

Prairieland Talk—

One Still Struts About

By ROMAIN SAUNDERS, 4110 South 51st St., Lincoln 6, Nebr.

LINCOLN—It was while enjoying the recent visit with the Hancock that Claud showed me a \$10 O'Neill National Bank note that carried Claud's name as cashier and S. J. Weeks as president. Claud expressed regrets that he had not been able on a bank cashier's salary of those days to pocket a few more of the 10-dollar-bills that carried his name.



Romaine Saunders

A recent letter from Homer Campbell out at Seattle expressed his delight on seeing that 10-dollar-bill that Claud permitted him to see when the Hancock, with the Segelmans, visited him and Mrs. Campbell.

The first editor and publisher of The Frontier, W. D. or "Doc" Mathews, as he was familiarly known, was also the founder and first president of that bank. He found the banking business not to his liking any more than holding down a homestead had been. The Mathews homestead was that 160 acre of open prairie four miles east and one mile north of the northeast limits of O'Neill. In Mathews' day it was a region alive with prairie chickens. Today nothing desecrates that historic spot—only maybe some bloated rancher's branded herd.

Doc Mathews retired from the exalted position of bank president, returned to his first love and with Clyde King and D. H. Cronin took over The Frontier under a corporation, The Frontier Printing Company.

Doc did the heavy editorials, King was the compiler of "No Man's" column, Cronin was business manager and check book supervisor, and this less distinguished fellow traveler was the typographical artist.

Mathews died in Arkansas where the family located after leaving O'Neill. King and Cronin, too, have joined the ranks of the dead. And that typographical artist is still strutting about.

Would you wear a crown. You must first bear a cross. Would you sing of victory? You must first face defeat. Would you walk the golden streets? You must first be willing to walk down a dark alley. Would you live eternally? You must first be taken to the abode of the dead.

With the last statement from the bank where I have a few dollars was a printed appeal with the promise that riches are yours by investing in U. S. savings bonds, the printed appeal doubtless the product of the government printing plant in Washington where an O'Neill printer of the long ago, Art Coykendall, was stickin' type the last I knew of him. Listen to this from that printed appeal sent me by "my bank": Put aside \$18.75 a month in series E U. S. savings bonds and within four years and three months you'll have over \$1,000. Get rich little by little. But where you going to get that \$18.75 every 30 days is not disclosed?

Alaska is now a state, the 49th and the largest, outdoing Texas that spreads across much of the southwest. Maybe Alaska should have been taken into the union as two states, as Dakota territory was within the memory of Prairieland Talker and others still in Holt county. Two patriots, long citizens of the county, waded the winter snows in Alaska a half-century or more ago. L. G. Gillespie of O'Neill and George Meals of Atkinson are two hardy survivors of the group that went from this community on an exploring and prospecting venture when the Alaska migration started in the late 1890's.

Say, girls of the John Schultz family out there in Rock Falls, here is a name for Glass Eyes' little colt. Just lay a hand on that recent arrival and say your name will be Prairie Rose!

This last morning of the month of June starts the third day of sweeping winds roaring in from the south. Wind blows, the sun glows out of the east starting the day with light and heat. Three days wind and then rain. But that was in the days of our fathers. Whett harvest at hand—may the sunshine glow and winds blow; and up there where the grass grows get out the mowers and hay stackers!

Charley Harding, Henry Grady, maybe another one or two at or near O'Neill that did their bit to bring freedom from foreign overlords to the people of the charming island of Cuba. That was more than a half-century ago. Today Cuba joins much of the world thumping a nose at us. Jealous, envious—the Cubans should blush for shame.

Editorial—

Icing on the Cake

The Chicago & North Western railroad barons took advantage of the long holiday weekend to pull a whizzer unprecedented in Nebraska annals.

After a Nebraska supreme court ruling revealed Thursday morning had reversed a March 7 order for rehearing of the Nebraska state railway commission, C&NW moguls decided the way was clear to knock off passenger-mail-express trains 13 and 14—the last two remaining trains of that type serving northeast, northcentral and much of northwest Nebraska.

Supreme court rules provide a 20-day lapse before the mandate goes to the commission and directs the commission to order the trains discontinued. Only the commission can order the trains to stop or start.

Railway commission officials wired C&NW legal and operating departments Saturday morning instructing C&NW to keep the trains in operation until legal processes had been completed.

C&NW, in effect, said "nuts" to the supreme court rules and to the commission, and publicly announced the trains would make their final runs Sunday, July 6.

Save-the-Trains association officers and directors, who had been opposing the discontinuance for five years, promptly labeled C&NW's action as "brazen, contemptuous and wild".

On Saturday morning S-T-A's substitute attorneys (the regular counsel, Einar Viren of Omaha, had gone to Canada for a 10-day fishing trip) filed an application with the Nebraska supreme court, asking the court to cite C&NW for contempt or alternately, a restraining order. Only three supreme court justices of the seven-member court were in Lincoln. Four are needed for a quorum.

But Chief Justice Robert Simmons fixed 9 a. m., Monday, July 14, for hearing.

C&NW counsel admitted to the press the road could be compelled to put the trains back on, but the legal department felt the high court's order last Thursday was "clear enough" to permit discontinuance immediately.

Thus when train 13 moved westward in the early Sunday morning hours and emerged from the blackness of night into the lush hay and cattle country, it was making its final run.

Turning around at Chadron there was a plaintive bugle sounding taps and wreaths were placed on the locomotive while a crowd looked on.

The off-again-on-again weird series of events during the weekend disarmed many who believed the trains had been given an extension of life. Newspaper, television and radio bulletins during the long holiday weekend had given the impression the trains would stay and little did anyone think the rail chiefs would flout the high court rules and telegraphed orders from the commission.

There were some sorrowing partisans aboard as the trains passed O'Neill for the last trips. One South Dakota couple stored their car at O'Neill and made the roundtrip.

The premature end of the trains was the icing on the cake. In 1956 the trains hauled 33,000 passengers and the mail haul (for distribution) was one of the heaviest on any train out of Omaha. Hundreds of cans of cream flowed eastbound each trip and westbound carried the empties. This is not to mention the other forms of express. Commercial intercourse in the Niobrara and Elkhorn river valleys traditionally accompanied the trains and all this is being disrupted.

The Omaha-Chadron-Omaha runs were never without reward for passengers, although straw seats prevailed until S-T-A 4½ years ago pressed for modern coaches.

There could be no more dramatic introduction to the sandhills than awakening from the overnight trip to look out across the vast expanses of prairie and the fine herds of cattle. So now, sadly, persons who have no other transport will have to make their way southward to the Omaha-Lincoln-Billings line of the Burlington or to the mainline of the Union Pacific. Between Valentine and Gordon (92 miles) there is not even a bus. Air service with four north-Nebraska stops has been authorized starting September 1 on an experimental basis. Air fare is approximately three times the rail fare

and not all of the 33,000 who used the trains will be able to afford the luxury.

The editor would have made the last historical journey except for the weekend press of S-T-A matters when the North Western barons became impetuous and decided to take matters in their own hands.

The merits of the S-T-A case have never been presented to the supreme court. S-T-A always felt it would be a court of last resort and the merits and Nebraska statutes could perpetuate the trains.

All S-T-A ever argued before the high court was the technical aspect in countering C&NW's appeal to the high court. C&NW claimed \$672 loss per day in operating the trains, based on formula which does not take into account the overall picture. All types of business lose money on certain phases. No business shows a profit on every wheel that turns. Some leading rail executives in the nation have publicly stated the formula used by railroads to discontinue passenger-mail-express service is not realistic.

To the best knowledge of S-T-A people, no state commission or high court has ever permitted a railroad to withdraw service when these factors exist:

1. Passenger-mail-express trains are the last two on the line.
2. There is a mainline situation (such as Omaha-Chadron).
3. There is publicity necessity (33,000 passengers in 1956).
4. There is no other established service (no bus between Valentine-Gordon).
5. The freight phase of the line is profitable (C&NW has never refuted this).

In at least one state (Minnesota), a mainline railroad took off its last two trains (in which above factors prevailed) and the trains were ordered restored.

Mail patrons will be penalized by a slowdown (mail clerks on the trains expedited mail that now will be transported "dead" to the Omaha terminal and "worked" upon arrival). Thirty-three thousand passengers each year will have to shift for themselves.

The phone company will reap long distance tolls where late mail dispatch no longer exists. Funeral coaches will travel roundtrip 250 miles to claim bodies of dead being shipped in. Baby chicks, normally shipped express, will fare not so well in closed unheated trucks, and people in western Nebraska (where there are no hatcheries) will build up auto mileage and expense. Express, once excellent by train, will be slowed (based on substitute schedules that have been posted).

Traditionally cattle shippers who accompanied their shipments by freight have been assured of first-class transportation home after shipping cattle by rail to the markets. Sandhills cattlemen will lean toward Burlington now, because Burlington will return them first-class to the nearest points.

And, most important, all north Nebraska is being penalized by poor management of the railroad.

At O'Neill a firing squad of a sort appeared with muskets to fire a final volley. Black crepe paper was draped over the North Western locomotive on train 14.

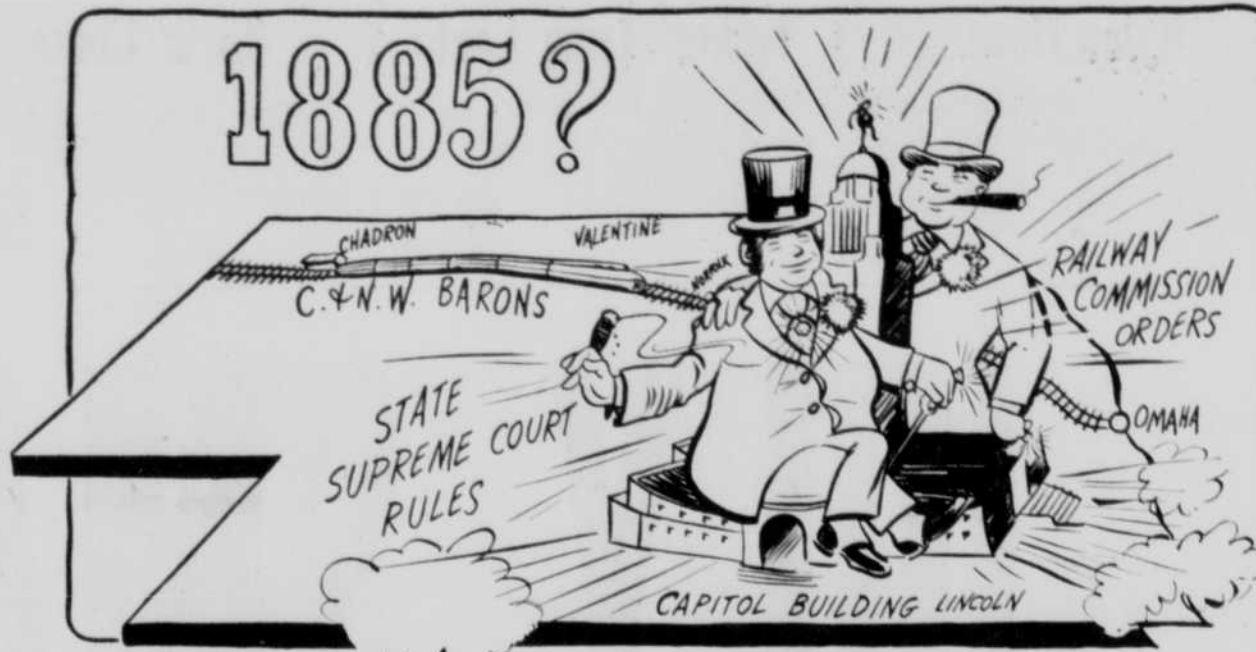
As the train disappeared to the east on the final run, its red light raking the countryside, there was sadness and nostalgia.

THE FRONTIER

CARROLL W. STEWART, Editor and Publisher

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Barons Flaunting Court? Shades of Old West!

(See EDITORIAL below, "Icing on the Cake")

Tenants at Grove Will Be Ousted

ROYAL — Beautiful Grove state lake, three miles north of here, is ousting most of its present underwater tenants.

Glen R. Foster, fisheries chief of the Nebraska game commission, said the 65-acre lake is now being drained preparatory to the removal of suckers and other undesirable species. The lake's feeder stream South Verdigris Creek, too, will be treated for the removal of undesirable fish.

This phase of the project is expected to be completed in August, at which time the lake will again be filled with water. Black bass, bluegill, catfish, and other warm-water fish will be stocked in the lake this fall.

Foster said fishermen can keep the rough-fish menace to a minimum by not emptying their minnow buckets into a lake or stream before heading home. There are many instances where rough fish were introduced in some waters in this manner.

Attend Funeral of Nephew —

Phil Dempsey and his sister, Mrs. Burton Kimball of Osmond, left Monday, June 30, by train to attend the funeral of their nephew, Duant Dempsey, at Wheat Ridge, near Denver, Colo. The funeral was Wednesday, July 1.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Dempsey and family brought them home Friday. The Jack Dempseys went on to get their two sons, who had been spending a month with their grandmother, Mrs. Jack Gray. The Dempseys are the parents of twin girls, who won the Westinghouse contest because their birthday coincided with Westinghouse's anniversary.

Visits Relatives —

Miss Hilda Gallagher left Tuesday, July 1, for La Cross, Wis., to visit her brother and family. Dr. and Mrs. Frank Gallagher, and also her uncle, Dr. E. E. Gallagher,

guests over the Fourth of July of Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle Washcheck were her father, Rev. Walter Ness, and son, John, of Clark and Mr. and Mrs. Pat Malone of Ottumwa, Ia.

LEE STORES

STARTING JULY 10TH

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Lovable cuddle bear. Made of lustrous high pile. Non-catch plush. Ideal for children's play rooms, infants' nurseries. 36" high. Colors: Brown, White, Pink, Blue.

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DISCOUNT PRICE

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\$7.95

BUSTER BROWN HAIRDO MOVING EYES

TEEN-AGE SHAPED BODY SOFT VINYL BODY

PRINTED PICOLAY DRESS HIGH HEEL SHOES

18" slim leg doll with grown-up features—legs, arms, head moves. Rooted hair—wash it, curl it, comb it. Quality, Beauty, Durability.

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24" all vinyl Bride Doll. Moving Eyes. Rooted bobbed hair. Dressed in a satin embossed bridal gown with net overskirt. Veil of net. High heel shoes.

\$4.57

Discount Price of

Baby Doll

12" Sitting Baby Doll. Not only cries but it also drinks, wets, washable rooted hair. Complete with diaper, nursing bottle.

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"Pro" Hockey Game

"Pro" Hockey — This game is terrific. It's so fast and exciting. Each player can stickhandle, pass, shoot and score—or even block—same as we do in professional hockey.

\$8.95

DISCOUNT PRICE

Pony Tail DOLL

14" vinyl doll with coo body for added play value. Rooted hair pony tail style. Moving eyes. Dressed in polka dot cotton with solid organza collar and border combination. Shoes, stockings, panties.

\$1.98

DRINK AND WET DOLL

14" Drink and wet baby doll with bottle. Moving eyes, rooted hair, movable arms, nylon dress trimmed with lace. Matching bonnet, shoes and socks.

\$3.98

BOWLING GAME

Fun for the entire family. 10 soft plastic 11" two tone bowling pins. Balls.

\$3.99

DISCOUNT PRICE

Each in a box.

Pony Tail DOLL

17" Girl doll. Pony style rooted hair. Hair ribbon. All vinyl body. A little lady all dressed up in a nylon dress. Lace trimmed. Ribbon sash. Stockings, Shoes, Panties.

\$3.98

BOWL-A-STRIKE

10—7" two tone poly pins. 2 balls. Each set in a storage box. America's Favorite Game.

\$1.89

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