Dickerson Trial

(continued from page 1)

At 2:05 p.m., Special Prosecutor Cronin began his summation and appeal. He admonished the jury to disregard the emotional pleas made by the defense counsel. "Search your own conscience and judge only on the evidence that has been placed in the record. You speak for the people of Boyd county. The great jury system of justice can crumble, breakdown, if you do not speak out honestly in your verdict. There has been nothing sinister or trumped up, as defense counsel imagines. This has been a slow process. Boyd County Attorney Wills filed first degree murder charges before I was brought into the case as a special assistant. No one can question Wills's honesty and integrity.

"We have not stressed motive in this murder; neither has there been motive in juvenile gangland murders being commited in Chicage and New York.

"The defense has tried during the trial and in their closing argufents to create side issues, to cover the trial. There is no place before justice for side issues. There wasn't a defense witness who could refute Nyal's story that Mrs. Dickerson killed Franklin Vanderlinde. Early in this case, both the mother and Nyal lied. Nyal told the truth to authorities July 1 and has told the truth since. He told the truth on this stand," pointing to the witness chair.

"On unimportant details there have been sofe minor dischepancies, but on material things the story is the same: The mother killed Vanderlinde.

"Defense makes great issue of the lip and facial wounds. If the bit had hit Vanderlinde in the mouth, as they infer, the same blow could not have penetrated his skull four or five inches.

"Defense says Mrs. Dickerson was trying to protect her son with manufactured stories, such a a haying accident. Mrs. Dickerson was not protecting 17-year-old Nyal then or isn't now. She's protecting Sadie Dickerson.

"What did Doctor Holyoke say? He said the hole in the skull was bigger than the bit and the hole was irregular. He also admitted, on the stand he did not know there had been mortuary probings conducted with a rod and with the same brace-and-bit and that these probings were done between the time of Vanderlinde's death and the time of his (Holyoke's) laboratory experiments. He admitted these probings could have altered the hole. Doctor Holyoke is an antomologist, a scientist, and a good one. He is also a theoretician.

"It's uncontradicted by evidence or by witness that the mother killed the boy," Cronin concluded.

Judge Lyle E. Jackson read the instructions to the jury, detailing the ingredients of first degree murder, second degree murder, manslaughter and acquittal. At 3:17 p.m., the jury filed into the deliberation room off the northwest corner of the courtroom. The jurors took time out to eat an evening meal. Shortly after 8 o'clock, Judge D. R. Mounts, who had been sitting all four days with Judge Jackson, was summoned from O'Neill for special instructions. Present for the 10 o'clock written exchange were the constituted court officials, Wills, Brennan, Johnson, Sadie and others. The foreman, E. J. Richter, Spencer farmer, asked the question: "Does only the forman sign the verdict or do all members of the jury sign?" The question was answered in writing; the jury room door closed again. There was tenseness and something in the air indicated the verdict was imminent. It was. Word spread. Others hurried into the room on the second floor of the frame 56-year-old Boyd courthouse that bore a touch of yule here and there. The jury filed into the box.

Jury Foreman Richter arose. His signature had been the only one necessary. "Not guilty," he intoned. The trial was over.

Mrs. Dickerson, who had hustled her skirt over her head earlier to avoid a camera, rejoiced. Immediately she received congratulations of some—but not all—in the room. Johnson escorted her to the jury box where she shook hands with each member of the jury—one woman and 11 men. Her friends, Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Hansen of Butte, who had testified in her behalf, were notified and she spent the night with them in their home.

Sheriff Collins reported the verdict to Nyal, who was in his cell. Nyal buried his head and wept.

Sadie was free.

Trial Sidelights

(continued from page 1)

For a time Wednesday Holt county (Boyd's neighbor on the south) had only one member of the bar within the boundaries, and he is O'Neill Postmaster Ira H. Moss, a non-practicing lawyer. (The Holt county judge is not a member of the bar.) All the practicing lawyers were in the Boyd courtroom as trial participants or spectators.

John Chavla of Monowi, a colorful Boyd resident, was a juror prospect. When he faced the judges' bench he offered a military salute with a flourish. He was not accepted.

Defense Counsel William L. Brennan, who suffers from low blood pressure was conspicuously absent several times. He complained of "nose bleeds."

Shepherding the jurors were the bailiff and the court matron: Mr. and Mrs. M. V. Jordan of Butte.

High school students from Butte, Spencer and Lynch sampled the trial proceedings. They formed a "Coke brigade" at recesses, raiding the soft drink vending machine. Empty bottles filling two cases were picked up by the custodian at one of the recesses.

After acquittal. Sadie spent the night with Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Hansen of Butte, who had testified in her behalf. Then she returned to O'Neill, did some shopping and voluntarily spent her last night in Nebraska in her former cell at the Holt courthouse. "She wanted to rest, bathe and freshen up," according to Holt Sheriff Leo Tomjack, who had befriended Sadie all along and insisted she was innocent. Early Sunday Tomjack and his wife wangled two worn suitcases, gave them to Sadie and placed her on a westbound bus at Columbus. She was leaving—going to Denver. Colo., to visit a brother; to Salt Lake City, Utah, to see her mother; to near Los Angeles, Calif., to locate a daughter. She told Tomjack she could file a claim against Boyd county for having been detained—but wouldn't. She had bus fare and a little cash. Proceeds of a personal property sale plus Vanderlinde's estate are either dwindled or tied up in estate proceedings. The sum, a few thousand dollars, is still subject to attorney fees for her defense. Mrs. Dickerson did not say goodbye to Nyal, Tomjack said. She was advised at Butte not to. Sadie was Vanderlinde's sole heir.

The Dickerson trial coverage for The Frontier was provided by Cal Stewart, former owner of The Frontier. Stewart also covered the trial for The Omaha World-Herald and United Press-International, and provided direct telephonic reports to Radio WNAX, Yankton, S. D., and Radio KMMJ, Grand Island. He was hampered in his radio reporting by an attack of laryngitis.

O'Neill Loan Association To Change Name Soon

Lyle P. Dierks, manager of the Elkhorn Valley National Farm Loan Association, announced today that his organization will become known as the Federal Land Bank Association of O'Neill on January 1.

Mr. Dierks, who has been manager of the O'Neill office for the past 17 years, says that at the present the farmer-rancher owned association has 576 borrower-members and a total of $5,628,100 in outstanding loans.

Mr. Ed Verzal has been assistant manager for the past four years. Directors of the board are Frank C. Kruntorad, president, of Ewing, Alnard Heerman, vice-president, of Naper and E. J. Revell, O'Neill, Ralph Hoffman, Ewing and Wilbur L. Moon, Stuart.

COURTHOUSE CLOSED

The courthouse will be closed Saturday, Dec. 26 following Christmas.

Veterans' Forms Mailed

The Holt County Department of Veteran's Affairs said this week that annual income questionnaires will be mailed this month to Nebraska veterans, widows, dependant children and parents receiving Veterans Administration non-service-connected disability or death pensions.

The questionnaires will be in the mail no later than December 31 and regulations require that pension payments are stopped if the form is not returned to the Lincoln Regional office within 30 days.

Any veteran or dependant needing assistance with the questionaire should contact Alvin Heese, Holt County Veteran Service Officer.

Club Notes

Better Ways Extension

Members of the Better Ways Extension club had their Christmas party Thursday night. Following a short business meeting games and cards were played and gifts were exchanged.

Mrs. Bill Kramer won the guessing game. Mrs. Don Wecker and Mrs. Ed McManus were hostesses with Mrs. Norbert Clark in charge of the games. Next month's meeting will be with Mrs. Virgil Tomlinson.

Rebekah

Rebekah Lodge members met Friday night in regular session and for a pot luck dinner and Christmas party. Games, singing and cards were the evening's entertainment.

Card winners were Mrs. D. A. Baker, Mrs. Marlin Luber, and Mrs. Ben Wayman. There was an exchange of gifts.

Officers will be installed January 5. Elected officers are Mrs. Melvin Klingler, noble grand, Mrs. Norbert Clark, vice grand, Mrs. Richard Hovey, secretary, and Winnie Barger, treasurer.

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