

# Land Auction

At O'Neill, Nebraska

843--Acres--843 Holt County Farms

To be sold at public auction to the highest bidder in the Knights of Columbus Hall, at 2:30 p. m., on

## Saturday, January 11, 1930

These four farms were formerly known as the Frank Dishner farms and adjoin the town of O'Neill, Nebraska, one of Nebraska's best middle western towns. Has a population of 2500, excellent school facilities, having the largest Catholic Academy in the state aside from very fine public schools. O'Neill is located on four Federal Highways and is located on both the Burlington and the C. & N. W. railroads.

**FARM NUMBER ONE**—Adjoins O'Neill on the west; contains 217 acres, all fenced and cross fenced; 30 acres hog tight, 90 acres in cultivation, 60 acres in red clover and wild hay, balance in pasture; all excellent valley land, 7 room house, barn 32x36, storage barn 24x60 with cattle barn attached 24x32; granary 16x24, double corn crib 24x24, hog house 20x32, hog house 16x20, brick milk house and brick ice house. This farm would make an excellent dairy farm.

**FARM NUMBER TWO**—160 ACRES—80 acres in cultivation, 20 acres alfalfa, balance in pasture; no improvements but all well fenced and cross-fenced.

**FARM NUMBER THREE**—160 ACRES—90 acres in cultivation, 25 acres in alfalfa, balance in pasture; no improvements; all fenced and cross fenced.

**FARM NUMBER FOUR**—320 ACRES—80 acres in cultivation, 110 acres in alfalfa, balance in pasture; no improvements; all fenced and cross-fenced.

Very excellent terms can be had by the purchaser of any of these farms, from at least 50% to possibly 75% of the purchase price for a term of at least 5 years at 6% interest. 10% cash on sale day, 15% on March 1, 1930 at which time merchantable title will be given purchaser and balance of purchase price will be arranged at that time. Liberal commission to realtors registering buyers.

Everybody welcome, bring the ladies. Cash prizes given away. Be sure to inspect these farms before sale day. For further information, write or see

### Midwest Realty Auction Co., Agents

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#### DOC MATHEWS RELATES EXPERIENCES OF THE FAMOUS BLIZZARD OF 1888

(Continued from page 1.)

granted a pension by special act of Congress, at the instance of the citizens.) The wind switched from the south to almost north—from our backs to our faces—then there was almost immediate drop in temperature—with a fine snow. We put on all the clothing we had and arranged the blankets and robes to the best advantage for protection. In as quick time as it takes to tell it, almost, the blizzard was upon us in all the fury of a demon. The wind became a hurricane, the snow almost like shot out of a gun, and we realized we were in for it, for we had lived long enough in Nebraska to know what to expect. While we could yet see, we discussed stopping at one of the sod houses but I knew we were not far from McCarthy's, and he had a good frame house. But we never saw McCarthy's nor any other house. The storm grew worse and worse and became so fierce in its howling intensity that we could not hear each other except by putting mouth to ear. When I say that we could not see the rumps of the horses, owing to blinding, whirling snow that hit us full in the face, the

experienced old timer will believe me and the inexperienced will wonder if the truth is being told. We dared not back, for we knew to go with the storm meant death, so we faced the music—and wild music it was. The horses would get off the road at times and one of us would get out of the sleigh, keeping a hand-hold of the harness, and manage to get back into the beaten path, which could be distinguished by the harder surface. It was fight, fight, fight—death so near that we could almost feel the touch colder than the storm. Finally we came to Dry Creek, knowing it by the banks and we found we had missed the bridge by a few feet, the beaten road evidently running around instead of over it for some reason, probably broken planking. This time I think Clyde got out of the sleigh, and we discussed cutting the horses loose, turning the sleigh to face the wind, crawl into the blankets, let the snow drift over us, thus trying (hoping) to save our lives. However, I knew we must be near Billy Ryan's ranch house, and that we ought to find the fence I knew was around the corral. So we urged the horses on, after digging the ice out of their eyes. Here we got off the road very soon, and floundering around, almost going down, the horses seemed to

give up the fight. I forget which of us got out, but think it was me. At any rate the horses were onto a fence. By grasping the bit, the horses were moved very slowly along and after an awful struggle, an opening in the fence was found, with deep snow of course, but we knew it must be some sort of a yard. When the horses ran into an almost buried hay-rack, we knew a building of some kind must be near and we found it or rather the horses did, for they worked through the deep snow up against the side—almost the roof—and working around to wind-swept side we found a door—opening which we found Heaven, or so it seemed to Clyde King and Doc Matthews on that fateful January twelfth, 1888—about four past meridian of the clock. There were some two dozen head of cows in stanchions and the delightful fragrance and grateful warmth emanating from those dear beasties was most sweet. By hook and crook and jack knives we got the poor horses loose and turned loose in that mansion of a stable—God be praised. To get warm we just picked out a good old motherly cow and crawled down beside her. Clyde says this of me: "Doc just cuddled up to his cow, used her udder to warm his hands, and then kissed her as he gave her his blessing." Guess Clyde exaggerated a wee mite—and then again maybe not. At any rate I was as glad to see that nice old bossy as a fellow could be when greeting his first sweetheart. Well, to the finish of our story. It was getting dark, we had warmed up good, invoiced our frozen noses, frosted hands and feet, debating whether or not to try and find a house. From the stable door we could not see more than ten feet or so, owing to the storm. Deciding to remain as we were, we had settled down comfortably when the door was thrown and there was commotion as two men came in shouting to each other that someone must be in the stable as they saw our sleigh outside. When we shouted out from the semi-darkness, Charlie O'Neill hollered: "Why, Bill, it is Doc Matthews." The Bill was William Froelich, a Bohemian farmer who lived further on up the creek and who had reached the Ryan ranch coming from town a few hours earlier—a little ahead of the storm, and was induced to stay owing to the threatening conditions. These men had fastened a rope at the door of the house and also to the stable. This was very necessary for safety for the whirling snow was absolutely blinding and the wind so strong that unless one had held onto this rope he would be swept away and lost, perishing, as was often the case in these awful blizzards. The house was only some sixty feet from the stable, but of course could not be seen. The men had come after hay to use for fuel in the hay-burner—a contraption the size and shape of a boiler, made of sheet iron, the hay and weeds being

packed in solidly with hands, feet or a maul and then placed on top of the stove in an inverted position, the stove lids removed, and a hot fire was a sure go, but it kept someone busy all the time making changes, two or more boilers being used. We tied bundles of hay with ropes and dragged the bundles to the house. On the first trip we missed Froelich. All hands hollered to lung capacity and fortunately he heard us and got back to the house. Froelich explained that his hat blew off his head, he let go the guide-rope to grab for the hat, and was swept into the storm. Close call for Bill. What a pleasant surprise to find that the lady of the house was Nellie Hurley, who at one time had been a member of our family. Nellie and Charlie had been married a few months and were running the ranch for Billy Ryan. The house was filled with bundles of hay before quitting the hard and dangerous job—enough to keep us comfortable all night, although it was twenty degrees below zero. However, there was not much sleep for any of us—we kept busy feeding the burners. Plenty of coffee and food. In fact we were just glad to be alive. I kept a record of things with crazy writings on the unpainted door, descriptive largely of personalities. Wish I had transcribed that record—would be quite interesting now. It was a long night, but the break of another day found us in good shape. The storm had ceased—no wind, no snow, cold. After some extra effort we got our faithful horses hitched to the sleigh and were off for O'Neill at a rapid clip. When we would pass a cow standing so still and quiet-like and frozen stiff we naturally wondered how many humans were frozen to death, and found out in the next few days. There were five within as many miles from where we were and from Omaha to the Black Hills and to the north to the Canadian border the reports were of terrible disaster, suffering and death—the most terrific blizzard the country had ever known or probably ever will know. When we reached home and found that no lives had been lost in town, and no extreme suffering we two joined with all the town people in programs of relief. The men folks did some heroic work during the storm. The school children were brought down to the stores in such cases where they could not be taken home, and then the parents were notified. No phones then, so it was a matter of personal effort. In my family it was a typical case. Harry was the only one at school and as we lived up on Kid hill it was a good way from other houses. Ed Hershiser, I think it was, who tied a rope on Mrs. Hooker's fence, then swung out in the face of the storm, unable to see three feet ahead

but in this way finding our fence and house. Mrs. Matthews and kids were nice and warm and Mamie Burke, too, was with them at that time and they were naturally greatly relieved to know that Harry was all right. They did not worry much about me, however, for they thought I knew enough to seek shelter early—when the storm started—but as you see, I did not—hence this story, which I have been forty-two years in writing or rather thinking about writing—and here is the result, for ye editor to use as he pleases. Good day.

Done at Memphis, Tennessee, this 17th day of December, 1929.

W. D. MATTHEWS.

A few asides by Mr. King:

"The editor kindly favored me with an advance reading of the foregoing splendid article by my old time, and always good friend, Doc Matthews.

There was little conversation after the storm broke, but I remember of Doc wondering, in language that he never heard in Sunday school, "if we had to freeze to death on this liberally blanketed creek."

It was I who did the walking ahead of the team—pathfinder—from the creek to the cattle-shed, one-half mile due north. It took over two hours to cover this distance.

My memory is not just clear as to Doc's behavior toward the cows. I had not sufficiently thawed out to be interested when we were rescued.

Doc's description of his clothing is correct to the last collar button, but it gives me a chill even now to think of my layout for thirty-five below for the morning after—boots without overshoes, a common cloth overcoat, cap, gloves and one of those home-knit comforters about a half yard wide and three yards long, wrapped about my head and face that was the life-saver.

The wildest imagination could not invent an exaggeration of the white-black horror of that storm. Poe said, "The human brain cannot conceive a thought that the human tongue cannot utter," but Poe wasn't with us that day on Dry creek, that's all.

Doc was kind enough to say afterward that I saved his life. He was under no obligation to me. It was my own hide that was my chief concern that afternoon.

And about that grand-dad reference—wrong.

Despite those seventy-four years that make Doc wince as if one had poked a finger in his left eye, his communication testifies that he is not dying at the top, at any rate.

His memory is ninety-nine per cent. The one percent is deducted for evaporation in transit."

CLYDE KING.

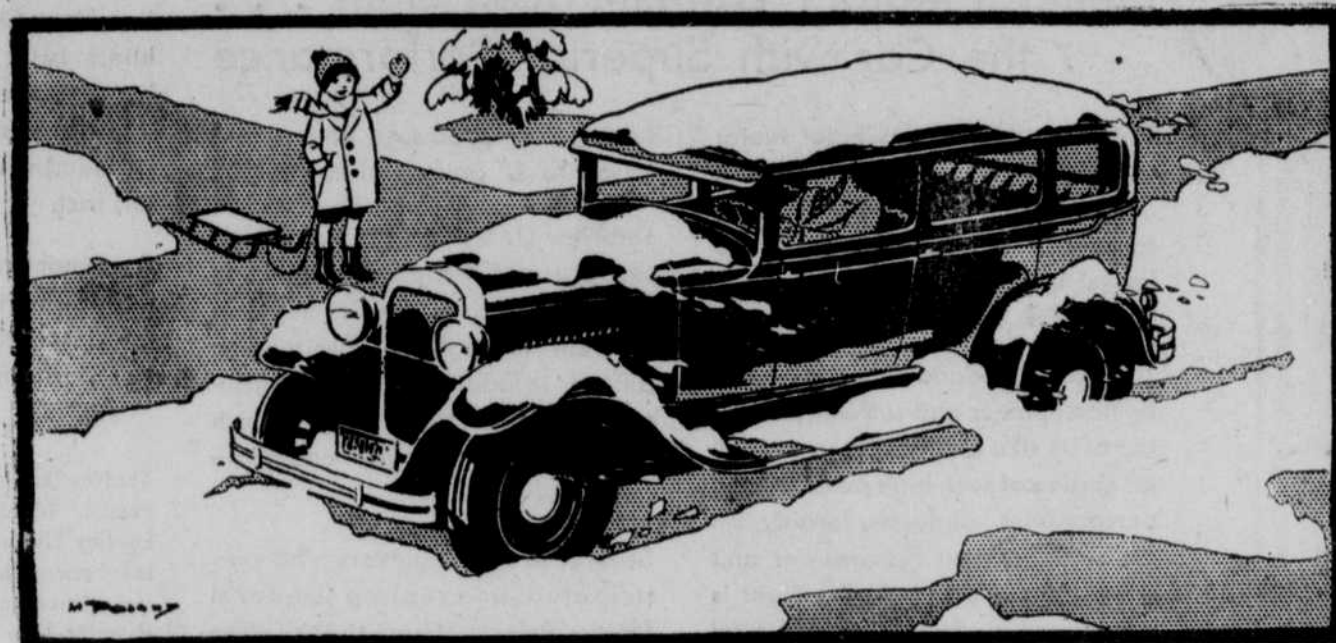
#### MEMORIES OF THE BLIZZARD

Forty-two years ago the 12th inst., the morning dawned still and warm, though cloudy. The air was as balmy as a spring day. My brother and myself started for school that morning with a light heart, and no thought that we would witness the greatest blizzard of all time had ever entered our heads. We were late in getting started; it was nearly recess time when we arrived at school. Our school house at that time was a sod building, which was a fortunate thing for us on that particular day. There were fourteen other scholars and the teacher, Miss Scott Flieliere, there. We took our seats, got out our books and went to studying, but were soon interrupted by a sound of something heavy striking the building which caused us all to look with concern toward the windows, and what we saw almost made the stoutest heart quail with fear. We had school all day just the same, but we had to stay there all night without sleep and also without supper, but we had plenty of coal in a box just outside of the school-house, close to the door and we boys would take turns getting a scuttle of coal, two going together each time. Maybe we didn't keep the stove red hot that night. We spent the night debating, playing games, and doing most anything we could think of to pass away the time. I said there was not one of us that slept that night, but there was a five year old boy who slept through the most of the night.

There was a German family who sent their hired man with a basket of grub for the school but he never reached there; instead, he went against the storm until he found a neighbor's house, one mile north of them. He might have perished in the storm but for the fact that they were up late and he got close enough to see their light; he supposed the light from the two windows was the eyes of a coyote shining in the dark; he got out his pocket knife to fight it. What joy it must have been to him when he found out differently. The storm stopped at four o'clock the next morning and as soon as daylight came we left for home; the thermometer registered 30 degrees below zero. By noon the weather had warmed up quite a bit and was very nice. Maybe we weren't tired, sleepy and hungry when we got home. May we never have another such a storm.

R. J. HATCH, O'Neill, Neb.

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