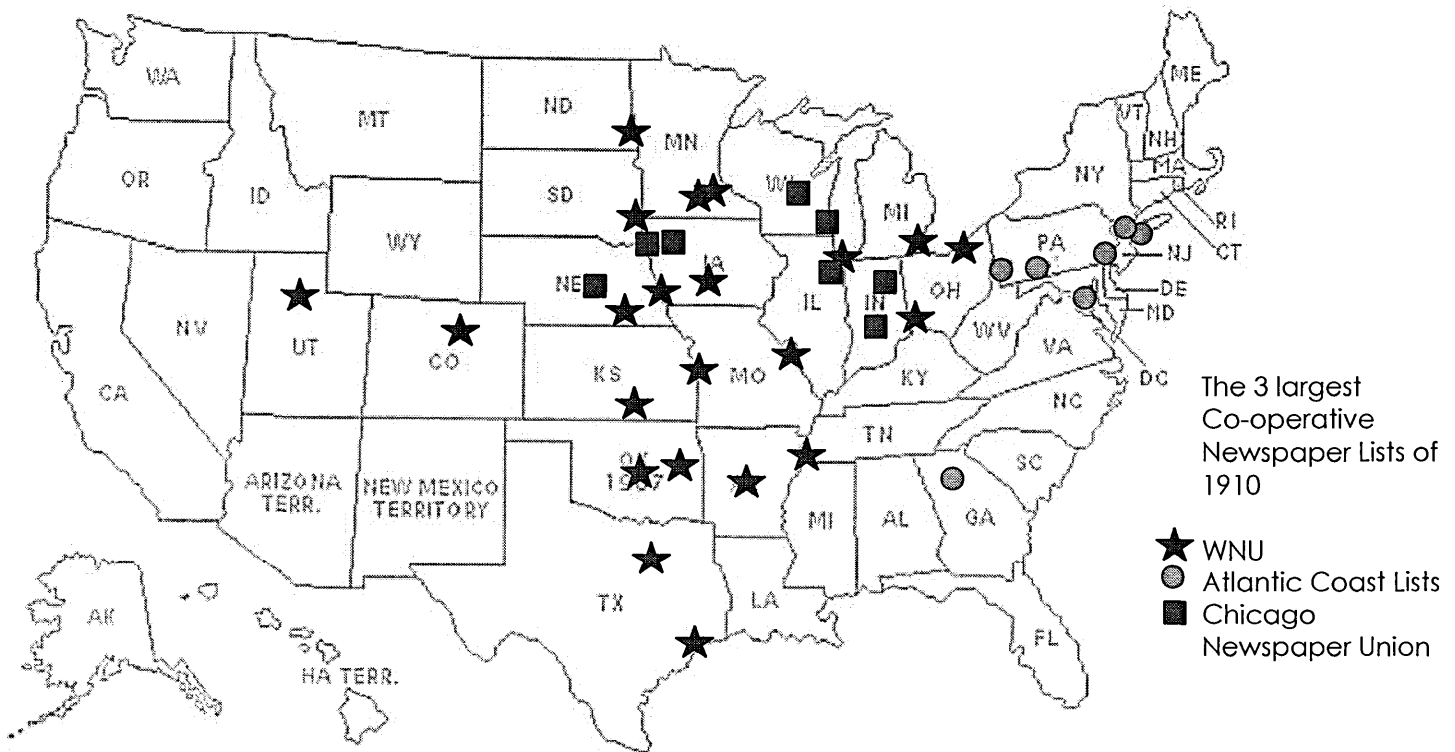


Figure 6: The United States of America - 1910

During a two year period from 1909-1911 Joslyn acquired 18 branches from competitors large and small, including the Northwest Newspaper Union, the Indiana Newspaper Union, the New York Newspaper Union, the Chicago Newspaper Union, the York (Nebraska) Newspaper Union, and the Wisconsin State Journal. Joslyn also appears to have purchased the Atlantic Coast Lists in 1910 as well. The N.W. Ayer and Sons Newspaper Directory for 1911 shows several branches that used to be on the Atlantic Coast List now on the WNU list. This made for a total of 33 branches in the WNU which served a combined 7,185 newspapers and created a monopoly. With these purchases, the WNU supplied 95% of all newspapers who used ready-print with their half-printed pages. This left the American Press Association as his last major rival, and then only in the boiler-plate business. After a protracted legal battle, this was also acquired, but not until 1917, a year after Joslyn's death. At the time of Joslyn's death in 1916, it was said that "The greatest factor in [the WNU's] growth had been the financial genius and aggressive leadership of the young New Englander,"¹⁶ George A. Joslyn.

This last acquisition of Joslyn's had lasting effects on the company. As rural populations decreased after 1920 and technology advanced, rural newspapers close to large urban areas began discontinuing ready-print and focusing on local news and light entertainment. They replaced their ready-print with boiler plate and filled in

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 54.

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their news around it. Smaller weekly newspapers, however, clung onto the financial security that ready-print offered in reduced labor wages and it continued to hold a place in the WNU line until 1950.

1917-1952

The WNU continued long after Joslyn's death. Initially, controlling interest went to his wife, Sarah Joslyn, but the presidency of the company fell to long-time employee Herbert H. Fish, who had started at the Lincoln branch office in 1893 and who moved to Omaha in 1900 to work directly under Joslyn. In 1923, the WNU had branches in 37 cities, which serviced 14,274 accounts. Additionally, "the Western Paper Company had nine facilities in eight Midwestern states that wholesaled paper and printing supplies."¹⁷

In 1929, Sarah Joslyn sold her controlling interest in the business to a group of employees. Fish continued to serve as company president, but moved the general office to his home town of New York. During the transition, the company "seemed to suffer very little, as ready-print customers fell away – forty percent had dropped the service by the mid-20s, they then signed up for the boilerplate service."¹⁸ John H. Perry took over as company president in 1938. In 1952, he marked the end of an era for the company. The WNU closed its ready-print service in March due to the rising cost of newsprint and distribution, and faster methods of news dissemination.¹⁹ At this time, the company was still producing 1,250,000 copies of ready-print in 27 plants for 1,412 customers. The company had an additional 17 plants and, after the transition, the company continued producing and marketing news features, selling paper, printing equipment and plastic plates, and providing commercial stereotyping, typography and electrotyping for advertisers and advertising agencies. Today, the Western Paper Company is part of XPEDEX, and the WNU is part of International Paper.

¹⁷ Dennis Mihelich, "George Joslyn, America's First Media Mogul," *Nebraska History* (Spring 2001), p. 35.

¹⁸ Eugene C. Harter and Dorothy Harter, *Boilerplating America: The Hidden Newspaper* (New York: University Press of America, 1991), p. 161-162.

¹⁹ "Readyprint soon to close up shop," *New York Times*, Feb 8 1952, p. 30.

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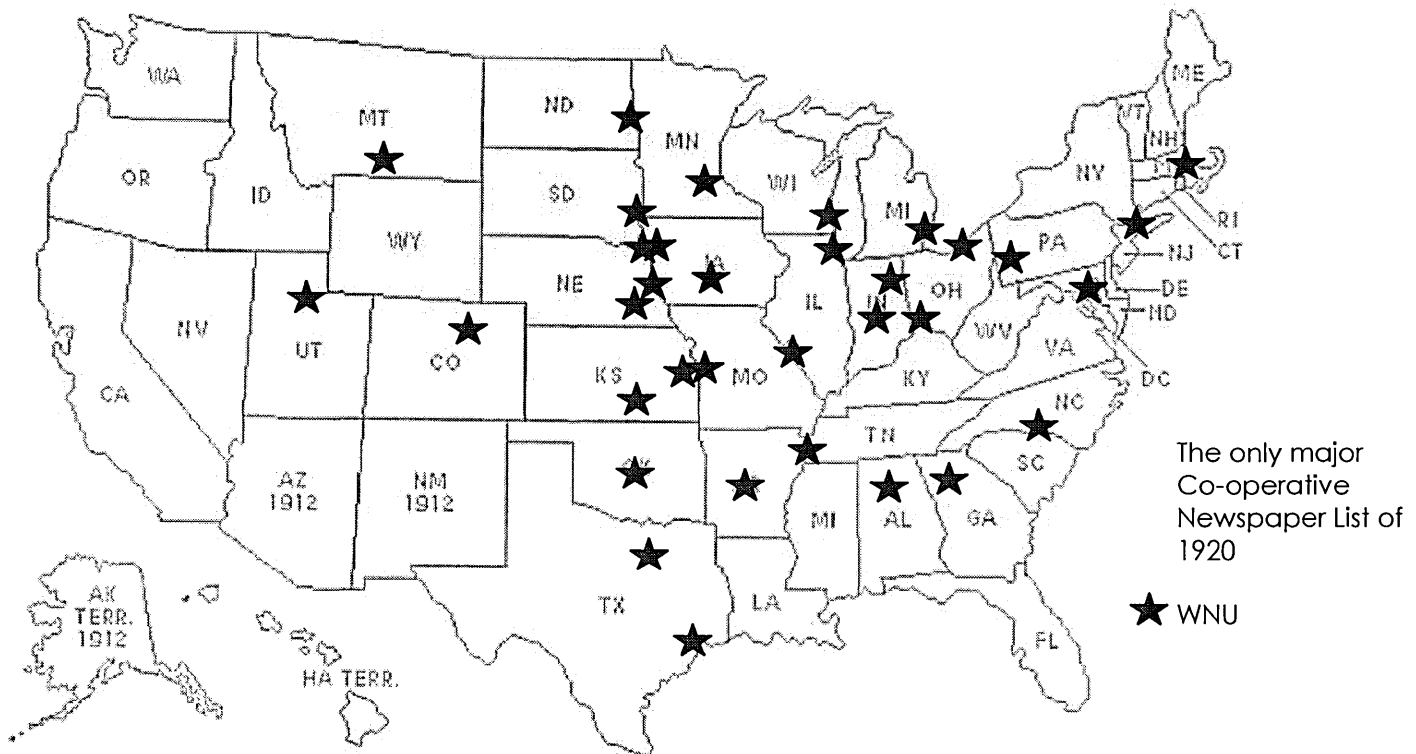


Figure 7: The United States of America - 1920

The National Influence of the WNU

As the company spread across America, so did its influence. The company's largest impact was on rural America during Joslyn's reign as company president. During this period, the majority of the WNU's customers were small, weekly newspapers located in towns of fewer than 8,000 that served both the town and the surrounding farms, sometimes covering most of a county. At the peak of its ready-print business in the nineteen-teens, the WNU had an estimated readership of 36 million for just this product; approximately 64% of America's rural population. Furthermore, the local editor could not change this product once it arrived from the WNU plant. Additionally, there was little else to choose from both for the editors, and for their subscribers. This all combined to give the WNU a significant influence over people in rural America in the early 1900s who often didn't even know they were reading material the WNU produced.

Two of the most noteworthy illustrations of the WNU's influence during Joslyn's presidency are the records of the U.S. Senate's Sherman Antitrust Hearings of 1912 and the scholarly research on serial literature. Having been the subject of antitrust hearings in the U.S. Senate illustrates that the content and businesses practices of the WNU were believed to have a national impact. Witnesses brought forth letters, telegrams and financial records to make the case against the WNU. More recently, the content of the WNU has received attention as scholars attempt to understand how the early publishing industry functioned. Many serial stories were published by

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newspapers and early subscription services, including the WNU. Because it had such a large customer base, the decisions of the WNU on which stories to offer to its clients, and which were eventually published had an impact on rural America that we are just beginning to understand.

Sherman Antitrust Act

During his lifetime, like many successful businessmen Joslyn's company, the WNU, was the target of numerous lawsuits. In recognition of the amount of influence the WNU had, its business practices were also investigated as a possible violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act in a series of Senate Committee Hearings. By 1911, Joslyn held a monopoly in the ready-print side of the auxiliary newspaper service business and was trying to acquire his last significant rival in the boiler-plate side of the business, the American Press Association. Like others who started businesses in hopes of large buy-outs by industrial statesmen, the American Press Association refused to sell to Joslyn and instead started a ready-print business in November of 1911. To counteract this, Joslyn began a protracted price war, and was initially blocked from purchasing the company by the Department of Justice under the Sherman Antitrust Act.

In the fall of 1912, the American Press Association found a sympathetic ear in the Senate and the government brought the WNU in front of its Trust Legislation Hearings. Early testimony by the American Press Association estimated that rural weekly newspapers reached four out of five families in the U.S., where the most popular magazine only reached one in five,²⁰ generating some concern that if one company held a monopoly in both boiler-plate and ready-print, it would mold the opinions of the readers to a single point of view and not provide them with a full understanding of all sides of an issue. After three days of testimony, the Senate hearing found that the WNU was threatening editors and undercutting prices.

A resulting suit was filed in the Northern District of Illinois and almost immediately after filing the suit, the government filed a Statement of Decree ordering both businesses to stop unfair acts of competition. In 1915, however, Joslyn and the WNU were accused of underselling competitors and issuing false reports against them, and threatened with contempt of court. Surprisingly, at about this time the government relented and allowed the American Press Association to sell its boiler-plate and ready-print operations to the WNU. A series of negotiations occurred between the government and both companies. Long and contentious, the sale did not become final until 1917 – a year after Joslyn's death.²¹

Altogether, the Senate's willingness to hold these hearings shows that it believed in the possibility of influence by the WNU on America's rural population. Furthermore, the WNU's ability to have its interests represented throughout the hearings by legal counsel with the ability to cross-examine the witnesses while its detractors were served solely by the U.S. Senators, shows Joslyn's ability to curry favor with the Senators on the committee.

Literature

In a more recent examination of the influence of the WNU; its role, and the role of auxiliary newspaper services in early fiction publication were examined by scholars interested in learning more about the early publishing

²⁰ Newspapers reported that it would affect 60,000,000 readers. Both of these statements may be exaggerations as 60,000,000 is equal to slightly more than the total rural population in 1915, or two-thirds of the total U.S. population.

²¹ Dan Kiper, *The Joslyns of Lynhurst: The true story of George, Sarah and their Castle* (New York: iUniverse, 2006), p. 6.

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industry. In the late 1800s, many rural areas had infrequent mail delivery and limited funds for frivolities (which meant that books were scarce). The weekly newspaper was one of the few things on hand to read besides the Bible, and was one of the few modes of entertainment available. The newspaper thus became something that was typically read closely, saved and passed around. It is estimated that between three and five people read each weekly newspaper. To see the effect of this, we can use the *Argus* as an example. In 1894, this weekly newspaper was printed every Friday in Albion, Nebraska, a town with a population of 926 in Boone County, population 8,683. Its circulation was approximately 800; therefore if five people read each copy, the newspaper reached 4,000 people, or one-half of that county's population.

The wide-spread use of ready-print and boiler-plate in small rural newspapers such as the *Argus* "acted like cookie-cutters, standardizing to an unknown degree much of the nation's character through the gatekeeper function, doling out selected news [and literature] products to areas of America that had little else to read."²² When Joslyn made the WNU the monopoly supplier of these services, he effectively created a significant sphere of influence on our nation's rural population. Until 1920 ready-print was the more popular product because of the small editorial staffs of rural populations. It was also the most influential and restrictive since the local editor had no means to change it. Boiler-plate, although it came in a limited selection, could be placed where the local editor chose and could be cut to fit if necessary.

One result of the large number of rural weekly newspapers subscribing to the WNU's ready-print service was to create something equivalent to the first book club where large portions of the population were reading the same fictional stories at the same time. Serial stories were first published in ready-print newspapers in the 1870s as a way to gain readership among women and thus their buying power for advertisers. Initially, auxiliary newspaper service companies clipped and reprinted the stories from magazines and books. As copyright law became more strictly enforced in the mid-1880s, auxiliary newspaper service concerns began paying authors and their agents to print new and second runs of a variety of works. As a general rule, however, they used only stories that were morally upright, with lots of action and little extended scene description or character development.²³ On one hand, this selection was a choice made by the auxiliary newspaper service companies. On the other hand, it was a response to requests by local newspaper editors for a certain type of material. Although each editor represented only a small amount of purchase power, auxiliary newspaper service companies including the WNU prided themselves on responding to customers' needs and desires, winning a good reputation with good service. The result in either case, however, was a limited selection of stories where the end reader had little choice – similar to going to the library and only being able to check books out of the romance section. The general reader would never know of all the other possibilities that existed unless they were able to make that rare trip to a store and rarer still had money to purchase a book for pleasure.

²² Eugene C. Harter and Dorothy Harter, *Boilerplating America: The Hidden Newspaper* (New York: University Press of America, 1991), p. 56.

²³ Charles Johanningsmeier, *Fiction and the American Literary Marketplace: The Role of Newspaper Syndicates, 1860-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 169.

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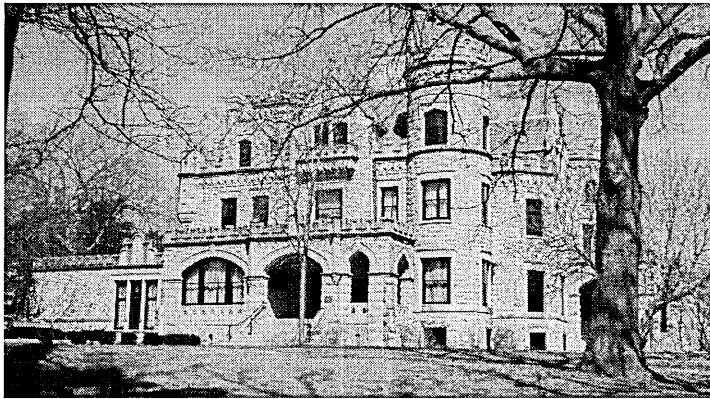


Figure 8: Main Residence - April 2008

Joslyn Castle as the Embodiment of Joslyn's Legacy

"The old notion that wealth is desired for the sake of power was never completely true. It has always been desired also, as a rule, for the sake of display."²⁴ In all ages, rich men who have not displayed their wealth and power have been considered eccentric. In countries without a ruling class, building estates has been a way to spend wealth and to create something that would leave an impression in the popular mind. In America, without a ruling class or an aristocracy, it was also a way for the newly wealthy of the Industrial Revolution to assert their place among their peers. They may not have appreciated the intricacies of each other's businesses enough to see the investment and power each represented, but

they could easily comprehend the value and image that an estate portrayed. Thus their homes became a tangible means to measure against one another. Furthermore, this display would have meant nothing if the Owner were not able to show it to advantage. Seeing the estate from a distance is nice, but shows only a portion of the wealth that went into constructing it. Consequently many estates were the sites of dinners and parties with business guests, where the visitors could be impressed by a full tour and therefore better appreciate the taste and wealth of the Owner. Their perception of one another clarified after such a visit, a little business was often conducted on the estate in a more relaxed fashion after such affairs or in correspondence that followed.

Joslyn was no exception. Concurrent with building the WNU into a nation-wide business, he oversaw the construction of his estate in Omaha. Joslyn bought a farm on the outskirts of Omaha in 1893, soon after he became president of the WNU. In contrast to the WNU, where anonymity was important, Joslyn's estate represented his chance to make a statement about his wealth and status. He carefully selected designers and craftsmen who understood the image he was interested in projecting and who could deliver it in a way that would be recognized by his peers. "George often said that creating the beautiful landscape of his estate was his proudest achievement."²⁵ The development of the estate became a simultaneous objective with the development of the WNU.

For the summer of 1893, the Joslyns moved to the Rosalie Court area of Chicago to attend the Columbian Exposition and to plan the landscape and construction of their estate. It is believed that he and his wife met John Thorpe there, chief of floriculture for the Exposition. After the Exposition, the couple lived at the Hotel Imperial in Chicago for seven weeks, which was close to the interior design firm of Spierling and Linden, who are credited with the interior design of the castle. During this same period, Joslyn added four branch plants to the

²⁴ E.L. Godkin, "The Expenditure of Rich Men," ed. Sigmund Diamond, *The Nation Transformed; the Creation of an Industrial Society* (New York, G. Braziller, 1963).

²⁵ Dan Kiper, *The Joslyns of Lynhurst: The true story of George, Sarah and their Castle* (New York: iUniverse, 2006), p. 17.

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WNU, increasing the company's ready-print business to 32% of those newspapers who subscribed to this type of service.

By late 1897 the landscaping was well underway. During this period, orchid mania had hit the wealthy elite and the Joslyns joined in this indulgence. A permit for his first Greenhouse was issued in August of 1897. This building continued to evolve until the residence was complete in 1903. The permit for the brick fence and gardener's house was issued in September of 1897. Then several years elapsed with little work completed as most local resources were taken by the Trans-Mississippi Exposition in 1898. At the same time, Joslyn kept the WNU on a steady course through the national depression of the 1890s. It was not until July 1900 that the permit for the carriage house was issued. It was very elaborate for such a utilitarian structure – including glazed tile interior walls and etched glass transom windows.

Construction of the residence began in March 1902. Its 34 rooms spread over 19,000 square feet and were completed for a cost of \$250,000²⁶ – more than four times the original estimate. The couple moved in October of 1903, just before Joslyn's company entered the era of consolidation. Joslyn occupied the house from 1903 until his death in 1916 while he completed the take over of the WNU's major competitors. Correspondence entered into evidence in the antitrust lobby investigation indicates that Joslyn entertained the president of at least one of his rivals at his estate as he negotiated a takeover. After his death, his wife retained control of the company until 1929 and continued to live on the estate until her death in 1940.

With its long association with Joslyn as he built the WNU into a national business, the Joslyn Castle is a better physical representation of Joslyn and the WNU than any of Joslyn's offices or the branch buildings of the company. Throughout his career Joslyn insisted that he remain based in Omaha, even though many urged him to consider Chicago as more central to his business interests. It is unclear how often he visited the other branch offices. This then makes the buildings in Omaha the best candidates to represent Joslyn's achievements. He had invested in Omaha early and continued to build on that initial investment. None of the buildings that housed the WNU in Omaha, however, were designed to be larger or more impressive than any of the other branch offices of the company. Other than the fact that this was Joslyn's home town, there was nothing to outwardly signify that this was the financial headquarters of the company. Locally, the WNU had offices in several buildings in Omaha over time. The first was 1123 Howard Street from 1882-1885, which was replaced by the Mayfair Building in 1892. The second was 511 S 12th from 1886-1898, which has been replaced by a parking lot and small ice-cream store. The third was 510 S 15th from 1899-1916. This was actually a side entrance into a portion of the building at 1501-1505 Howard Street (DO09:0121-055). Built in 1893, this building still stands; however, it was not constructed for the WNU and held many other uses over the years. Today it has less integrity than the Castle, having been painted white and undergone alterations to its storefront and interior layout. Finally, the Western Newspaper Building at 621 S 15th Street in Omaha was constructed only one year before Joslyn's death. In comparison, the Joslyn Castle was designed to impress business rivals as well as peers of the Industrial Revolution and display the wealth Joslyn accumulated in his career. The care he put into his residence makes it clear that this is how he wanted to be known. Therefore Joslyn Castle is the best embodiment of Joslyn's legacy.

²⁶ \$250,000 in 1903 would equal approximately \$6 million in 2007.

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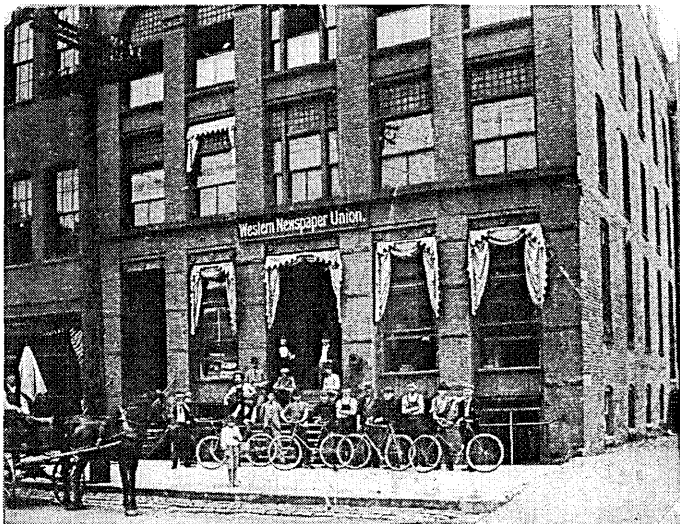


Figure 9: WNU office at 511 S 12th Street



Figure 10: WNU office at 1501-1505 Howard

CRITERION C – THE WORK OF A MASTER-BUILDER AND A REPRESENTATIVE OF A STYLE AND PERIOD

National Context of Residences of Industrial Statesmen & the Scottish Baronial Revival Style

In addition to its association with George Joslyn, a nationally significant publisher, the Joslyn Castle is also significant state-wide as the work of a collection of Master Builders and nationally as a rare and excellent example of Scottish Baronial Revival architecture in the United States.

Businessmen of the Industrial Revolution often worked in the latest technologies, and came home to places that were representative of simpler, easier times. "The past became a tangible, fixed anchor in a world of flux, serving as the 'roots', the foundation for a world in a process of disruptive change and pervasive conflict."²⁷ Biltmore (1895) is one well known icon that illustrates this dynamic. It was constructed over a six-year period and fashioned after three châteaux built in 16th-century France. Its form and detailing are the epitome of a castle and represent hundreds of years of building knowledge.

In focusing on the residential architecture of this period, it is clear that the Châteauesque style was prevalent among the extremely wealthy. Popularized by Richard Morris Hunt for his affluent clients, its massive masonry construction and elaborate and expensive detailing did not translate well to vernacular forms and thus it remained a "relatively rare, architect-designed fashion."²⁸ Similarly, the stone body and Medieval appearance of Scottish Baronial Revival architecture meant that it was used more for private residences of the elite than

²⁷ Marvin Trachtenberg and Isabelle Hyman. *Architecture from Prehistory to Post-Modernism / the Western Tradition*, (New York, New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc, 1986), p. 431.

²⁸ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Knopf, 1984), p. 373-374.

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average homes of the period. Both styles were also used for large apartment buildings and railroad hotels of the period. However, Scottish Baronial Revival architecture is more common in Canada than in the United States, likely because of its larger Scottish population.

When the Scottish Baronial Revival spread to North America in the 1850s, it "took its inspiration from the buildings of the Scottish Renaissance" as a tide of national pride rose in Scotland.²⁹ Its form and detailing were from the late 16th and early 17th Century tower house. "The indigenous castellar style of the tower house with its tall austere walls, asymmetrically grouped and crowned with a skyline of corbelled battlements, crow-stepped gables, bartizans and turrets could... be uniquely identified with Scottish national culture..."³⁰ It can be distinguished from Châteauesque architecture by its more Medieval appearance, with a rusticated stone body, stepped gables, shot windows, and projecting turrets; where Châteauesque tends to present a more refined appearance with Renaissance details, a smooth brick or stone body, and mansard roofs. Less obvious is the tendency of Scottish Baronial architecture to place an emphasis on vertical form and a relatively compact plan, where Châteauesque architecture is often more horizontal in form and in larger examples tends to sprawl.³¹

Joslyn Castle as a National Example of the Scottish Baronial Revival Style

There is no definitive proof of how the Scottish Baronial style was selected for Joslyn Castle. However, "since McDonald was quite proud of his Scottish ancestry, it is logical to assume he is the one who chose to design the structures at Lynhurst [Joslyn Castle] in the Scottish Baronial style."³² Similar to many architects trained in this period, McDonald was educated to believe that "not only were the forms of historic architecture valuable through their beauty, but they came to our times freighted with historic associations that every cultured person was familiar with, and that seemed to suggest, even to demand, that a certain building in a certain place, be built in some one of a rather restricted range of styles....a house was usually Georgian, Tudor, or Cotswold...unless it was a mansion and intended to look like one, in which case it might have been Jacobean or one of the Louis."³³ Furthermore, having grown up in Canada, which has a large number of Scottish Baronial style buildings, and visited Scotland many times, McDonald would have been familiar with this architectural style and associated it with residences of the wealthy.

Many Scottish Baronial characteristics are evident in the buildings of the Joslyn estate. From the exterior massing to the finest details, the buildings follow through consistently with this single style. All of the structures were designed with asymmetrical massing in tall shapes with compact plans. The rusticated masonry exterior, crow-stepped gables, drum turrets and corbelled chimneys complete this style. It is this consistency and completeness of style and high level of integrity that make the Joslyn estate so significant.

²⁹ www.freewebs.com/gillonj/index.htm

³⁰ www.artnet.com/library/07/0771/T077159.ASP

³¹ See Hubert Fenwick's "Scottish Baronial Houses" for more in-depth information on the development of the Scottish Baronial Revival Style.

³² Dan Kiper, *The Joslyns of Lynhurst: The true story of George, Sarah and their Castle* (New York: iUniverse, 2006), p. 31.

³³ Walter C. Kidney, *The Architecture of Choice: Eclecticism in America 1880-1930*, New York: George Braziller, 1974, P. 2.

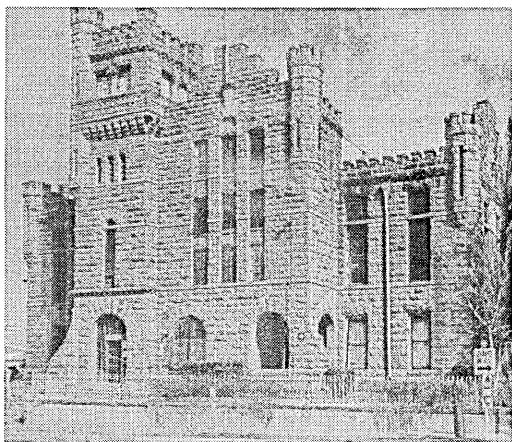
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**Figure 11: Brown County Jail**

The National Register currently lists a few examples of Scottish Baronial Revival style. These include the Henry Ford Estate, Fairlane, and several works of Martin and Moodie in Texas. Fairlane was the main residence of Henry and Clara Bryant Ford in Dearborn, Michigan. It was completed in 1914 and contains 56 rooms and 31,000 square feet. The design of Fairlane mixed Prairie style massing and details with Scottish Baronial Revival elements and Tudor Revival details in a long, low building. In comparison, the buildings of the Joslyn estate are a more pure example of the Scottish Baronial Revival style. Slightly smaller at 34 rooms and 19,000 square feet, the main residence of Joslyn Castle is stacked into three compact stories with a tall hip roof. In a second comparison, the work of Martin and Moodie Architects of Texas is fairly well known for the elements of Scottish Baronial Revival style displayed in their work. Of the three buildings they designed that are listed on the National Register, the Brown County Jail, in Brownwood, Texas,³⁴ is the clearest example of this architectural style.

The selection of this style and its relative purity may be traced to the combination of Peter Moodie, who was a Scottish-born contractor, and the local labor force in the Brownwood area, which was particularly full of Scottish and English stone masons. The building still stands as an excellent example of this architectural style. Tall and compact, the building is finished in rusticated stone with many typical Scottish details, such as drum turrets and crow stepped gables. Joslyn Castle, however, displays the same features of this style in its more traditional use – that of a residence and not a public or governmental building.

The Master Builders

The design of Joslyn Castle and its grounds are credited to a number of designers, varying from the internationally known John Thorpe to the state-wide-famous John McDonald. It is unclear how much the designers worked together to create the vision that became the Joslyn estate, and how much of the cohesiveness was due to the direction of George Joslyn. It appears that much of the landscaping work was completed by the time the residence was begun. However, John McDonald was practicing architecture during this period and was good friends with Joslyn. Therefore McDonald may have at least influenced the work that set the stage for his own.

The initial design of the grounds is credited to John Thorpe and Charles Carpenter. John Thorpe was identified in an early local newspaper account of the landscape design at the estate. He was an internationally famous horticulturist, botanist and naturalist who came to America in 1872. He was prominent in organizing the American Carnation Society, the Horticultural Society of New York, and the Chrysanthemum Society of America, and was a Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society of London, England. He was also one of the founders of the Society of American Florists and its first president. He was active in many of shows in England, Scotland, and Ireland and managed the first flower show in Madison Square Garden and the first two shows in Kansas City in 1902 and 1903. In 1893, he was appointed chief of the Department of Floriculture at the World's

³⁴ <http://www.historictexas.net/brown/history/brown-co-jail.htm>

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Columbian Exposition in Chicago. It is likely at this exposition that he met the Joslyns. Thorpe was well known for working in the Gardenesque Movement; creating groupings of exotic plants set apart from their natural environment. This approach is consistent with what is known of the original landscape design of the estate, which included mature imported exotic trees and plants from all over the world.

Charles G. Carpenter was also identified in early newspaper accounts with the design of the grounds and his name was on the building permits for the greenhouse, brick gate and gardener's house. A designer of local significance, when Carpenter first came to Omaha, he worked for the city of Omaha. During this period, the city hired H.W.S. Cleveland to design the city's parks and boulevards system. Cleveland was known for natural landscape design and working with him may have influenced Carpenter's work. He began his own practice in time to work on the Joslyn estate. Then after completing that project, he worked as an engineer for the Omaha Board of Parks and appears to have left Omaha in 1905.³⁵

John McDonald designed the main residence and carriage house at the Joslyn estate. An architect of state-wide significance, he graduated from McGill University in Montreal, Quebec, Canada and met the Joslyns in 1885 when he stayed at the Metropolitan Hotel they owned and resided at in Omaha. Their common ties to Montreal and a shared love of hunting forged a life-long friendship between the two men. Joslyn became McDonald's patron. Joslyn gave or influenced commissions for McDonald which included the Child Savings Institute, First Unitarian Church, Joslyn Castle, Joslyn Art Museum, the public library in Waitsfield, Vermont, and the WNU Building at 621 South 15th Street in Omaha. McDonald was also a friend of Thomas Kimball – Nebraska's most famous architect.³⁶ Kimball granted McDonald the commission for the Apiary and the Nebraska State Building at the Trans-Mississippi Exposition. Additionally, McDonald was one of three winners of the first stage of the Nebraska Capitol Competition, which Kimball oversaw.

A discussion of the estate's designers would not be complete without mention of Jens Jensen, a nationally recognized landscape architect. Jensen was known for designing in the Prairie School style, using native species and designing in harmony with the landscape. He is responsible of the landscape of many of Chicago's parks, estates for many wealthy Midwesterners, such as Henry and Edsel Ford, and parks in other Midwestern cities, in addition to the creation of the Cook County Forest Preserve District. Jensen was not part of the original design team, but after the tornado in 1913 destroyed the original greenhouse, he designed the small conservatory that is attached to the main residence today.

Conclusion

The WNU continues to have a nation-wide impact today. The WNU rose out of the Great Plains and spread across our nation. Its cheap ready-print allowed newspapers to spring up everywhere, covering local events in fledgling towns of the Trans-Mississippi area and the reconstructing South. It united the majority of our nation's rural population with common literature to read for entertainment and kept them informed of state and national events. Without the services of this company, many weekly newspapers would not have been able to survive. Because of it, those newspapers are now a rich primary source of information for scholars and lay-people alike.

³⁵ Dan Kiper, *The Joslyns of Lynhurst: The true story of George, Sarah and their Castle* (New York: iUniverse, 2006), p. 135.

³⁶ Interview, Joni Fogarty

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The history of our country is in its newspapers; the majority of which were printed weekly and were the product of local editors and the syndicated services they subscribed to, such as the WNU. Since the beginning of our country they have informed our citizens of local and national events and entertained them with stories. Today, they provide a record of our lives. They are a rich primary source of historical information, useful to scholars and lay-people alike. As we look back and attempt to understand our past, the difficulty with using newspapers as source material has always been accessibility. We have typically been limited to reading through individual newspapers. This is changing as archivists digitize these collections. This takes a great deal of time and server space, as the people involved with the Utah Digital Newspaper Project found when first attempting to digitize the newspapers of Utah. There is an enormous amount of material to scan and organize into a searchable database. In order to make it more manageable, they left out the content from the WNU. No other decision could have saved them as much space while at the same time preserved the more intimate details of local history that most of their patrons were interested in. Perhaps as our technology continues to evolve, the WNU articles, too, can be scanned so scholars can better understand the influences of its content.

The WNU become a nation-wide auxiliary newspaper service business primarily through the work of George Joslyn. His ambition and shrewd business sense led first to the success of the Omaha branch office, then to the establishment of additional branches and finally to the consolidation of the WNU's rivals into its own company. With its long association with George Joslyn as he built the company, the Joslyn Castle is nationally significant under Criterion B.

In addition, Joslyn Castle is nationally significant under Criterion C as a rare and exceptional example of Scottish Baronial Revival architecture. Not often found in the U.S., all of the buildings on its grounds consistently have compact plans, rusticated masonry, drum turrets and other character-defining features in perfect renditions of this style. Finally, the estate also has state-wide significance as the collective work of nationally and state-wide-recognized Master Builders.

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Omaha Public Library Clipping Files

Joslyn Museum Library Clipping Files

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Nebraska State Historical Society Library
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WNU Buildings on the NR

Bunker Building, 820 Baltimore Ave, Kansas City, MO

Western Newspaper Union Building, 304 W. 10th St., Kansas City, 07000170, LISTED, 3/21/07

Western Newspaper Union Building, Omaha NE