



# Prairie Forge: The Extraordinary Story of the Nebraska Scrap Metal Drive of World War II

*James J. Kimble*

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In the wake of Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt called for the largest arms buildup in our nation's history. A shortage of steel, however, quickly slowed the program's momentum, and arms production fell dangerously behind schedule. The country needed scrap metal. Henry Doorly, publisher of the *Omaha World-Herald*, had the solution. *Prairie Forge* tells the story of the great Nebraska scrap drive of 1942—a campaign that swept the nation and yielded *five million tons* of scrap metal, literally salvaging the war effort itself.

James J. Kimble chronicles Doorly's conception of a fierce competition pitting county against county, business against business, and, in schools across the state, class against class—inspiring Nebraskans to gather 67,000 tons of scrap metal in only three weeks. This astounding feat provided the template for a national drive. A tale of plowshares turned into arms, *Prairie Forge* gives the first full account of how home became home front for so many civilians.

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