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Children at the Crossroads

By Judge Ernest L. Reeker

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Why the Title "Children at the Crossroads"

So many kind letters have come to us from readers after but two releases of "Children at the Crossroads," with numerous inquiries as to why the feature bears this title, that we have decided to withdraw the juvenile court story scheduled for today and substitute the history of the title's origin.

It goes back to two years ago when we motored to South Dakota to attend the "Days of '76" celebration held at Deadwood every year. All day long we had driven over miles of road that led straight ahead. If you have motored through the West, you are familiar with this seemingly endless stretch of road that lies just in front of you, no matter what route you follow.

Monotonous mile after mile slid under our automobile wheels, thru bare, dusty, drought-stricken and desolate country, devoid of scenery on either side, and, to all appearances, uninhabited. There was not even one tiny blade of grass to stir in the ceaseless wind.

At length, toward nightfall, our weary eyes beheld a break in that eternal road ahead. We had arrived at a crossroad, and here we paused to try to determine which thoroughfare we should take. Then we heard the unmistakable sound of a horse approaching on our left. Turning, we saw its rider was one who could tell us whether the roads led. He was a forest ranger. . . . The road straight ahead continued through barren lands, he said, but if we took the turn to the right we would enter a region of spectacular beauty.

The guide was rich in knowledge

of the nature of the country through which we must travel; therefore we took the turn he suggested. Soon, before us, in the glow of the crimson, descending sun, lay the Bad Lands of South Dakota. Mountains were castles with turrets reaching high in the crisp air, or they might have been spires of distant cathedrals, surrounded by smaller mounds, all washed in dazzling, gorgeous colors, shifting from orchid to deep purple, from azure to indigo, from pink to flame; so sublime a magnificence that it seemed the Almighty had imprinted his visage upon the earth that we might glimpse the grandeur of Heaven.

That sight would have been lost to our vision had not the forest ranger, out of the wealth of his experience, pointed the way.

So it is with hundreds of unfortunate who find themselves at the juvenile court corner, the crossroads of their careers. They have been traveling along a desolate highway and have reached a place where they may change their direction.

One road leads on to a life of crime; the other, to good citizenship. No clear, sharp signs mark these paths. Poverty, sickness, neglect, unemployment and lack of experience have wholly obscured the dim symbols rarely scattered along the way. . . . Probation and the modern juvenile court must point to the turn in the road which leads to peace, beauty, and success. Hence the title, "Children at the Crossroads."

Ernest L. Reeker

Greenwood

Mr. John Mefford is not so well at this writing.

The condition of Mrs. Ruth Dyer remains very serious.

Rev. and Mrs. Williams visited at the Lloyd Jeffrey home last Sunday.

Ralph Witt of Norfolk is spending a few days at home with his folks.

Thelma Holke is visiting at Ceresco with her sisters, Margaret and Mamie.

Wilma Stradley has returned home after visiting her grandmother at Hampton.

Mr. and Mrs. Bert Alton of Omaha called at the Fred Ethredge home last week.

Quite a number of Greenwood folks attended the picnic at Eagle Tuesday and Wednesday.

Mr. and Mrs. Jim Strahan of Waverly were guests at the Fred Etheridge home Sunday.

Mrs. Rose Curtiss of Hampton,

Nebr., is visiting her daughter, Mrs. Earl Stradley, this week.

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Weimers and baby visited Mrs. Bessie Weimers Saturday night and Sunday.

Mrs. Fannie Sayles and daughters Thelma and Emily left Monday for Denver to visit with her son Jack.

The Rebekah lodge met Thursday evening, August 3. There were eight ladies from Havelock present as visitors.

Mrs. Wayne Kinney, Mrs. Umphrey and Mrs. Winget visited at the home of Mrs. Joe Kyles Wednesday afternoon.

Marvin Wallace, who has spent the past six weeks with her aunt, Mrs. Elton Keller, has gone to her home in Friend.

Mr. and Mrs. Elton Keller were Sunday dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. Urban Kyles at Lincoln. Mrs. Keller remained for the week.

A number of friends surprised Mrs. Lillian Richard on her birthday, Friday evening. Pinochle was played, followed by delicious refreshments.

Mrs. Rosetta Axmaker, 72, passed away at her home in Lincoln Sunday evening. Funeral services were held Wednesday at the M. E. church. Burial was in the Greenwood cemetery. Rev. C. A. Parks officiated.

DIES WHEN DENIED PIPE

NEW YORK, Aug. 5 (UP)—One by one the doctors stopped Albert March from eating his favorite foods and drinking his favorite drinks. But the ailing man still clung to his one consolation—his pipe.

Yesterday the doctor told him his condition was such he would have to give up the pipe.

Today March was found dead in the gas-filled bathroom of his apartment.

MURDOCK ITEMS

William Schiefert has purchased a new tractor for use on his farm.

John Eppings and family went to Eagle for the last night of the carnival there last week.

Postmaster L. B. Gorthy and wife were in Eagle last Tuesday night enjoying the carnival and street fair being held there.

Albert Bauer, who is making his home at Lincoln, was a visitor in Murdock for a couple of days and enjoyed meeting his many friends in this vicinity.

Mr. and Mrs. Merle Gillespie were visiting friends at Grand Island for a short time, while enjoying a vacation, but returned home the latter part of last week.

The machinery used in sinking the new well for the Murdock water-works, was taken to a town near Des Moines, Iowa, last week, where it will be put to work on a similar job.

Richard Eppings, who went to North Dakota expecting to find work in the harvest fields and during the threshing season has not been kept busy all the time and so decided to return home.

Alvin Bornemeier was called to Mynard where he has three well jobs. The prolonged drouth has made many wells fail the past couple of years. One of the well jobs near Mynard is for a school district.

Mrs. Henry A. Tool was at Weeping Water one day last week, conferring with some of the farm club leaders there regarding the extension work program to be pursued during the coming fall.

Gail McDonald and family of Hampton, Nebr., where Mr. McDonald is a rural mail carrier, visited in Murdock over the week end, guests at the home of Mrs. Hannah McDonald and the Bryan McDonald family.

Edward Knabe and sister of near Nehawka, were looking after business in Murdock during the past week. Miss Knabe is the owner of the farm where Carl Meyerjergen is farming and was calling on Mr. and Mrs. Meyerjergen while here.

Mr. and Mrs. George Work and the children of Omaha have been enjoying a vacation of some two weeks in the west, taking in the many sights of interest in Yellowstone Park. Mrs. Work is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Tool.

Visiting with Grandparents

Sherry Bradford and her mother, Mrs. O. E. Bradford of Beatrice were visiting in Murdock last week at the home of Mrs. Bradford's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry A. Tool, while Mr. Bradford was attending the Officers' Training camp.

In Business in Ashland

Jarvis Lancaster, former deputy sheriff of Cass county, who shot a would-be robber of the Plattsmouth State Bank a number of years ago, has taken over a filling station on Highway No. 6 at the outskirts of Ashland and has also arranged to establish a store in the room that was formerly occupied by W. E. Felmetter, whose lease expired. The Lancaster family is moving to Ashland and will operate both the service station and the store, which are but a short distance from each other, the wife and daughter looking after the conduct of the store, while Jarvis conducts the station.

Play Golf at Ashland

A group of the golf players of Murdock were at Ashland last Sunday, where they played during the morning and were accompanied by Gail McDonald of Hampton, who was visiting here. Bryan McDonald also went along and watched the game.

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Abstracts of Title

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but his leg is not yet so he can get about on it very readily. He is still using crutches.

Attended Eagle Celebration

Among those from Murdock who went to Eagle to attend the celebration last week were Mr. and Mrs. Eddie Craig, J. W. Kruger and wife, W. E. Lyons and wife, John Thoms and family, Chris Koch and family, Chester Elsemann and family, Carl Euck and wife, J. H. Buck and wife and others whose names we did not learn.

Jitter Bugs on the Go

The Allis-Chalmers Jitter Bugs, a local baseball group left Murdock last Tuesday for a tour over the state. Their first game was to have been at Wakefield, but was rained out. On August 3 they were scheduled to play at North Platte, August 5 at Scottsbluff, August 7 at Chapell, August 8, McCook and the last game on their way home at Platte Center, August 9. We have received no information on the outcome of any of the games.

Alfred Weber is the manager and the players are Reuben Stock, Milton Weber, Paul Rueter, Morris McDonald, Marvin Weber, "Buzz" Gakemeier, Willard Stock, Lyle Stock, Wayland Ward and Paul O'Brien. The boys were looking forward to a week of pleasure and we are sure they are having it.

Has Very Sore Foot

Louis Roerber was about the farm with a pair of rubber soled shoes and had the misfortune to step on a board from which a nail protruded. The nail was imbedded deep into his foot, making the member very sore. However, care was taken to prevent infection and the wound seems to be healing nicely.

Visited in Murdock Wednesday

William Stander, formerly residing in Louisville (and years ago near Murdock) but now a resident of the

state of California, residing at Orange, has been visiting in Cass county for the past ten days. He came the southern route through Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri and into the state of Iowa, before arriving in Nebraska. He found crops good in some places and very poor in others. They say the best corn they saw was in Iowa. Mr. Stander and Mr. Koeber and Mrs. Stander were visiting friends in Murdock last Wednesday.

Rev. G. W. Wolters Here

Rev. G. W. Wolters and wife, accompanied by their son Fred Wolters and wife and son Gerald, came down from their home at Arlington Tuesday of last week and spent a day at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Gakemeier, during which time they enjoyed meeting many of their old friends here. They then went to northwestern Iowa to visit relatives before returning to Arlington. Prof. Fred Wolters, the son, stopped in Union while en route here to make application for a position in the Union schools.

Visited in Illinois

John Carson and sister, Mrs. Mamie Straight (who has been nursing her mother, Mrs. Mary Carson) departed for Springfield, Illinois, their former home, where they are taking a vacation as well as looking after some business matters. Mrs. Mary Carson, who is better known as Grandmother Carson, is much better and able to sit up a part of the time now. She is being cared for by Mrs. Barbara Utt while the daughter is away.

Eagle Celebration a Success

The two day celebration put on by the town of Eagle last week proved a success in every way. There were large crowds present both days and the Fire Department, which sponsored the event was able to realize a profit for their efforts. One of the features was the haz-

If Rattler Takes S Shape, Look Out For Strike, Warns Veteran Hunter

MCGREGOR, Ia. (UP)—Seven year of hunting snakes during which he has caught as many as 109 a day, have taught Larry Kersten of McGregor that most popular beliefs about rattlesnakes are fallacies.

One such notion blasted by Kersten is that a rattler's age can be told by the number of buttons on the rattle.

The truth is, according to the reptile hunter, that rattlers grow a button every time they shed their skins and that is two or three times a year. Moreover, the buttons sometimes are lost.

Kersten just laughs at the belief that a rattler won't strike unless coiled.

"The fact is," he said, "the snake assumes the shape of a letter S, then straightens out when it strikes."

Kersten began hunting snakes after an itinerant catcher who makes a profession of taking rattlesnakes alive for zoos, gave him a few pointers.

Early in the spring, preferably the first warm day, Kersten takes

to the hills with a gunny sack, heavy gloves and a pair of homemade otngs. He looks particularly for rock ledges or crevices, for it is there that the snakes come out to lie in the sun.

Spotting a basking snake, or sometimes an entire family, he moves cautiously ahead. With the tongs he seizes a rattler just back of the head, snips out the poisonous fangs while it thrashes madly about and maneuvers it into the sack.

"The snakes won't bite through the sack because they are all tangled up and confused," Kersten explained.

He often keeps them on his farm for weeks before turning them in for a bounty. He has collected as much as \$700 a year in this manner.

In captivity the snakes refuse to eat, sometimes existing for four or five months without food.

Kersten kept no record of how many snakes he has captured, but estimates the number to be in the thousands.

ord race. Richard Eppings went over to participate in this, driving a model T racer belonging to Joe Zoz, which had been stripped down to almost the bare chassis. We did not learn who the winner was.

Found No Water

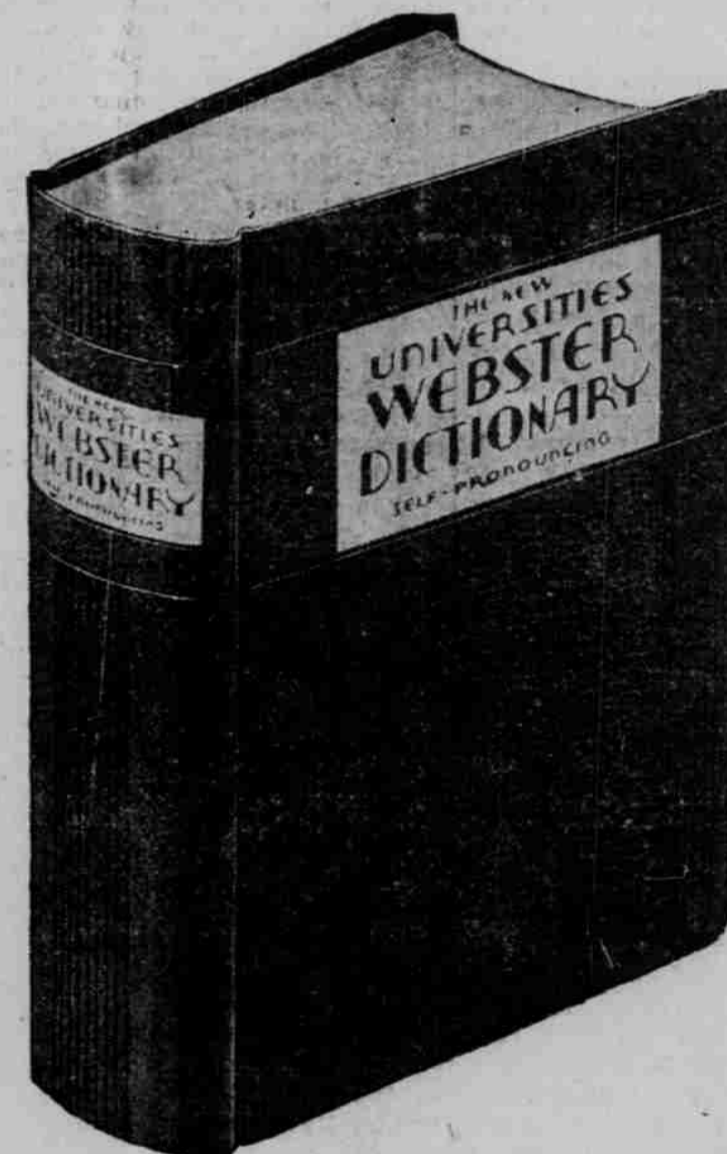
Henry Gakemeier has been short on water for use about the farm and so arranged to have a well sunk. At a depth of 173 feet there were still no signs of water and it has been abandoned as a dry hole. Another well was sunk in a different place in the hope of striking water.

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