

Prairieland Talk—

O'Neill City Was Original Name

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

LINCOLN—A small community reared its dwelling places on the open prairie by the crystal waters of the Elkhorn.

Until incorporated as a city with mayor and councilmen the community had been known as O'Neill City. It may have been our first mayor, John McBride, who proposed dropping the "city" and retaining the O'Neill. So it is today an enlarged community bearing the name, but memory no more of a noted Irish patriot, General John O'Neill.

Others of that name have walked the streets and dodged the flying bullets of festive cowboys out for fun or strolled down to the river to look in on a Sioux Indian camp.



Romaine Saunders

About the first hotel, known as the Commercial, was started and operated by a John O'Neill. The building still stands at Fourth and Everett streets. The parents of a fancied sweetheart of Prairieland Talker in the long ago managed that hotel.

O'Neill—do you remember that "wild Irishman" by that name out there in the Niobrara river gulches, a scholar, a leader of men, a patriot and citizen with few his equals? O'Neill—and today a William O'Neill is governor of the great state of Ohio.

And in the August issue of True magazine there is a breezy story about General O'Neill's exploits with the Fenian movement and unsuccessful tries to take over Canada in behalf of glorious Ireland.

Someday some good writer will undertake a book on General O'Neill.

A native of Columbia, South America, dark skin, Spanish tongue and friendly attitude when talking with a fullblood Yankee of Prairieland. "I love Lincoln," he told me. He is in school work at present in old Mexico and is in Lincoln taking some studies at a college summer school. He has a son, too, in college here. His wife is a Mexican, professionally a nurse. The day I talked with him within one month he said he would take off for his home in Mexico. Asked about conditions in Columbia he said there was much unrest in that country, as elsewhere. Lincoln as an educational center invites students from many lands, and those I have been privileged to meet think prairieland meets the human heart's desire.

If three or four billion dollars spell wealth, then Nebraskans are rich, their property holdings now valued by the tax collectors at four billion, with the promise that these tax collectors will save you a whole dime on each thousand dollars of your share in the billions. Or is it only a beautiful bit of fiction a city newspaper reporter hands us?

Editorial—

We Make Insurance Rates

It is astounding how large a proportion of hospital and medical bills are now covered by insurance. It is astounding also how large a proportion of the money paid in for such insurance premiums goes out again to pay for medical services.

Recently we received from a group insurance company, with which we hold a policy, a notice that the next bill would be at higher rate. It appears that during the past year the company paid out in claims 98.1 per cent of all the money that it received from its policy holders in premiums. That left only 1.9 cents out of each dollar which the company would have, to pay its overhead, its salaries and all other expenses. That was, of course, not possible, and the result is that rate must go up. It takes 4.9 cents out of each dollar to run the association, so the increase is mandatory.

It is wonderful what a large proportion of our people are now covered with health or hospital insurance. But we must take care lest the rates become so high that it will be impossible for people of ordinary means to carry it. How high the rates shall be is entirely in the hands of the people who hold policies.

If you have been reading a series of articles in the Saturday Evening Post you will understand this. It is undoubtedly true that many people insist on hospital or medical care, if they hold insurance, where they would not dream of it if it were not the case. It is also true that in some communities unscrupulous doctors have made a practice of giving unnecessary services or charging higher rates, where there is insurance. That could in time price medical insurance out of existence.

It's just like our auto insurance rates. We have seen it go up and up year after year. And it's partly due to the fact that car owners turn in claims for damages that they would never have fixed if they had to pay for them. Here too unscrupulous repairmen sometimes charge more for work where there is insurance to pay for it, and juries award fantastically high damages sometimes where they know that "the insurance company pays for it."

Let's remember that in every instance it is the policy holder who pays any kind of insurance claims. Our rates will be just what we make them. If the insurance company operates an 4.9 cents out of each dollar it is easily seen that even high executive salaries will not seriously increase rates. It's we policy holders who make insurance high.

Canned Laughter Irritates

We are bored stiff with the "canned" laughter which is the greatest insult of so many television shows these days. It amounts to guidance for the moron, and since we do not include ourselves in the moronic category (rightly or wrongly) we are left somewhat chilled by an experience of viewing a typical canned TV show.

One can denote a typically-canned television show by listening closely to the laughter. Every time the so-called comedian should have said something funny, one gets the volume of automatic laughter—recorded and turned on just at the right moment, which is supposed to induce and catalyze laughter from the viewing audience all over the country—in their respective television dens.

It would be good for the comedians, and for viewing public, to get honest laughter, or none at all. We would prefer a comedian to take his

A Lincoln concern, Cushman Motor Works, has been awarded a contract by the federal postal department of a little less than a million and a half dollars to furnish the department with motor trucks for carrying mail. Railroads dropping train service all over the country the mails will be carried by trucks. Maybe this large layout of postal funds is the reason for increases in letter postage. R. H. Ammon, manager of Cushman's, I believe, is the son of a Mr. Ammon who came to Lincoln some years ago from an out state town where he had operated a small printing plant, later acquiring the Cushman Motor Works which was handed down to his son. This concern recently acquired a large tract of land just outside the city, so maybe this take of more than a million from the postal receipts will go into new factory buildings in the new location.

Nebraska for the first time has now a woman serving as state treasurer, Governor Anderson filling the vacancy in that state department caused by the death of Mr. Hill by appointing Mrs. Hill, the dead man's widow, to the office. And the office of treasurer of these United States is also presided over by a woman.

Nearly 60 years ago he visited us in our home in O'Neill. He had met Mrs. Saunders when both she and he were college students in our Capital City. Yesterday I stood up by the open grave as clergymen performed the last rites over the lifeless form of Charley Miller. Had a word with his widow who now sits alone in a desolated home in a little village a few minutes drive from Lincoln. Her husband had spent a life time as a teacher and preacher, at the age of 84 straightened for the grave to await the call to come forth to life immortal. And so goodbye, Charley. Now today, just another step in the march of time, one more fellow traveler along the path of life for four score years is taken to the abode of the dead, life's struggles over.

The Middle East—the cradle of the race where mankind enacted the first pages of human history, a lone couple walking away from their Eden home to people a section of earth destined through succeeding centuries to be soaked in human blood, yet a section of earth from which our heritage comes of all that is best in human thought and conduct. Today in the Middle East is heard the bugle call and tread of marching armies. I talked today with a mother whose face wore a worried look; her two sons called to the colors to fly to where the Jordan river flows and back of that mother's fears is the memory of the word picture in Holy Writ of "a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."

Former President Truman invites and will have the approval and esteem of Americans in advising our citizens to stand by President Ike as he deals with the Middle East situation. Mr. Truman has been critical of the Eisenhower administration all along, and it is refreshing to learn of his "change of heart."

chances with audience laughter, even pausing to allow for what he thinks would have brought laughter, rather than having the canned laughter ramed down our throats.

Where Are The People?

(From the Blair Enterprise)

An editorial appearing in a Nebraska newspaper several weeks ago was entitled: "Where is Everybody?". It commented on the fact that there appears to be a change in the recreational habits of people. "Baseball attendance is way down, theatre attendance is down, TV and radio stations complain they do not appear to have the attention of their listeners as formerly and people just aren't attending community activities as they once did."

The writer, who set forth the facts of that observation, is probably right in his conclusions. But he could answer his own question if he would but leave his city office and get out into the country.

Where is everybody? Well, just take your car on any day and you'll find them. The roadside picnic tables are busier than ever before. Folks are spending time in our parks—not the sophisticated city parks, but the less cluttered, less regulated parks where one can run and yell and roll on the grass to his heart's content.

A look at the Blair park, any day of the week, will reveal a new and rapidly growing trend in entertainment. Groups and families are eating out together. They are getting out of doors, way from the crowds and back to nature.

The Nebraska state parks are jammed with people.

Mother nature pleases many with the abundance of rain—the almost unprecedented volume of rainfall for July. But, oddly enough, too much moisture in this eastern-most portion of the Great Plains area can work a hardship. We refer to owners and operators of low hayland. Some livestock people might find themselves short of feed (on their own premises) if they don't get an opportunity to up their hay. Such are the workings of nature.

O'Neill's shortage of physicians and surgeons appears to be on the verge of being corrected. There is little doubt in anyone's mind our fine hospital, our city and its surrounding territory can support two or three talented medical doctors—perhaps a specialist or two. Modern doctors require a good hospital and this O'Neill offers.



CARROLL W. STEWART, Editor and Publisher

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When You & I Were Young... Severe Hail Storm Strikes Near Here

Gallaghers, Ernsts, Jilgs Suffer

50 Years Ago
Among those hit hardest by hail which fell northwest of O'Neill and northeast of Atkinson were: J. S. Gallagher, William Meyers, J. K. Ernst, William Jilg, Herman Guske, Fred Koelke, Jap Ritts, Frank Kubischeck, Bert Lawrence, J. P. Mullen, Ed Mullen and Peter Clausen. Deaths: Mrs. John M. Alderson; M. C. Coffey, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Coffey; Abraham F. Rouse, 75, a pioneer and highly respected resident of Meek; John Leese of Alpina, N.D., a former resident of the Mineola neighborhood.

20 Years Ago
A meeting is to be held for all persons interested in the erection of a new high school building. An architect from Lincoln will present plans. The highest temperature was 98 during the past week. The lowest mark was 80. Lt. Thomas James Gaughen, a nephew of the Earley family, flew an army plane out of Kansas and put on a flying exhibition for the home folks. Thomas operates a passenger-mail plane between New York and Kansas City, Mo. The survey and work of a state highway from the Waldo corner into Chambers is to commence at once. Whether this will connect with highway 11 straight across the hill two miles west or detour either south or north through Amelia or stop at the eight mile point is not known yet.

10 Years Ago
J. Francis ("Fritz") Kelly, 32, a pilot and F. E. ("Kelly") Saindon were killed in an airplane accident at the O'Neill Country Club near the fifth hole. Kelly was an O'Neill business man and Saindon was high school principal and athletic coach at O'Neill high school. Other deaths: C. F. McKenna, 68, a former real estate and insurance agent; Mrs. Catherine Miller, 68. Miss LaQuita Parsons, 17, of Atkinson was selected "Miss Holt County Legionnaire".

One Year Ago
A seven inch deluge fell at the Ed Weber farm, north of Stuart. Others, including persons at the George Shald and Meusch places, north and west of the Webers, reported five and six inch downpours. Deaths: Mrs. Laura Mulford, 79, of Stuart; John D. Forsyth, 68, of Niobrara. Twenty-two births were reported in the Future Subscriber column of The Frontier. Miss Judith Lee of Atkinson won an essay contest sponsored by Save-the-Trains-association.

O'Neill Locals

Dr. and Mrs. R. V. Bunkers and family of Canton, S. D., were Wednesday, July 23, until Friday guests of his brother and family, Mr. and Mrs. Don Bunkers.

Mr. and Mrs. George Peterson of Grand Island were Sunday guests of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Clark and also visited his sister, Mrs. Bob Rumm in the Atkinson hospital.

Mrs. Arthur Berg returned to her home in Long Prairie, Minn., after visiting her mother, Mrs.

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Anton Tomack, and sister, Miss Claire, for three weeks. She is the former Cecelia Tomjack.
Mr. and Mrs. Willard Solfermoser spent the weekend in West Point and Lincoln.

Spending the weekend in Nebr. with his parents Mr. and Mrs. Pete Velder, were Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Velder and family.
Miss Donna Lou Turner of Omaha was home with her par-

ents, Mr. and Mrs. John Turner, for the weekend.
Mrs. John Underwood returned Sunday from Osmond where she had visited her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Gene Mc-

Dermott and family since last Thursday. She also visited her brother, Martin VanErt in Brunswick. The McDermott's brought her home.

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