

Prairieland Talk

Sorrow-Laden Yule 61 Years Ago

By ROMAINE SAUNDERS, Retired, Former Editor The Frontier

LINCOLN—Sixty-one years ago there was a desolated home at the extreme southwest limits of O'Neill. In that home were a sorrow-laden woman and a heartbroken little girl. The holiday season for them was a season of mourning and the community was stirred over a terrible tragedy.

Barret Scott and his wife and little daughter were on their way home from a visit at Scottville when masked men held them up at a point known as Parker, dragged Mr. Scott from his buggy, bound his legs and arms, and loaded him into a wagon, drove away at a gallop, reached the Whiting bridge at the Niobrara, hanged their victim from the bridge, cut the rope to let the lifeless body fall into the cold waters below. Searching parties headed by the sheriff and including J. H. Meredith, Clyde King, J. B. Mellor, O. F. Biglin, R. R. Dickson and a number of others were out for a fortnight on a hunt for the body.



Romaine Saunders

Then on a cold, clear night in January the grapping hook of one of the searchers brought up the body of Barret through an opening in the ice. Scotty was laid out on the ground by the river's brink and the brave men of that searching party sat down beside it and wept, and the stars in the heavens looked down upon the scene that January night 61 years ago.

Why had a mob laid murderous hands on Scotty? He had been the county treasurer and county funds were used not to enrich himself but to save families from starving during a period of hard times, as the late Mr. Roosevelt used federal funds for a similar purpose in the 1930's. The Scotty lynching was the outgrowth, the climax of political bitterness. His death was not enough to satisfy one aroused vigilante. Scotty was brought into O'Neill and prepared for burial when it was seen that a vengeful heel had been planted upon the bald head of Scotty.

And such at times was the conception of pioneer justice.

Americans are regarded the world over as being lousy with money. In addition to our sizeable federal debt, business concerns, factories, corporations, farmers and home owners of the country all combined now have debts totaling the sum of \$352,300,000,000.

Football coach, penal institutions, board of control, whether or not George Morris gets his job back with full compensation for the interim, special session of the unicameral talk, Nebraska Citizens' council beating the air, tax laws in question, the governor charged with having threatened a state reformatory appointee that he would be fired denied by his excellency. But all this at the capital city has in no way diminished the crowds of yuletide shoppers seen streaming along on hurrying feet in and out of the marts of trade. And the street emblems of holiday time have afforded something to chew the rag over—Jim likes them and Susie thinks they are sacrilegious. And dad and mother are worried over the whole thing of how to get presents for the kids.

Coming in to start business another day, he discovered the box was empty that had contained the cash receipts for the previous day's business, but left in the otherwise empty receptacle was a note, "Sorry! You should have taken it home with you." A thoughtful thief to come up with untimely advice.

Gov. Raymond Gary of Oklahoma predicts the adoption of another prohibition amendment. Will the sooner then do as was reported of some of them when the 18th amendment saw the booze kegs emptied into the gutters in towns down there and thirsty citizens rushed out to lap it up?

Editorial

Oppose Federal Aid to Schools

While the heralded white house conference on education went on record for increasing federal aid to schools it is encouraging to note the Nebraska delegation opposed federal assistance.

Speakers at the conference talked glibly of "demonstrated need" and many of the delegates deferred to the principle of local and state financing, but we get the idea the conference "went strongly" for the prospect of federal aid. Some of the reasoning went this way: If federal aid is the quick and easy answer, then let there be federal aid.

Were against federal aid and/or control of schools in all its ugly forms. And we commend the Nebraska delegation for staying put.

Federal aid would be accompanied by more controls, more bureaus and more opportunity for graft and assistance on the basis of political expediency. Then, most important, the machinery would be set for brain-washing. Some (a minority, of course) lofty educators are pinkos of the highest order; some schools of higher education are infiltrated with commies and extreme leftists.

The public education system in the United States is the giant of all monopolies. Competition, as we know it in business, is non-existent. Local control must be retained else the giant is capable of getting out of hand.

Regardless of whether schools are operated with federal aid or with strictly local financing, the money is derived from one source—taxes. And the public pays the bill. To play footsie with federal aid to education and send money to Washington for the bureaucrats to dispense like passing an ice cube around the table from person-to-person and expecting much left of the cube when it returns to its point of origin.

Federal aid is a system whereby the public pays \$10 and gets back \$6 to \$8.

Proponents of federal aid point to the land grant colleges of another era. They say the federal aid didn't interfere then with the functions and operation of the colleges. To that we say government in Washington in those days was the servant of the people and functioned exclusively to maintain law and order and to look after the protective welfare of the people.

Today big government is blamed for restraining initiative, sometimes it is charged with confiscation of wealth, and big government is a factor in virtually every phase of life. In other words, the atmosphere is different from when the land grant colleges were established.

Those who propose federal aid as a relief to taxpayers are simply not being honest. Those who believe Washington knows what's best for O'Neill's purely local problems are idealists. Federal aid to education is a blueprint for disaster and a sorry, one-way street.

If in doubt, do a favor for the person who refused to do one for you.

A citizen of Utah is escorted to prison. He had stolen nothing, killed no one nor conspired to overthrow the government; but he had five wives, all at home, all sharing his "bed and board," all happy and contented. That was once the fashion in Utah. But they have become "civilized." Now, if it is a criminal thing on the part of a man to have five wives, is it not a criminal thing on the part of four of those women to marry one man? Four of his wives should also have been escorted to prison with him. Which is the greater offense—to maintain a household supervised by five wives or to have five or six that have been cast off through divorce proceedings, as happens in the next state west of Utah in wholesale lots? The hard-working Utah guy supporting five wives would have my vote over the Hollywood, Calif., philanderer who casts off one and takes another every new moon. It was Buffalo Bill who, when acting as justice of the peace down at North Platte, threw out the warning when performing a marriage rite: "What God and Buffalo Bill have joined together, let no man put asunder!"

A plaque has been unveiled in Washington in honor of the more than 300 chaplains killed on battlefields when the country was at war. The largest number of clergymen to die in action was 188 during World War II. In the war of 1812 one chaplain was killed, as was one also during the Mexican war.

From federal civil defense comes the ultimatum, or maybe only a directive, that householders throughout the land dig in. The government, in the person of our former esteemed governor of Nebraska, Val Peterson, editor in chief of home defense, supported by newspaper patriots from Neligh, South Sioux and Fremont, is convinced that every American household should have a bomb shelter in the backyard, like the storm cellars once seen across prairieland. As yet there is no general response to Val's orders and probably will not be unless a bomb hits a community, which seems unlikely, because such a thing would be the signal for a world blowup.

The department of agriculture at Washington, D.C., comes up with a budget of \$4.28 for one week's meals, 20 cents a meal per individual. I have taken on a few meals in Washington and if they have it down now to 20 cents a feed a radical change has been written at the nation's capital.

Bill Kite, whose dad was a native of Atkinson, was the victim of a holdup at his place of business on lower O street. The thief was handed \$34 by the girl at the desk and the court at the bar of justice handed him a three- to six-year term in prison. A manipulator in big figures steals a million and gets away with it.

One of Lincoln's downtown banks entertains holiday visitors with a miniature railroad occupying considerable floor space in the lobby. Two fast trains, maybe the Overland Limited and Rocky Mountain Rocket, speed the tracks. One spectator thought maybe the toy railroad represented the bank's undivided profits.

Jehovah's Witnesses are in the courts most of the time in efforts to secure legal recognition of their activities. Now they ask the United States supreme court for a ruling as to whether or not separation of church and state forbids the use of public buildings for religious meetings.

The Christmas rush is going to catch you if you haven't already begun your Christmas shopping.

The man who habitually loans money to the same friends will some day pay off the last note.

'Play It Close to Belly'

C. W. Means, an officer of the Omaha Livestock National Bank, summed up the sagging hog market for stockmen at a meeting in Ord last week.

Means said each American ate 116 pounds of red meat (cattle, hogs, sheep) last year. "This year," he explained, "we have 152 pounds of meat awaiting consumption."

He said most hog men are shipping brood sows to market in heavy quantities. "By May," he said, "you should see some improvement in hog prices."

Means also told his listeners why heavy (1,500 to 1,600 pounds) steers are not in demand. "Heavy steers have comprised about 10 percent of the marketable cattle. They found ready sale in clubs, restaurants and hotels where there is demand for big steaks. This year, heavy steers comprise about 12 percent of the market. Feeders have been holding the steers too long. It is the old story of supply and demand. The housewife wants 900 to 1,100 pound animals."

"Play it close to your belly," he told his listeners. "Buy right . . . feed right . . . sell right. This is hardly the time for speculation. Play it close all the way. Talk it over with your banker. You need his money and advice. He needs your cattle and experience."

Big men do not necessarily have big thoughts but they can often back them up when they do.

Christian living pays off in the long run, though it is often a mighty long run.

We are thinking of starting a drive to end drives for new organizations.

THE FRONTIER

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Calkins Gets Promotion

Donald L. Calkins (at right) is congratulated by his commanding officer, Capt. C. N. Day, upon being promoted to photographer's mate second class, USN, November 16 at the naval station, Green Cove Springs, Fla. He is the son of Mrs. Hazel F. Calkins of O'Neill and the late Police Chief Chester A. Calkins. Calkins has been serving at the station since June, 1955.—U.S. Navy Photo.

When You and I Were Young . . . Former Employee Shot in Holdup

C. J. Malone Assumes Judicial Duties

50 Years Ago Mrs. H. R. Henry died in her home in Willowdale township. . . The play, "Southern Folks," is to be presented at the opera house by the O'Neill firemen. The cast includes M. H. Horiskey, D. H. Cronk, Frank Campbell, Sheridan Simmons, Francis J. McCarthy, Mrs. Mae McCarthy, Miss Mamie Coffey and Miss Bea McCafferty. . . C. J. Malone, who will assume the duties of the county judge soon, has moved up from Inman and is getting settled in his home two blocks east of the courthouse. . . Mr. and Mrs. Will McNichols of Aspen, Colo., are visiting relatives here. . . Emmet McBride was shot in a holdup at Oberlin, O. Emmet, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Ed McBride, is a former employee of The Frontier. He is well on his way to recovery.

20 Years Ago The acting of young Jack Coleman has been receiving favorable comment in the Omaha papers this week. Jack has been appearing in the Omaha Community Playhouse production, "The Return of Peter Grim." Mr. and Mrs. Coleman are former O'Neill residents. . . While coming home from Atkinson, Lee Devereaux was forced by blinding lights of an approaching car to go into the ditch. He is suffering from a broken collar bone, broken ribs, a punctured lung and concussions. . . The New Deal oil station and cafe entertained the O'Neill firemen with a free dinner in return for their services rendered when one of the station's tank wagons caught fire a few weeks ago. . . Marjorie Jean Cronin entertained 16 young friends at a chop suey dinner.

10 Years Ago A special meeting of Simonson unit 93, American Legion auxiliary, was held at the Golden hotel at which honored guests were ladies eligible to membership in the auxiliary. . . The American Legion is casting about for a building as a permanent place of meeting. The membership of the Legion will be considerably augmented by the addition of the men who have been in service in this last war. . . Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Curtis will receive their friends at their home, the occasion being their 50th wedding anniversary. . . A contribution of cookies is going out of Holt county to cheer the youngsters in the children's home in York. The idea started down at Page three years ago, where their initial offering was two bushel baskets of cookies. . . The funeral of Charles E. Hevens, pioneer and longtime Atkinson businessman, was held in Atkinson at the Methodist church.

One Year Ago Parishoners of the Church of the Epiphany at Emmet will honor their parish priest, Rev. Francis T. Price, at a party in the church basement. The occasion is the 10th anniversary of his ordination.

Rex W. Wilson, M.D.

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Louise Kennedy Sets Winter Rite— PAGE — Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Kennedy of Ainsworth, formerly of Page, have announced the approaching marriage of their daughter, Miss Louise of San Francisco, Calif., and Kurt Christian Binder of Detroit, Mich., son of Mr. and Mrs. Christian Binder of Ann Arbor, Mich. Miss Kennedy is a graduate of Stephens college, Columbia, Mo., and the University of Nebraska, where she was a member of Alpha Xi Delta sorority. Mr. Binder is a graduate of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, where he was affiliated with Chi Phi fraternity. The wedding will take place January 15 at the First Congregational church in Ainsworth. Miss Kennedy is a granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. D. N. Loy of O'Neill.

Regional Deaths

Fred W. Kolman ELGIN—Funeral services were held Thursday, December 8, from the Lutheran church in Elgin for Fred W. Kolman, sr., 80, a well-known retired rancher who died Saturday, December 3, in a Norfolk hospital. Survivors include: Widow—Myrtle; five daughters, six sons, 24 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren and one brother.

Mrs. Fanny Anderson CREIGHTON—Funeral services were held Wednesday, December 7, from the Congregational-Baptist church in Creighton for Mrs. Fanny Anderson, 71, who died Monday, December 5, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Louis Morrison, in Omaha.

Substitute Pastor Serves BVM Church

LYNCH—Rev. Charles Kamber of Omaha is substituting as pastor of the local Catholic church until after the holidays after which a permanent pastor will be appointed. Word from Rev. John Wiczorek states that he is taking treatments at a hospital in Excelsior Springs, Mo.

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Spencer Has New Implement Firm

SPENCER—The Benson Implement Co., a new firm here, opened for business Monday, December 12. It is owned and operated by Hugh Benson, formerly of O'Neill, and Elwin Benson, formerly of Omaha, who are brothers. They are the sons of Mr. and Mrs. Blake Benson, widely known north Holt county ranchers. The families of both men will move to Spencer soon. The Bensons have purchased the building formerly occupied by the Ralph Black Implement Co.

Royal Theater O'NEILL, NEBR.

Thurs. Dec. 15 Family Night THREE STRIPES IN THE SUN Starring Aldo Ray, Phil Carey, Dick York and introducing Mitsuko Kimura. Medals for killing Japs over his heart . . . but now a girl in a pink kimono in his arms! Family admitted for 2 adult tickets; adults 50c; children 12c

Fri.-Sat. Dec. 16-17 Out of the living hell of a Chinese prison into the dead-end of BLOOD ALLEY Starring John Wayne, Lauren Bacall with Paul Fix, Joy Kim, Berry Kroger, Mike Mazurki and Anita Ekberg. Adults 50c; children 12c; matinee Sat. 2:30. All children under 12 free when accompanied by parent

Sun.-Mon.-Tues. Dec. 18-19-20 The rise and fall of Evelyn Nesbit Thaw THE GIRL IN THE RED VELVET SWING Cinemascope and color by DeLuxe. Starring Ray Milland, Joan Collins, Farley Granger with Luther Adler, Cornelia Otis Skinner. Adults 50c; children 12c; matinee Sun. 2:30. All children unless in arms must have tickets

Holt Soldier's Unit Fetes German Orphans— EWING—Army Sgt. Wayne C. Kruntorad, whose wife, Marilyn, lives in Atkinson, is helping give some 200 orphan children near Wurzburg, Germany, a Christmas day banquet. The party, complete with entertainment, refreshments and gifts, is being made possible by contributions from Sergeant Kruntorad's unit, the 86th infantry regiment. Sergeant Kruntorad, a mess steward in the regiment's company A, arrived in Europe in July, 1955. He has also served in Korea. The sergeant, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Kruntorad of Ewing, entered the army in November, 1951, and completed basic training at Ft. Riley, Kans.

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