

THE FRONTIER . . . O'Neill, Nebr.

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Entered the postoffice at O'Neill, Holt county, Nebraska, as second-class mail matter under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879. This newspaper is a member of the Nebraska Press Association, National Editorial Association and the Audit Bureau of Circulations.

Established in 1880—Published Each Thursday

Terms of Subscription: In Nebraska, \$2.50 per year; elsewhere in the United States, \$3 per year; abroad, rates provided on request. All subscriptions are strictly paid-in-advance.

Two Great Americans

The short, weary, terrible month of February has drawn to a close. Ordinarily, February is not only a short month—the shortest month of the year—but it is a hopeful one.

November, December and January are usually very long, dark, stormy months in the Midwest and we look forward to February hopefully, anticipating a break in the rigors of Winter; but we were disappointed in that anticipation this year. The three months mentioned were long, dark and stormy, breaking all records for wind, snow and blizzards, and February has been just a continuation of that kind of weather.

The historic, indescribably severe Winter of 1948-49 commenced with a blizzard in November and it has been just one awful, destructive blizzard after another up to the present time. There is no need to repeat the story of the appalling Winter now slowly dragging its way to a bitter end.

Everybody in Nebraska and everybody everywhere else in the United States who reads the newspapers or listens to the radio knows all about it.

Stories and pictures of the weather for the past four months have featured almost every issue of The Frontier during the period and they have been front page news in many of the daily newspapers and magazines all over the country. The World-Herald, for instance, sent one of its best reporters and photographers to O'Neill to cover the story, publishing special editions, "Blizzard of '49," and "Operation Snowbound" and some members of the staff have remained continuously on the job for several weeks.

The Frontier itself has covered the story regularly and faithfully from every angle and its efforts have been appreciated by its readers both in Holt county and outside of the county. It has been literally swamped with orders for extra copies of the paper. The "Voice of The Frontier", O'Neill radio outlet to the world, has also done valiant service.

The government moved into the O'Neill region and other snowbound areas of the Midwest. With their big, powerful machines they cleared highways and roads and brought relief to suffering people and livestock. Before February's end, these same machines moved out—a job well done.

Gov. Val Peterson was right when he said that the Winter of 1948-49 has been the greatest disaster in the history of the state. And that, in brief, was the sad story of February, 1949, now ready for the history books.

It is a striking contrast to the ordinary February, which is a month of hope, of sunshine, of longer days, of warmer weather, of the occasional appearance of a robin, and of colorful anniversaries.

February is a colorful and interesting month, containing a number of special days; but the most important events of the period are two national holidays—Lincoln's birthday and Washington's birthday. These two events distinguish February among all the months of the year.

Washington and Lincoln were two great Americans—they were stalwart, outstanding Americans—and it is fitting that their birthdays should be observed by the American people. They were men who lived in a time of crisis in the early history of the nation—a time when there were many tremendous problems to deal with—and they measured up to their responsibilities.

We do not imagine that these two great Americans were perfect by any means. They, no doubt, had their faults, the same as other people, but they were big men, nevertheless, and rendered great and enduring services to their country.

It is a deplorable fact that there are not more great men in public life today.

There is too much politics in public life in this generation. Our thought is that the people of the present day and particularly the boys and girls should study the lives of men like Lincoln and Washington and derive inspiration and incentive for their own lives.

In the midst of the overwhelming hardships with which the people of Holt county and surrounding area are struggling this year, they do not have much time for reading, study and reflection; but, in spite of our misfortunes, we should remember these two outstanding American citizens.

Every age has its idols, especially among the boys and girls, and too often that idol is some popular individual like a movie or a radio star who has feed of clay and is unworthy of public acclaim.

We do not believe in idol worship, but we do believe that Abraham Lincoln and George Washington are worthy examples for the present generation and all generations to revere and follow.

Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time.

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The Frontier has been a center of public information in recent months, supplying news about the weather to all parts of the United States.

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The Frontier does not pose as a weather prophet, but we confidently predict that Spring is just around the corner.

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Don't worry too much about the weather. Whatever it is, it will probably change within 24 hours.

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One consolation is that we won't have to worry much about dry weather this year.

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We say without fear of contradiction that the days are growing longer.

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And still the fight against the relentless forces of Nature goes on.

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People are all about the same, wherever they may happen to live.

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The weather is still front page news all over the country.

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The next threat will be from melting snow and floods.

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We have a lot to learn about the forces of Nature yet.

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One trouble with this country is too much politics.

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The "first robin" had better wait a while.

The Job Is All Yours, Ike



PrairieLand Talk —

Wheeler County Once Had Negro Settlement; Benign Face of Father Dixon Recalled

By ROMAINE SAUNDERS

LINCOLN—Nebraska, the person of the chief executive, set aside a week for special study of negro history. The colored people are centered in Lincoln and Omaha and probably make a little trouble as any segment of society.

At one time there was a negro settlement south of O'Neill, just across the border in Wheeler county.

I see yet the benign and smiling face of Father Dixon, who came up to O'Neill to meet the 10 o'clock morning train from the West and there disembarked here a dusky dame that came down from Valentine to become the second or third wife of Father Dixon.

I later had a ranch not far from Dixon and I found him to be a pretty fine citizen.

The son of an African chief by one of the chief's several wives, he ventured out to contact the white man's civilization. After six months' instruction under an English teacher he was asked to define grammar. And this was his definition: "Grammar is the art of conveying thought from the mind of one person to the mind of another by means of words." Dr. Webster did not outline that when he said: "Grammar is the art of using language correctly."

A newspaper gent out at Alliance has been spreading black ink trying to convince himself and others that the Nebraska sandhills should be renamed cattle hills. This suggestion coming from a region where they have boasted of being "the garden spot beyond the sandhills" gives it the flavor of outside interference.

Sam McKelvie, of Valentine, and Lincoln, has protested against such a change. Now comes a lady from out at Antioch, Anne Parker, and writes in the Lincoln Journal in defense of the sandhills. The gent who proposes the change from sandhills to cattle hills is a foreigner to the sandhills, the Antioch lady reminds us.

"He has never mosed down in the evening to watch the mother duck pilot her brood across the lake," writes this sandhill patriot from Antioch over a real or assumed name. "He has never peered cautiously through the tall rushes hoping to see the 'thunder-plunking' bittern; nor has he gazed upon the ever-changing, multi-colored grasses of the meadow stretching on to meet the perfumed patches of wild roses and sweet peas on the hillside.

"If he had ever watched the purple shadows deepen the hollows, to accentuate the golden highlights of the hill tops, he would have known that 'Cattle Hills,' a name that pictures a cow standing stiff-legged on every knoll, was, as Sam said, unthinkable." The sandhills are known as the cow country. Maybe that's enough cow.

Last night prairieLand was aglow in the gold of an unclouded sunset. This morning vapors spread a curtain across the sky. By mid-day fog enshrouded the land. Muddy water lies in pools from melted snow or forms streams coursing its way to lower ground. The streets are dreary, dirty snow and slush ice edge sidewalks and cover lawns to the doors of city dwellers. None venture onto streets without rubber foot covering and the Winter coats must be worn. Will these accouterments hold out until the transition comes and we begin to growl about the hot weather.

The birthday anniversaries of America's two greatest government figures come to us as honored events in the dreary month of February. Washington, the great, the father of his country and the friend of mankind, is

still the school boys' hero and the revered patriot of the nation. Lincoln, railsplitter, product of nightly studies pursued by the flickering light of burning logs in a crude fireplace of a Kentucky backwoods cabin, emancipator of a race, preserving the Union, Honest Abe, the wisdom's pattern of political wisdom and incorruptible manhood, and in the end the victim of an assassin. The great Washington passed to his rest at Mt. Vernon in the last hours of the expiring 18th century without a groan. These two national characters stand out above all others and are forever enshrined in the memories of their countrymen.

A mated pair of starlings fly each morning from their nightly lodging and perch on top of a chimney in full view from my window. After some minutes warming their feet as the chimney sends a mild current into the morning air the pair wing away perhaps in search of something for breakfast. It is small trouble to set out the scrape from the table and thus sustain some feathered creatures that might otherwise perish in the snow.

The indebtedness of the federal government combined with that of states and cities makes each persons share when prorated to all, from baby to grandfather, a grand-mother, \$1,848. Better pay yours.

A notable group of churchmen have been in conference in Lincoln within recent days. A D. D. from New York's widely known Riverside church has been the prominent speaker. In the public utterances of religious leaders, scientists, educators, statesmen, runs the same ominous note, the end is at hand, unless—Ah, there's the rub. If mankind hasn't sense enough to straighten out the kinks he ought to sink.

France needs nothing so much, said the mighty Napoleon, to promote her regeneration, as good mothers. Around the circle of the earth this need was never more urgent than right now. Nor was it ever more urgent that the world's millions of good mothers sense to the full their responsibilities in shaping the tides of the times.

They are referred to as "oldsters." The aged, the crippled, the blind and the halt are helped none by the daily reminders thrust their way. From a source it would be well to return to we read: "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the face of the old man, and fear thy God."

The late Colonel Doyle would pronounce it "small potatoes." Call it what you like. Political success seems to have gone to his head. When the chief executive resorts to calling names even the friends who made him must blush for shame.

Some drastic changes to eliminate government waste and duplication of effort are embodied in the report of the commission created to remodel federal agencies. And this commission bears the name of the horrible Herbert Hoover.

The game refuge north of O'Neill along the Niobrara has been disemboweled by act of the legislature at the instance of Sen. Frank Nelson. The opinion has prevailed that the so-called refuge was more or less of a joke.

A job on the university teaching staff pays \$2,600 annually, while coaching the huskies how to football it through a season is worth a 10 thousand dollar swag.

Phoenix Also Had Long, Cold Winter

By A. STOLLER

PHOENIX, ARIZ., Feb. 22—This is Washington's birthday anniversary and a national holiday. The writer is not working at the YMCA, as he usually does six days a week; but hopes to get a little extra work done at home. It's amazing how work piles up in a busy man's life. Likewise, a woman's

Last week the writer suggested that, in the following issue of The Frontier, he would write about the continuation of cold weather in Phoenix. Well, the weather has warmed up some since he made that suggestion, but not enough to make such comment untimely.

As a matter of fact, the sun has been shining quite steadily in Phoenix for the past several days and, when the sun shines steadily in Phoenix, the weather is delightful even if it is rather cool.

This country is called the Valley of the Sun and the sunshine for which it is famous is the one thing which makes all the difference in the world. There never was anything more beautiful or delightful than a sunshiny day in Phoenix and there never was anything more dreary and disagreeable than a cold, cloudy, rainy day.

And, as far as the writer is concerned, he has never seen a longer, colder, wetter Winter than the one which is now coming to a close. It started suddenly last Fall at the close of an excessively hot Summer and it has continued steadily up until the present time. The nights are still cold, but the days, under the influence of the sun, are a great deal warmer. The maximum temperature last Sunday was 70.

In any event, the Winter of 1948-49 has been a record-breaker, comparatively speaking, just as it has been in Nebraska and in some other states.

Of course, there is never any snow to speak of here—the writer can recall seeing snow but once during the long period he has been spending his Winters in Phoenix; but the weather can be very cold and nasty when the sun doesn't shine, as it does most of the time the year round.

That kind of weather is caused by two things; viz., heavy snowfall and intense cold in the northern part of the state, of which Flagstaff is the center, and heavy rainfall in this part of the state.

Arizona has had both this year, which were the biggest kind of a blessing to this drouth-stricken country, and so, while the weather has been a disappointment to the tourists and hard on the inhabitants, it is a reason for great rejoicing.

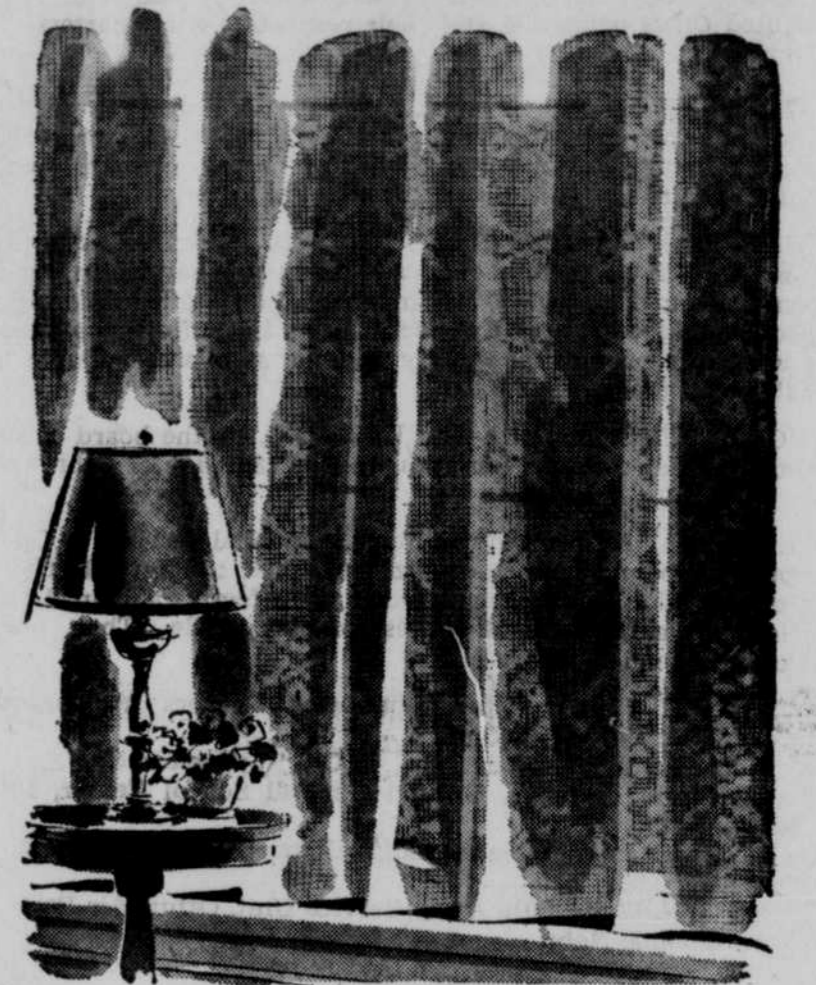
(Next week: He Has a Tough Job).

Anniversary Club Meets Twice —

INMAN — The Anniversary club has conducted two parties the past week. Monday night, February 21, the group surprised Mr. and Mrs. Roy Gannon at their country home, north of town, and on last Thursday night the members surprised

Mr. and Mrs. Chester Young at their country home, south of town. Refreshments were served by the self-invited guests. There is a turnover each year of approximately 80 per cent of the robin population in a given vicinity.

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Ralph N. Leidy

— O'NEILL —