

PrairieLand Talk

From Desert to Breadbasket

By ROMAINE SAUNDERS, Retired, Former Frontier Editor

LINCOLN—The soil conservation alarmists are not, of course, the only ones who dip into the realm of fiction with respect to the pioneers.



Romaine Saunders

A book was written by a Ph. D. in which among erroneous statements the author tells the reader that buffalo hunters removed the skin of the animal by slitting it down the back.

The pioneers practiced "soil conservation" and employed two methods. One was to scatter a bit of hay over a field when dry hot winds blew.

In the sandhills south of O'Neill, where the McClure herds trailed in the long ago, there were deep blowouts that have long since drifted in and vegetation taken over by the simple processes of nature.

If you went among these herds without a horse under you it was at the peril of your life. At one time in the geographical history of our western continent our great prairie was known as the great American desert.

What is this "farm problem" demanding so much attention? To produce a crop and get it sold has ever been the concern of the farmer. He is not the only American patriot who has "problems"—from school kids to the biggest industrialist or newspaper editor life is beset with problems and thank God it is.

Remember Pearl Harbor. Another anniversary approaches of the event that set the world on fire and brought about the employment of the first atom bomb to bring Nippon to his knees.

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Editorial

Why Thanksgiving?

Today is Thanksgiving day—or so it is called. Its observance was originated as a very special day on which all of us should take time off to give thanks for the great wealth of life we enjoy.

We Americans are among the privileged who enjoy freedom of religion—a privilege taken for granted but certainly not enjoyed by all peoples of the world.

But for most of us, alas, it will not be Thanksgiving day. It will be turkey day—the day of the great annual eating contest after the long sleep of that morning.

Like armistice day, Christmas and memorial day, it will be greeted only because it's a holiday from work. This is a sad commentary yet indeed it is all too true.

We Americans, who have the most to be thankful for of any people in the world, will—most of us—forget to give thanks this day. Oh, we say, it's silly to set aside a special day for such a thing, because we all know that deep down inside we're thankful.

A few of the more appreciative and stalwart will arise and go to church, and there'll be a lot of pew space left over.

Far, far fewer will breathe a silent prayer of thanksgiving by themselves, a thing they always claim a person can do just as effectively in a car as in a church.

Some homes will have grace before meals as a regular daily thanksgiving practice; a few others will have it just this once because it is Thanksgiving day.

Reed O'Hanlon, jr., editor of the Blair Pilot-Tribune, states it this way: "Why not grace before the feast, just this once, if on no other occasion? Lots of decent and fairly intelligent people do it all the time these days. It takes just a moment—and the potatoes and gravy will still be hot when you're done.

Ex-Nebraskan Herbert Brownell kicked up quite a fuss when he rattled the bones of Harry Dexter White. It's sad, strange and ironic that White should have been permitted to operate in espionage—and even enjoy protection—while holding key posts in the U.S. government.

What a different world this would be if people would listen to those who know more and not merely try to get something from those who have more.

The hair pulling and name calling and snapping and snarling among the nation's great involving not so much patriotism but who will be the greatest and run things, recalls an incident in the days of the ration cards in '42. My life's companion and I had gone to the schoolhouse a mile north of our home in Swan precinct to get the permits for certain supplies.

"Pausing a moment while Mary Ann Winkler made the final stroke with the pen before handing me two of the war ration books, overtime pay for teachers was mentioned. Miss Winkler remained at her desk some three hours extra each evening last week. 'I do it for my country,' she said. That's simple, direct, understandable. Do it for my country! Doesn't that knock the grouch out of you? A country school at \$50 a month is no snap for a young woman who stays evenings in her one-room school and with a smile makes out ration books, and does it for my country."

Lincoln courts assessed her a \$100 fine and suspended her driver's license for six months maybe to let Omaha understand that they cannot turn their drunk women loose to endanger traffic on the streets of the capital city.

Harry Truman, snow white hair and wrinkled brow, but still able to bray with the best of the Missouri mules, took to the air and the TV to give his version of the controversial Harry Dexter White affair, or so much of it as he found convenient to recall. Mr. Truman makes the effort to defend his own part in retaining a known spy in an important federal post. Can't condemn him for that though his record as president has been publicly repudiated. This whole White affair is more or less disgraceful. And Truman has not broken an alabaster box of ointment for its burial. It was the characteristic speech such as the country had become familiar with and tired of with such outbursts as "phony," "lies" and "mealy-mouth," with which Truman as a politician was well stocked. The public is interested in what the facts are in these important congressional investigations, not the partisan hogwash.

At the November election, 1903, Billy Hagensick, the "village blacksmith," was the choice of one voter in Gratton precinct for sheriff, though Billy's name was not on the printed ballot. And a patriot up at Atkinson that election was not satisfied with either the republican, fusion or prohibition candidates for clerk of the district court, so he wrote in Neil Brennan's name and let it go at that. The republicans elected their candidate for sheriff, Charley Hall, and Gilmour, for clerk, pulled through with a majority of 23 votes and the republicans got control of the county board. Fusionists got the rest. . . . In the last issue in October that year the Spencer Advocate gave space to this item: "Misses Kate and Mattie Mann and Owen Meredith of O'Neill came over Sunday and stopped overnight in our tiptop town."

November introduced a quiet snowfall. It was gone in a day, leaving the first bit of mud seen in months. And then frost laid a silver sheet across the land a few mornings. Today the sun rides high across a cloudless sky and men are seen going about coatless and hatless. Dogs bark at their shadow, or did the dog get a glimpse of that squirrel that just scooted across the street and climbed a tree? Last night a half moon looked down upon the pleasures and sorrows and follies of men and winked out below the horizon before daybreak. Summer bloom has faded from the earth and the bright, mild hours carry the season forward toward arctic circle conditions. But friends we meet this morning salute us with "Nice day!" and hasten on.

The Political War Is On

There's no use talking. While some folks are acting on their own free will in opposing Secretary Benson, the whole thing is a political war, conceived by politicians, staged by politicians and designed solely for the purpose of embarrassing the administration.

To our way of thinking the administration should be glad that the battle was started as early as it was. By the time that another presidential election rolls around everyone will be fully aware of just why the fight on Benson was started. And by that time he will probably have developed a farm plan that will very apparently be an improvement over the other one.

In the meantime, let's remember that farm prices dropped much farther in the last days of the Truman administration than they have in the Eisenhower administration thus far. The fact that it's the most recent part of the drop that was in Ike's administration and the further fact that political opportunists have been stirring people up, accounts for the big drive against Benson.

Unfortunately, though, the biggest dip in cattle prices has come since Ike took office. The season's first snowstorm bore a striking similarity to the memorable two-day blast in November, 1948. That one was the beginning of a miserable winter. Both the 1948 and 1953 assaults were late autumn affairs, striking before winter officially arrived.

The end of the world, when it comes, will find some human beings still trying to tell others how to live their lives.

I shall try to correct errors where shown to be errors, and I shall adopt new views as they shall appear to be true views.—Abraham Lincoln.

THE FRONTIER

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When You and I Were Young...

Bowden Slides into Town Aboard Sled

Home Butchering Now Taxed

50 Years Ago O. F. Biglin has encased a cozy little business office in his furniture and implement store that gives him easy access to either department, without having to furnish heat for the two extensive rooms this cold weather. R. J. McGinnis arrived from Cody, Wyo., and will stop in town a few days. . . . .

20 Years Ago Farmers butchering and selling hogs without paying tax are liable to prosecution. . . . .

10 Years Ago Miss Dorothy Ryan, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. G. J. Ryan of this city, became the bride of L. L. George Hammond, also of this city, at a ceremony in St. Patrick's church at 8 o'clock a. m. on November 24. . . . .

One Year Ago Unwanted parking meters leave town. . . . .

Metal Work Topic at Scout Meeting

EWING—Boy Scout troop 181 met last Thursday evening at headquarters for a regular session. Scoutmaster H. R. Harris called the session to order. Larry Rotherham, scribe, called roll to which 10 members answered.

Use of the Scout neckerchief in first aid was the discussion of the evening followed by demonstrations. Plans were made for Scouts to make a first aid pocket kit to be carried at all times.

Rev. W. J. Bomer, the assistant scoutmaster, gave an interesting talk on metal work, plastic braiding and other crafts. The Scouts voted to make Christmas presents, beginning at their next meeting. Reverend Bomer will be in charge of the craftwork for this project.

The roundtable Scout discussion held at O'Neill on Monday evening, November 17, was attended by Reverend Bomer, Neal Jensen, Allen and Elwood Peterson and H. R. Harris. Instruction for Scout activities for November and December was the topic for discussion.

Other Ewing News

The Thursday Bridge club was entertained last Thursday afternoon at the home of Mrs. Perry Seiser. Scorewinners were Mrs. Lyle Dierks, Mrs. R. G. Rockey and Mrs. William Spence, who was a guest. Lunch was served by the hostess.

Miss Bernadine Rotherham has been assisting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Sam Regan the past week.

Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Larsen entertained at a 6 o'clock dinner last Thursday evening in honor of the 17th birthday anniversary of their nephew, Melvin Pruden, and also honoring Mr. Larsen's sister, Mrs. Ida Kennitz of Wood, S.D., and Mrs. Zeims, both of whom have birthdays in the near future. In attendance were Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Pruden and daughter, Fern, Mr. and Mrs. Will Conner, Mr. and Mrs. Herman Zeims, all of Ewing, and Mrs. Ida Kennitz of Wood.

Mr. Louise Beal of Orchard is a guest at the home of her in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Waldo Davies, and daughter, Marie.

Relatives received word on Friday of the sudden death of Clinton Hopkins at El Monte, Calif., where he made his home. Z. H. Fry, a brother-in-law, left the same day for El Monte.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Norwood made a trip recently to Midwest and Casper, Wyo. At Midwest they visited their son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Norwood, and family.

Mrs. William Lofquest entertained the Seek and Share club at her home on Tuesday afternoon, November 10. Nine members answered to roll call. Mrs. Edna Lofquest was a guest. The lesson for the group was on glowing candles, presented by Mrs. Wray Fry. Plans were made for a family party November 24 to be held

at the annex of the United Presbyterian church. On adjournment, refreshments were served by the hostess. December 8 is the date for the next meeting when Mrs. Willie Shrader will be the hostess.

Mr. and Mrs. Russell Fink and Mr. and Mrs. Eldon Fink and family of Fremont were callers on Sunday at the home of William J. Harris.

Miss Fern Pruden was a weekend guest at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Buford Carlson at Orchard. Mrs. Lena Kirschmier had as her guests on Sunday Mr. and Mrs. Marion Wolverson and Mrs. Ray Neisius and family, all of Pilger, and Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Kirschmier and family of Ewing.

M. H. Dierks, who has spent several weeks visiting relatives at North Platte and Ogallala, is back at his home in Ewing. He returned with his son, Lyle P. Dierks, who visited his sister, Mrs. Walter Tressler, and family on Wednesday, November 18.

Mrs. Elmer Bergstrom and Wilbur Bennett were initiated into the Jephtha chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, on Tuesday evening, November 17. Mrs. Vera Anson, worthy patron, and William Spence, worthy patron, conducted the ceremony. Mrs. R. G. Rockey, chairman of the refreshment committee, assisted by Mrs. William Spence, served an oyster stew with all the trimmings, apple pie and coffee.

Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Spence and son, Demmie, of Atkinson were recent guests at the home of his brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. William Spence.

Orchard Pair in 60th Anniversary

ORCHARD—Mr. and Mrs. M. H. Carter of Orchard celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in their home Sunday, November 15.

M. H. Carter was born in Mississippi, on April 14, 1866 and Miss Maggie Lautenschlager was born in Plattsmouth, September 8, 1873. They were united in marriage in Hay Springs, November 15, 1893.

DESTROY RATS and MICE WITH d-CON GUARANTEED STANNARD'S STORE - O NEILL -

Sunday-School Pupils to Save Pennies

EWING—Sunday-school pupils of the Ewing Methodist church on December 1 will begin saving pennies which will be sent to missions. White stocking containers will be given each. On Sunday, December 20, these will be brought and hung on the Christmas tree. The "Livewires," the teen-age class taught by Mrs. Harold Harris, were appointed to secure the tree and put it up.

Supt. Dewitt Hoke presided at the Sunday-school board meeting held last Thursday evening at the home of Mrs. R. G. Rockey. Sunday evening, December 20, was set for the Christmas play, "Cindy Copies with Christmas," by the Upper Room club, with special music by the youth fellowship group.

Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Wortman and sons of West Point visited at the Klippenberg home Sunday afternoon, November 15. Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Fox and daughter, Barbara, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Tomlinson and son, Veldon, visited Mr. and Mrs. Max Grenier Thursday evening, November 12.

EMMET NEWS

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Tomlinson and Veldon of Star stopped at the Gilbert Fox home Thursday afternoon, November 12, enroute home after spending a week hunting in the Black Hills. They also visited Mr. and Mrs. V. E. Stevens and sons at Rapid City, S.D.

MILLER THEATER

Miller Theater advertisement featuring "The Sun Shines Bright" and "She's Back on Broadway" with showtimes and dates.

daughter, Barbara, spent Saturday night, November 14, visiting Mr. and Mrs. Bob Tomlinson and son, Veldon, of Star. Mrs. Bob Cole and Mrs. Georgiana McGinnis called on Mrs. John Tenborg at her home Thursday, November 12.

DR. H. L. BENNETT VETERINARIAN Phones 316 and 304

Christmas Trees! Go on Sale Tuesday, December 1 (YANTZI BLDG., NEXT DOOR BIGLIN'S) AGAIN THIS YEAR, Simonson Post 93 of the American Legion has been granted the exclusive rights to the sale of Christmas trees in O'Neill through the cooperation of O'Neill merchants.

Our Fifth Annual RANGE BULL SALE OF 32 Head of Strong Aged 2-Year-Old Hereford Bulls WILL BE HELD Thursday, December 3rd, 1953 1:30 P.M. Atkinson, Nebr. 12 Head by WHR Tristar 29th, the sire of our top bulls the past 2 years. 10 head by WHR Lancelot 6th; 10 head by Bell's Resolute F 45.

NEW 1954 HUDSON WASP More Power! More Glamour! New Lower Price! Lower Priced Running Mate of the Fabulous Hudson Hornet BEST BUY IN THE LOW-MEDIUM PRICE FIELD! GONDERINGER MOTOR CO. ATKINSON, NEBR.