

Prairieland Talk

Word 'Blizzard' Coined in O'Neill

By ROMAINE SAUNDERS, Retired, Former Editor The Frontier

MARION, IND.—A little snow felt today on the 67th anniversary of Nebraska's greatest and most tragic winter's visitation, the day that word "blizzard" was coined by an inspired pagan, O. C. Bates, when he stood at the case and hand-set the type that told the story of O'Neill citizen and school children huddled in the Mann and Sullivan stores not daring to venture out into the whirling cloud of snow. O'Neill's four weekly papers told the story of a community overwhelmed in mountains of snow, but none of those stories touched the quick of vivid reality like that which came from the discerning mind and accurate fingers of the white-headed old gent setting type at the case in the basement of the First National bank where the O'Neill Tribune was printed.



Romaine Saunders

The snow fall in northern Indiana today as this paragraph comes from the typewriter brings with it a slice off the Arctic circle. Workers with shovels, hammers and saws have taken their tools and gone home.

A small body of land in Lake Erie is known as Rattlesnake island. A caretaker and his family live on the island. Fifteen miles out from shore is a larger island with a sizeable population known as South Bass island. Both are under the jurisdiction of the state of Ohio. There are three boys in the family on Rattlesnake who go to school on the other island, getting to and from school by airplane that carries supplies from inland points to the islands. The air "school bus" service is paid for by the state and the South Bass school district. In early days, Denny Cronin and other young fellows hoofed it in from the "Michigan settlement" and sat the day out under the tutelage of John Bland and, still earlier, D. P. O'Sullivan, in a one-room school in West O'Neill about where the Outlaw food market now operates. Harvey Bently rode a horse in from four miles east of town and Mark Murphy from three miles out to attend school in the first school of parts that stood at the present public school site.

A group of 30 young men from old Mexico composes a choir that is making a tour of our country, giving concerts and plans to go abroad. A college auditorium somewhere up in Michigan is the nearest I have been to them.

There is a spirit of cooperation, an attitude of help the other fellow among business concerns in this Indiana city not manifest in many towns. We went to four business places yesterday before obtaining the four-bit item of merchandise wanted. The first place visited did not have the thing wanted, but the gracious young lady who waited on us suggested a store in a similar line of business where it might be obtained. This place did not have it either, but again a courteous suggestion was made of another store where the article might be found. One more fruitless stop but directed to another store just around the corner, there we got it. Each expressed regrets that they did not have the thing wanted but were glad to pass on a helpful word and maybe be the means of sending a customer to a fellow merchant of the town.

Seventy-three years in darkness, deaf ears closed to the music and sounds of earth, now, at 75, Helen Keller prepares to take off for the Far East on one more and what she says will be her last mission in behalf of the multitudes in the Orient who, like herself, are blind. Miss Keller is one of the most remarkable persons of modern times. Overcoming what would tie the hands of many, her life has been a striking example of achievements that carry an inspiration to others.

Editorial

Some Say: 'Shouldn't Be Sold'

One of the questions before the current session of the Nebraska legislature which will receive considerable publicity is the matter of whether or not to sell Nebraska's public school lands. Already proponents of the idea, which is not new, are busy. Likewise, educators are preparing statistics and arguments to combat the assault against the present system of handling school lands in the state.

Many people, particularly those residing in areas where the school land has long since been sold, have only a vague idea about the present system of having the state retain and lease the 1,630,000 acres of land, income from which benefits all schools in the state.

We are quite amused by some of the editorial comment, particularly that which originates in quarters in which the school land dough is spent and not earned.

The Nebraska Education News states that Nebraska school districts would lose approximately \$1,355,706 annually if the lands were to be sold and the money invested instead of the land being held and leased. The publication estimates the loss in terms of mill levies would be between two-thirds of a mill and two mills, depending upon the year, the school district and the number of children in various districts.

The Nebraska State (Lincoln) Journal comments, on the subject of selling the school land: "It is like saying a farm tenant should be empowered to buy the land he rents for 12 years, the period school leases run."

The Nebraska Signal (Geneva) declares: "We concede the question of reevaluation of the leases and rentals paid under the present system should be left open and needed adjustments should be made. For the present, however, the best interest of all children of the state seems to require that we hang on to the one means of equalizing educational opportunity and costs that Nebraska has been able to devise."

And there you have the learned and profound comments of three able editors, all outside the realm of the vast majority of state-owned school land.

It might be well to point out the state acquired the school lands in 1867 by agreement with the federal government when Nebraska became a state. During the intervening years the lands have produced revenue for the schools of the state, although mismanagement during part of the period lessened the full amount that might have been realized.

As is well known, most of the lands in question are in the western part of the state, with generous amounts in Holt, Boyd, Wheeler, Rock and other counties. It is not surprising, therefore, that the state legislators are somewhat divided on the sale question along geographical lines. Somehow those lawmakers, educators and editors outside the realm of the only remaining school

A call comes from military circles for "mule skinner" to come and help the army out of certain transportation difficulties. "Mule skinner" is a technical term that means a guy gifted with the ability to get the most service out of a mule. There was a patriot by the name of Bill Robinson, 27 miles south of O'Neill, who was an accomplished "mule skinner" when not out with his shotgun knocking prairie chickens out of the air and dodging game wardens. The army gets into places where motorized equipment cannot negotiate passage and mules are needed to pack in the equipment. I have wondered if Rich Burtwistle across the line in Wheeler county continues the mule raising industry for army service inaugurated by his father before him in World War I days. A mule is decidedly temperamental. He has a system of self defense and self preservation culminating in two hind legs oiled at the joints and equipped at the extremities with armorplate. He and the army "skinner" are made for each other.

In a letter from a friend I find this: "There is something more friendly about a weekly paper than any other. The personal items, even the ads and the news articles just seem to be homey." Doubtless reads Editor Cal's "homey" stuff.

Again we read something of the life story of another who had come down the highway of time on Holt county prairies and after her contribution in deed and word to the welfare of the O'Neill community hears the drumbeat of eternity and goes to join that innumerable caravan from whose bourne no traveler returns. Mrs. Wrede was one of the pioneer Lansworth family and became the wife of one of the pioneer Wrede family. Her husband was the first to respond to the roll call of eternity. Lonely hours followed, known only to those whose life's companion has gone the way of all the earth, and made cheerful by devoted loved ones. Out of the mists of yesterday's memories linger—and out of the glow of immortal life we meet again.

Next month one of those dinner functions comes off up at South Bend, Ind. Edward Doran, a prominent Hoosier democrat, is to be "roastmaster." This title probably has no connection with the main dish on the table, but rather turning to a brown some GOP bigwigs.

Ten guys have been selected as the best dressed of the Hoosier male population. Marion bloods feel somewhat slighted that they were not among the thusly honored gents. The best dressed guy today would be rigged out in a wambat fur coat, cap and mittens and hightop overshoes. But one Marion concern, a national bank, has something to glory over. The past year the bank carried the largest deposits in its history, made the most on bank profits and expanded resources beyond any previous year.

Contest and recount of election returns in one Nebraska state senatorial district cost the contest \$250, held up things in the unicam for a few days, resulted in nothing only what was first shown when the ballots cast in the two counties of that district were counted in November. Must want a thankless job pretty badly to spend your money in the hopes that a recount of votes will give it to you.

"And Elisha died, and they buried him." A man who had raised the dead, healed the lepers, saved the life of a widow and her sons, put Assyrian armies to flight, scared the daylight out of kings and never owned as much as a donkey though he could plow a field with a yoke of oxen, rated seven words as his death and burial notice. A hobo gets at least a few lines when he turns up his toes.

land miss completely the salient points:

The eastern counties have had their school lands although not in proportionate quantity with the western districts. These so-called eastern school lands have long since been sold and the revenue went into a permanent fund. State officials have made investments with these funds—some of which have gone miserably sour and amount to substantial losses. Meanwhile, the school land in the western districts has carried the burden.

The eastern school land has long since been restored to the tax rolls and now helps build and support schools, highways and other forms of government. The Holt leaseholder is taxed twice—once for his own property and once for his proportionate share of the tax burden not carried by school land (remember, that money is "one means of equalizing educational opportunity").

Probably the most serious aspect of all is the community rows stirred up when many of these leases expire. Peaceful neighbors (outsiders, too) frequently "run up" the lease bids on a grudge basis until sometimes the lease figure is way out of proportion to what the land is worth. Such land will soon wear out—because leaseholders no longer will tend it like their own because they are confronted with economic impossibilities in many instances.

Why tax-free Holt county land should support all schools in the state is more than we can understand.

The state-owned school land idea would make sense if the money were distributed in the counties in which the income originates.

But the more populous counties always have had and always will have the most voting power in the legislature, and that's about where this discussion was opened.

THE FRONTIER

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The Frontier editor, Carroll ("Cal") Stewart (second from left) is presented a replica of The General, a famous Civil war railroad locomotive. Presentation was made by A. P. Jaskowski, Western Auto merchant, who conceived the miniature model as a "reward" for Stewart's boosting of Chicago & North Western passenger-mail-express trains number 13 and 14. Left-to-right: L. D. Putnam, Stewart, Jaskowski and C. C. Golden.—The Frontier Photo by John H. McCarville.

News, Views and Gossip BY THE EDITOR

Best-Seller In February, 1954, a James Dugan came up with a historic yarn about the incredible Great Eastern, a monstrous ship of the middle Nineteenth century. His book, The Great Iron Ship, was acclaimed the book of the month, appeared that month in condensed form in the Readers' Digest and became a best seller.

We knew Dugan rather well while doing air force duty in England during World War II and it was at that time he began his research on the fabulous Great Eastern—which earned undying fame for breaking 14 corporations, figuring in six shipwrecks, laying the first trans-Atlantic telephone cable, attracting thousands of curious sightseers on both sides of the Atlantic, and finally was dismantled for junk.

Dugan scooped up a 60-thousand-dollar "advance" from the book publishers, Harper & Brothers, and took off for research on his next effort.

This week we received a note from Dugan, son of an Altoona, Pa., iron moulder—our first contact with him in many months:

"So good to know you continue to populate the cruel prairie," he began.

"We had an unseasonable year, mostly in France.

"I was on 35,000 miles of Cousteau's ship, the Calypso, in the Aegean, Red sea, Persian gulf and Indian ocean. Expect to go back to France in February to work on my next book.

"Peggy, I never did meet your family friends from Jersey who helped on the Great Iron Ship. I tracked them down, looking for certain documents, which they did not have. But they gave clues to the people who did.

Giant Jams

"We were in London for a couple of weeks; the change is remarkable—everything spruced up, including the people.

"Giant traffic jams, including an exclusive Rolls-Royce jam in the Mayfair district. The prewar City Man has reappeared with his billycock hat, fancy vest and rolled umbrella. He talks in a weary, unintelligible mumble.

"You can even get a decent dinner in a couple places.

"The area around St. Paul's cathedral has been very slow in rebuilding.

"GI's on leave are always in mufti—but you can spot them a mile away on account of gaudy shirts, windbreakers and zoot suits. It's still great fun to be in London, but distinctly not the same London as wartime.

"The most fascinating stop of the cruise was the Seychelles islands in the Indian ocean—a genuine paradise. I met a guy there who has: A rented 10-room stone house on terraces in the beautiful bay of Mahe; all kinds of fruit, flowers and vegetables around the house; five servants; handcarved furniture; objects d'art; phonograph with new records; a French wine cellar; lots of new books; a new small car. He's no pinch on entertainment either.

"The man's take-home pay is something less than two thousand dollars a year.—Cheers, JIM."

Our best guess is Jim's next book will concern either the man with five servants and the island paradise or Cousteau, who happens to be the leading authority on things at the bottom of the ocean (where Dugan may have located the doorknobs off the Great Iron Ship).

Civil War Engine

Editors sometimes seriously question if there is any use in knocking themselves out on projects not necessarily defined as a part of a newsman's job.

These thoughts were allayed this week in the matter of a time-consuming interest, namely having a small part in helping to keep in operation the last two remaining passenger-mail-express trains in this area.

The kicks derived from the presentation of a miniature steam locomotive (see above photo and caption) amply repay our effort. —CAL STEWART

attended a wild goose and duck dinner party at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Artus of O'Neill Saturday evening.

Merle Foreman and Mike Schaaf called at the Dean Perry home Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Meier and daughter, Megan, and Francis Tenborg were dinner guests of Mrs. Geary Embody Sunday.

Kenneth and Randy Kendall spent from Wednesday, January 19, until Sunday evening at the Wayne Fox home.

Mrs. Frank Foreman and Mrs. Cecil McMillan visited Mr. and Mrs. Jack Bailey in O'Neill Friday.

Mrs. Joe Ziska visited Mrs. Agnes Gaffney Tuesday afternoon, January 18.

Miss Norma Lou Foreman of Omaha came Saturday and visited until Sunday afternoon with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Foreman, and Merle and Jeanie.

Mr. and Mrs. Joe Ramold moved on Tuesday, January 18, from the Clarence Farr residence in Emmet to a farm near O'Neill.

The WSCS met last Thursday afternoon with Mrs. Agnes Gaffney at her home. Fourteen members were present. Mrs. Leop Beckwith was in charge of the lesson and Mrs. Guy Beckwith gave the devotionals. Lunch of suet pudding and coffee was served by the hostess. The next meeting will be with Mrs. John Conard in February.

Mrs. Floyd Barnes is helping Mrs. James Kendall a few days this week.

Gary Buckmaster of Fremont was a dinner guest at the Frank Foreman home Sunday.

The Methodist Bible study class met at the home of Mrs. Geary Embody last Thursday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Carroll of O'Neill visited at the G. Owen Cole home Sunday afternoon.

Miss Mary Lou Conard spent about four days visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Conard. She returned to Wayne State college Monday.

The Bernard Pongratz family were supper guests at the Joe Grutsch home Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. G. Owen Cole started to Sioux City last Thursday morning. They returned home after reaching Osmond as blizzard conditions there made traveling difficult.

Kenneth and Randall, sons of Mr. and Mrs. James Kendall, and Steven and Roy Fox, sons of Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Fox, stayed at the Gilbert Fox home Wednesday afternoon and evening, January 19.

A card party was held Sunday evening at the St. Michael hall. Pitch and pinocle were played. Lunch was served. Mrs. Henry Groth won the pot prize.

ATTEND KIN'S FUNERAL CHAMBERS—Mr. and Mrs. C. V. Robertson, Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Walter and Mr. and Mrs. Al Dierking attended the funeral services held at Valentine for their cousin, Art Orr, held Monday, January 24.

The ladies' Altar society met Wednesday afternoon, January 19, at the Church of the Epiphany.

Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Fox and daughter, Barbara, were guests at the Robert Tomlinson home at Star Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. John Kee visited at the Wayne Bates home last Thursday evening.

Mrs. Mary Lewis attended the Live and Learn extension club meeting at the home of Mrs. Walt Reis of Atkinson last Thursday.

Mrs. Dean Perry called at the Robert Cole home Tuesday afternoon, January 18.

Mrs. Bessie Burge and daughter, June, visited at the home of Mrs. Maude Fuller at O'Neill on Friday evening.

Leonard Dusatko visited Mr. and Mrs. Jerrold Dusatko Friday forenoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Don Meyers and children attended a card party held at the Merle DeLong home at Page Saturday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Larry Schaffer returned from Denver, Colo., on Saturday. They had spent a week there and attended a stock show.

Dean Perry, Merle Foreman and Mike Schaaf left Sunday evening for Gilbert, Wyo., on a business trip.

The sons of Mr. and Mrs. George Winkler visited at the home of Eddy Etheron on Sunday afternoon.

The Wayne Bates family visited at the John Kee home Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Patterson returned Monday, January 17, from Albion and Columbus where they had been visiting for a few days.

Mrs. Bessie Burge, June and Clayton visited the Glen Burge family in their new home at Chambers Sunday. The Glen Burge family recently moved to Chambers from Inman.

Dewey Schaffer, son of Mr. and Mrs. Larry Schaffer, spent last week at the home of his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. D. C. Schaffer of O'Neill, while his parents were in Denver, Colo.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Cole, Mr. and Mrs. G. Owen Cole, Mr. and Mrs. Dale French, Mr. and Mrs. Dale Kersenbrock and Bill Miller



Tourney Director D. E. Nelson congratulates V. Rothchild of Atkinson high's runnerup basketball team at the close of the 18th annual Holt county basketball tournament. —O'Neill Photo Co.

FARM SALE FRIDAY, JANUARY 28th Starting 1 P.M. — Lunch by Neighbor Lady Club 7 HEAD OF CATTLE—Including 3 cows (2 fresh, 1 to freshen soon), 2 stock steers, 2 bucket calves. ALSO—team of horses, 11 spotted girls, bred to purebred Hamp, to farrow April 1. ALSO—200 chickens. HAY, GRAIN, ETC.—1,000 bus. ear corn in crib, 400 bus. Ne-maha oats, 350 bus. Marion oats, 300 bales alfalfa hay. MACHINERY, ETC.—Including J-D tractor, G-P, with new 13-28 tires; 6-ft. Case combine with motor; 4-section harrow; J-D tractor plow; J-D 12-ft. disc; 6-ft. McC. mower; J-D spreader; 9-ft. disc; weeder; planter; sulky plow; lister; 2 cultivators; wagons; rack; sheller; feeders; bunks; barrels; tools; DeLaval elec. cream separator. Some household items. Terms: Cash. HENRY HEESE, Owner Cols. Max & Buy Wanser, Aucts. Farmers State Bank, Ewing, Clerk

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