



75th ANNUAL PLAINS ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

Banquet Keynote

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Abstract Title: The “Audacious” Children of Africa and Their Circuitous Route to Nebraska Sandhills Homesteads

This talk will focus on a small group of families that homesteaded in north-central Nebraska in 1904. But the deeper story is one of terroristic abduction in the early 1800s, unwilling transport followed by slavery in a new, unknown world and strange culture. It is the story of brutality, suppression, a quest for freedom, and finding refuge in Canada. The tale finally culminates in the acquisition that drove every pioneer – “a piece of land of my own” – and the surprising establishment of a Nebraska Sandhills community of white and black farmers and ranchers who lived and worked as equals and with respect for over 30 years. This is the story of DeWitty, Nebraska, later renamed Audacious and the black homesteaders that founded.



"Moses Speese near Westerville, Custer County, Nebraska." 1888 photograph by Solomon Butcher. Nebraska State Historical Society, Butcher, Solomon D. (Solomon Devore), 1856-1927 Collection, reproduction number RG2608.PH:000000-001345.

