

'Whistling Post' Hanging Ends Kid Wade's Career

(Editor's note: Sixty-four years ago in February the illustrious life of Kid Wade ended tragically at the hands of a band of "regulators." The recent anniversary of this "whistling post" hanging of one of this region's best-known historical characters has prompted the retelling of this epic story.)

By Romaine Saunders
Special Correspondent

Wednesday night, February 6, 1884, Kid Wade was hung to a F. E. & M. V. whistling post one-half mile east of Bassett. A coroner's jury empaneled in Brown county (of which Rock was then a part) said he came to his death by hanging at the hands of unknown individuals. Those who knew considered it a time when silence was golden.

After justice had laid an inexorable hand on Doc Middleton, the Kid was the recognized leader at the eastern end of a band of outlaws operating from the Black Hills to the Missouri.

At the time of his apprehension young Wade—he was 22—was under indictment in Iowa, Nebraska, Dakota, Wyoming and Montana. Some distinction for a Holt county citizen!

He had been schooled in the craft of a horse thief by the elder Wade, whose ranch on the Big Sandy nearly due north from Atkinson was a rendezvous for the outlaws. There were always provisions in abundance in the Wade cabins. Hams, sides of bacon, antelope meat and beef hung from rafters.

The operations of the Middleton band caused the settlers of the Niobrara valley to organize what was known as regulators or vigilantes. They were officered with captains and lieutenants. It was often suspected but seldom proved that some of these "regulators" were using the organization as a blind to cover up their misdeeds.

On the strength of the various indictments, as well as general principles four Holt county citizens, "Capt." C. C. Dodge, "Lt." Peter Hansen, Charles Messenger and Michael Coleman, undertook the task of apprehending the Kid. On January 12, 1884, they

swung into their saddles, reining their horses eastward. Information had been received that the Kid was near LeMars, Ia. On the evening of the 16th they arrived in LeMars. Here they learned that the object of their quest was at Mansfield, 16 miles out. The morning of the 17th Messenger, not known to the outlaw, rode out to Mansfield and located Wade, with whom he negotiated the purchase of a horse.

A forfeit was posted and Messenger informed Wade if he would accompany him into LeMars they would get the money from the bank for full payment. The Kid consented to this, not without some misgivings. On the way into LeMars he cast frequent searching glances at Messenger who rode stoically on.

As they were leaving their horses to the care of the livery barn attendant in LeMars, the companions of Messenger quietly closed in from three sides and drew their guns—and the Kid, the terror of the Niobrara, was a prisoner.

After 24 hours in the saddle, the Kid in irons, they arrived in Yankton, S. D., the evening of January 18. He had agreed to accompany them without a requisition on the promise of the 4 that he should have a fair trial in Holt county. They remained 2 days in Yankton. Here they saw commercial possibilities with their prisoner. A hall was engaged and it was advertised that Kid Wade would give an exhibition of his skill with the six-shooter at 50 cents admission. He had the reputation of being the best that ever flashed an ivory-handled .45 in his territory. That he went through this performance in good faith without making a kill and his get-away clearly indicates his confidence in a square deal being given him,

with no thought of the tragic end that awaited.

And looking back over the intervening years the retrospective forces the conclusion that the Kid, outlaw that he was, had high regard for his word of honor and a faith that was betrayed in those qualities in others.

At Yankton, a second prisoner was taken, Joe Jordan, a brother-in-law of young Wade. It appears that Jordan was released upon the arrival in Holt county with the 2 prisoners. Thus far the activities of the regulators were clothed in the honored vestments of law and order.

On February 1 a kangaroo court was held at Back Berry's at Paddock. Delegations of Brown and Holt county vigilantes were present to "examine" the Kid. A tragedy was averted at this meeting by Mike Coleman relieving Henry Richardson of Brown county of his gun when he was in for shooting the Kid on the spot for telling him "you are as big a horse thief as I am."

Maybe desiring to shift further responsibility, the majority of the Holt county bunch favored turning Wade over to the mercies of the men from Brown and the Kid saw the promise of a fair trial and his hopes vanish. The late S. J. Weekes of the O'Neill National bank, was among the boys and men then living in the neighborhood to congregate at Paddock to "see the excitement."

Coleman and Hugh O'Neill protested the turning of the Kid over to the Brown county vigilantes. He had been promised a fair trial at home and should have it. They did more than protest. Hastening into O'Neill they swore out a warrant for the arrest of the Kid and sent Sheriff Ed Hershiser out to bring him in. Ed, like the Northwest Mounted, generally got his man. He trailed the group to the vicinity of Long Pine.

The Brown county delegation, under command of "Capt." A. J. Burnham, probably by this time also inclined to shift responsibility, turned the Kid over to Hershiser. "Capt." Burnham and another of the party by the name of Matson, offered to accompany the sheriff in with his prisoner.

These 3 with the Kid pulled into Bassett to spend the night. Hotel rooms were all occupied but they were told they could stay in the bar room. The Kid rolled into a blanket and went to sleep on the floor. The sheriff with his 2 companions settled at ease in their chairs. The cold February night wore on. Suddenly a crash of glass as gun barrels were thrust through the windows startled the watchers. At the same time, the door was flung open and a body of grim and disguised men appeared. The regulators had come.

The Kid was awakened and led to his doom.

One story was that he



MAN OF PRINCIPLE . . .
Stephen Kertesz, former Hungarian minister to Italy, turned down offer to become Hungary's minister of foreign affairs because he disagreed with Communist doctrines. Now he is in U. S. to study international law.

trembled with fear and asked to be spared that he might have a chance to mend his ways. Another was that he implored his guards to give him a pair of 6-shooters and he would get away from the mob and come into O'Neill and surrender.

In telling of the affair when he got back to O'Neill Sheriff Hershiser said the last words he heard the Kid

say were: "I have been feeding you fellows and now you are going to hang me."

Did the Kid recognize his abductors as his own band of outlaws who resorted to a hanging to protect themselves?

DISTRICT 178 (Holt)

W. M. Schipman, teacher

Our eighth graders, Virginia Burrell, Virgil Burrell, and Dean Wilkinson, are looking forward to the spring examinations.

ations.

Mary Homolka entered school on February 13, and we expect Raymond Shoemaker to enter soon.

Marlin Belew withdrew from school, as the Belew family moved to Hoskins. John Natchman will replace Mr. Belew as moderator on the school board.

The pupils are making bird and flower charts to keep records of returning birds and flowers.

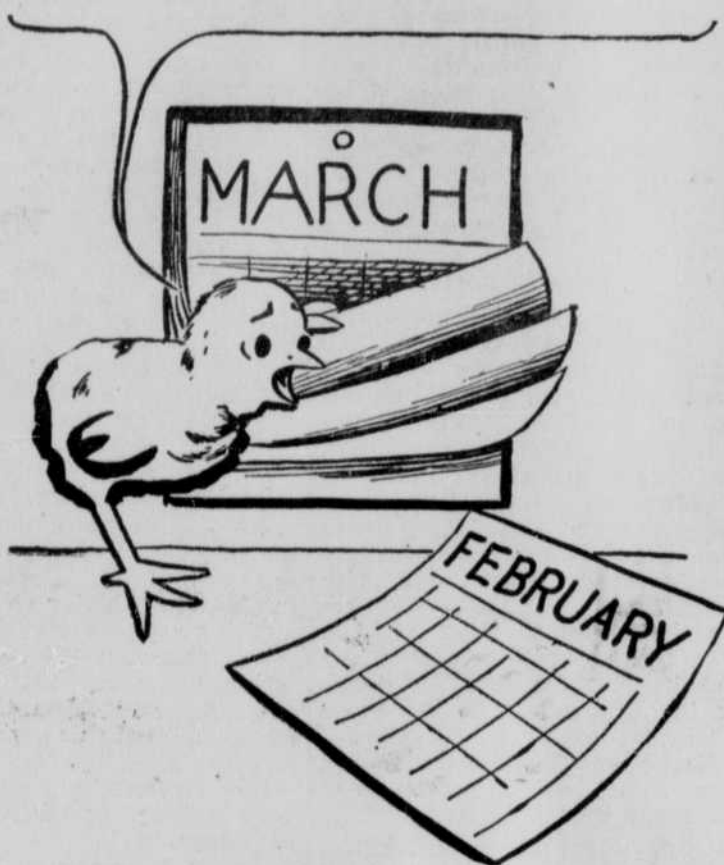
BOYD COUNTY FARMS

Have several good, improved Boyd County farms 160 to 320 acres for sale. Any can be purchased on terms to suit, long term loan like paying rent. Why rent, when you can make the rent share buy your farm home?

Max N. Copper

Bloomfield, Nebr.

Time's a Wastin' . . .



**You Can't SEE
the Vitamins in an Egg
but They're There!**

An egg is the world's most perfect food. Each egg comes wrapped in its own divine package. When you look at an egg, you see the shell, but it is the INVISIBLE contents that count.

When you look at a chick, it isn't the exterior cuteness nor downy feathers that count. It is the quality in the bloodstream of that chick that determines its value.

Why not protect yourself on this INVISIBLE quality? Buy TRI-STATE Hatching baby chicks. Our nearby associate breeders cooperate with us in rigid culling, proper feeding for high hatchability, pullorum testing. Don't take chances this year. The best way to save is to feed better chicks!

Remember: When conditions are not dependable, buy TRI-STATE chicks that ARE dependable.

We have a Complete line of Jamesway and Makomb poultry equipment, Gland-o-Lac poultry remedies, a full line of poultry feeds.

Profit With Poultry

There's a tidy profit to be made by raising chicks this year, it seems. Latest developments show:

- 1 — A '48 MEAT SHORTAGE . . . thus more demand for eggs.
- 2 — NOT ENOUGH PEOPLE RAISING CHICKS . . . will create a scarcity of eggs . . . and higher prices for yours.
- 3 — ENOUGH FEED TO SEE US THROUGH. And it looks as though feed prices will be far, lower, too.
- 4 — OLD NON-PRODUCTIVE HENS SHOULD GO TO MARKET. You'll do better if you cull out the old birds and feed that grain to your EARLY chicks.



Before You Buy

A Tire of Any Kind See Us.

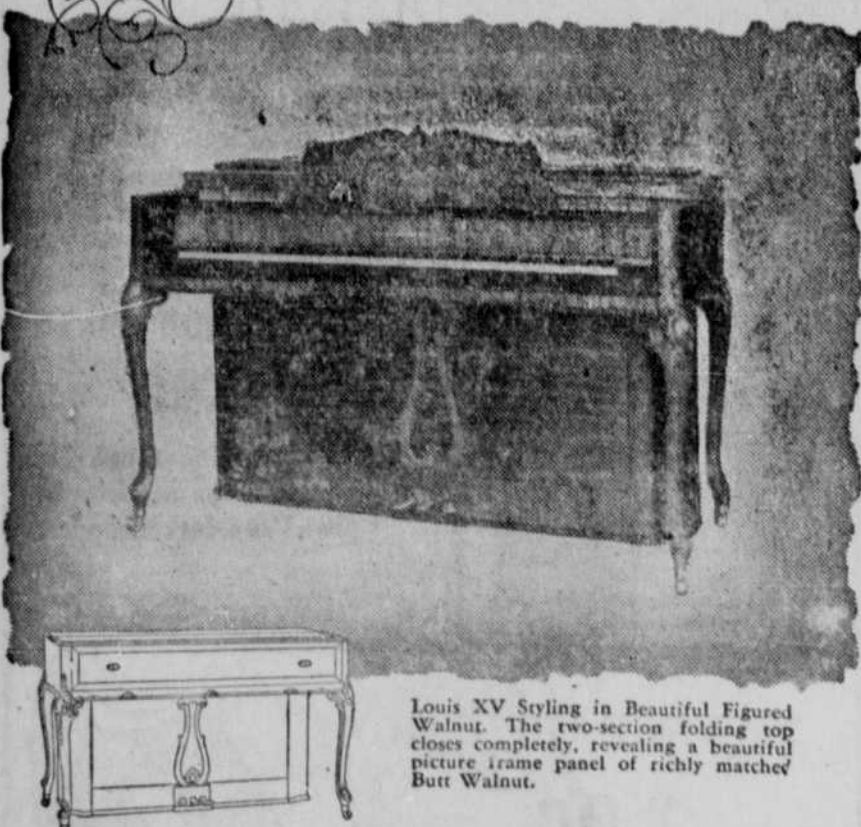
We Have 'Em and the Price Is Right!

LINDBERG HOME & AUTO SUPPLY

"THE FIRESTONE STORE"

Phone 108.

GULBRANSEN
NEW EMPIRE SPINET PIANO



Louis XV Styling in Beautiful Figured Walnut. The two-section folding top closes completely, revealing a beautiful picture frame panel of richly matched Burr Walnut.

Traditionally charming is this modern interpretation of Louis XV styling with its simple elegance and grace. The new Empire Spinet is endowed with a musical eloquence quite as outstanding as its unique, structural beauty. One of the many new models of Gulbransen, for 50 years maker of "America's Smartest Piano Fashions."

Above Model Now on Display.
Direct from the Factory to You.

A. E. BOWEN

— O'Neill —

Early Chicks for Profit!

★ This year, you'll be smart to buy your chicks early. It's the early chicks that will pay off in eggs during the high-price period this fall . . . and it looks as though egg prices will be way up there.

★ Look at the Table below . . . it shows why you should buy Tri-State Hatching's dependable, high-production-bred chicks. Order your chicks right now . . . just call, write or phone us.

★ You will find our prices attractive as all our chicks are priced to sell.

Feed Cost Per Dozen Eggs

When Feed Cost Per Hundred Pounds is	\$4.00	\$4.50	\$5.00	\$5.50	\$6.00
30 Eggs a Day	.35	.39½	.43	.48	.53
35 Eggs a Day	.30	.34	.37½	.41	.45
40 Eggs a Day	.26	.29½	.33	.36	.39½
45 Eggs a Day	.23	.26	.29	.32	.35
50 Eggs a Day	.20	.23½	.26	.29	.31½
55 Eggs a Day	.19	.21½	.24	.26	.29
60 Eggs a Day	.17	.20	.22	.24	.26
65 Eggs a Day	.16	.18	.20	.22	.24
70 Eggs a Day	.15	.17	.19	.21	.22

Tri-State Hatchery & Farms

PHONE 90

O'NEILL