

### Document A

This photograph shows a family in front of their sod home. There were few trees on the Great Plains, so wood for building was scarce. Homesteaders constructed walls for their homes by stacking 3" thick slabs of sod cut from the prairie. Because photographs were rare, subjects often took a portrait seriously, dressing in their best clothes.

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**Title:** Melanathan Price, West Union, Custer County, Nebraska.

**Date:** 1886

**Photographer:** Solomon Butcher

## Document B

The photograph shows a father with his three children in front of their home. Butcher reported that the mother of the children had died and that the photograph was taken just after a heavy rainstorm. The roof had just collapsed under the weight of the wet sod on the top of the home.

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**Title:** Three motherless children and a caved-in soddy [sod home]

**Location:** Custer County, Nebraska

**Date:** 1887

**Photographer:** Solomon Butcher

### Document C

This photograph shows the Shores family. Jerry Shores, who is seated second from the right, had been enslaved decades earlier. Thousands of African Americans moved to the Great Plains from the South in the 1870s and 1880s for the opportunity to own land – and in hopes of escaping the oppression and injustice they experienced in the South.

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**Title:** The Shores family near Westerville, Custer County, Nebraska.

**Date:** 1887

**Photographer:** Solomon Butcher

### Document D

Parents with their three children standing in front of their home. Butcher typically asked those he photographed to face the sun to improve the lighting for the image, which is why his subjects often appear to be squinting or looking down slightly. Because any movement would cause the image to be blurry, the subjects typically posed for the photographs, remaining still.



**Title:** Starting a New Family Northwest of West Union, Nebraska.

**Location:** Custer County, Nebraska

**Date:** 1886

**Photographer:** Solomon Butcher

## Document E

This photograph shows a family with their livestock. Butcher reported that the family wanted to take the photograph with their piano so that their relatives back East would see it. However, they did not want their family to see the state of their house, so they asked to move it outdoors for the photograph.



**Title:** The David Hilton family near Weissert, Custer County, Nebraska.

**Date:** 1887

**Photographer:** Solomon Butcher