

Prairie Land Talk

Spuds to Rescue 40 Years Ago

By ROMAIN SAUNDERS, Retired, Former Editor The Frontier

LINCOLN.—Even women's tears do not always avail. A group of farm women, 150 of them from Atlantic coast states, barged in on the U.S. agriculture secretary, the much harassed Ezra Benson, to plead for government aid to boost potato prices.

Fresh from the potato fields of Long Island, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, the lady spud growers said they must have a dollar a hundred pounds for their products or go broke. Official "sweet talk" from heartless swivel chair farmers was the best the women got. They left in tears.

Those Dry Creek homesteaders of the long ago who raised carloads of spuds, hauled them to town and got 11 cents a bushel for them at Mike Sullivan's and John Mann's trading posts didn't get enough currency at the First National bank for a load of potatoes to finance sending a delegation of prairie land dames to Washington.

Some 40 odd years ago this humble pilgrim was facing bankruptcy, or at least loss of credit, if he did not meet certain payments coming due at an O'Neill bank. He knew little about roping and branding a steer, but next to nothing about farming. A friend suggested I raise potato crops that summer. The friend went further than "suggest"—he helped me plant and gather in. Two four-horse loads of as handsome potatoes as were ever grown, hauled off and sold that fall at 50 cents a bushel, squared me at the bank and a little more.

Ezra T. Benson had not been discovered at that time.

In 1900 Adlai Stevenson was the democratic candidate for vice-president. And, 56 years later, another Adlai Stevenson is the democratic candidate for president for the second time. In 1900 the Adlai Stevenson of that day was William Jennings Bryan's running mate in the "boy orator's" second time up. Both went down to defeat. And the second time up for the present Adlai may mean he is heading for the same fate.

It is night. I look out of the unshaded window and see nothing but the starlight treetops against a dim background of starless night sky. The day has brought a full measure of lovely things—a walk down a familiar street where a little child plays about a flower garden on a hunt for butterflies; the first gay adventurous thing to hold within my heart when the day is done. I moved on and came upon it unaware, the beauty of a smiling face and a gentle voice that responded, "Thank you!" for a favor done, cordial greetings and gracious contacts along the way. The day is done. Tonight I pause, remembering the lovely things, contact with friendly pilgrims, the nameless beauty, the song of the birds, the floral bloom, the crimson glow of setting sun—the sizeable check that came through the mails today.



Romain Saunders

There may be a survivor or two in O'Neill and also down by Amelia who remembers the F. B. Cole family. Mr. Cole was an early day watch and clock repair man in O'Neill who filed on a homestead some 30 miles southwest of town. To maintain a business in town and be on the homestead to spend the night with the family was a problem. It was about a day's job for a pair of broncos to make the roundtrip. Cole was something of a mechanical genius. He made a prairie sailing rig that could negotiate those 30 miles to the homestead in about two hours. This outfit consisted of a platform on the running gear of a buggy, a seat, a steering handle and a sail. The open prairie in the 1880's was swept daily by winds and a landlubber who knew something of the manipulation of a sail managed to get there by a zig-zag course. The Lincoln Sunday Journal-Star of August 19 last had the story of this sailing rig together with an illustration drawn by my 13-year-old grandson, Gerald Saunders, a seventh grader who would rather draw than study from books.

Prejudice is the result of ignorance. The other guy has the same right to his way of life as you have to yours.

Pink glow of early dawn, then sunlight marches in flaming majesty above the horizon this calm October morning. We sense something of celestial grandeur and wonder not at the ancient bowing in adoration as the sun rose over Oriental hills. Colorful autumn days dawn, glow and pass into night on prairie land. We are a year older, another mark of passing years on face and brow. The green of summer tinted with autumn gold, ripened fruits and the calm, restful season of the year, symbolic of life's time of rest, struggles for a crust of bread are in the past and a check from Uncle Sam coming in every month to add to your bank account. It is life's October and out of the realm of treasured memories there comes visions of the past and we walk again down the path of long ago where dead leaves of October lay along the way. Walking abroad this bright morning in early fall, the blue heavens above, concrete underfoot that leads to the marts of trade where the girl at the cash register smilingly takes my two-bits for a bite of banana.

Billy McNichols writes me from Hollywood that he is shaping his business affairs so as to go to Rochester, Minn., when the doctors give the word. He mentions a visit he and Mrs. McNichols enjoyed at the home of Mrs. James F. O'Donnell, another former O'Neill citizen, who now makes her home in the Hollywood neighborhood. Billy says they found her "well and happy." Mr. McNichols cherishes memories of O'Neill, his boyhood home, the home of his parents and grandparents.

A friend just back from a visit to the Illinois cornfields tell us prairie land patriots about seeing cornfields that are yielding 70 or more bushels to the acre. Clodhoppers back there should come to Nebraska and learn something about growing corn from that son of the soil down by Aurora who says his cornfield yielded 132 bushels to the acre.

When You and I Were Young... Davidson Boy Hurt by Bullet Gun Discharges in John's Foot

50 Years Ago Johnnie, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. James Davidson, punctured his left foot with a bullet from a rifle. He was hunting along the river when the gun was accidentally discharged. . . J. W. Van Kirk, living two miles northeast of town, is reputed of having the best corn anywhere in this section. Even though it was dry, he estimated he'd have 60 bushels to the acre. . . Miss W. McEniry and J. P. Gallagher, attended by Miss Mamie Cullen and Dr. J. F. Gallagher of St. Louis, Mo., were married.

20 Years Ago Mrs. Rose Ryan is a grandmother. She received word that a son had been born to her daughter, Mrs. Charles Graham, of California. Mr. Graham is the son of Mrs. Edward Graham of O'Neill and Mrs. Graham is the former Margaret Ryan. . . Margerie and Lois Lindberg, who attended school in O'Neill, spent the weekend with the homefolks at Meek. . . Mrs. Goldie Liddy returned from Columbus and Omaha where she had visited relatives for a month.

10 Years Ago September and October in Holt county might be considered as "the wettest year in history." To date this year 27.30 inches of precipitation has fallen. . . Albert Petersen, 58, assistant police chief for the past seven years, died suddenly. . . Those released recently by the selective service were Joseph G. Laible, Willis C. Peterson and Glenn Lawrence of Atkinson, Ivan C. French of O'Neill and John J. Dougherty of Inman.

One Year Ago Robert E. Strong, 65, of Norfolk, formerly of O'Neill and Emmet, died in a car accident. . . Mrs. Clara Tucker, 87, of Ewing was buried at Ewing. . . Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Drayton of Orchard celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. . . Miss Delores Doolittle of Amelia was married to Charles Ray Gartner of Lincoln.

Miss Mary Elizabeth Gatz, a freshman at St. Mary's college in Omaha returned home with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Gatz, for the weekend. Mr. Gatz had attended a meeting in Omaha.

2 Coyotes Killed During Sunday Hunt

CELIA—Ray and Bob Pease, Eldon Breiner and sons, Lonnie and Russell, and their six dogs and Bernard Rossman and son with six dogs, "Butch" Goeke and "Tuffy" Henning engaged in a coyote hunt between Atkinson and Emmet Sunday, October 7. Two coyotes were killed and six were sighted.

Other Celia News Mr. and Mrs. Omer Poynts and Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Chaffin and family surprised Mrs. Mark Hendricks on her birthday anniversary Thursday. They came for supper. . . Darrel McKathnie, son of Mr. and Mrs. Milton McKathnie, was 8-years-old Friday. His mother had Venita Schwindt and LeRoy Lauridsen also her sister, Mrs. Gerald Risor and family there for supper in honor of the event. . . Elmer Saltz of Page spent Friday night with Glen Sorensen at the William Malou home. . . Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Cone of O'Neill were Thursday visitors at the William Malou home. . . Sunday dinner guests at the LeRoy Hoffman home were his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Butolph of Minneapolis, Minn., who are spending the weekend at the Amelia Hoffman home in Atkinson; also Mrs. Amelia Hoffman and sister, Mrs. Mary Johnson, Harold, Gerold and David Frickel. Victor Frickel and children were afternoon visitors. . . The teachers of the various schools in the community attended the Amelia Hoffman home in Atkinson. Youngsters enjoyed a vacation that day. . . Albert Johnson of Lyons spent several days the past week at the John Sicheneder home. . . Leonard Chaffin helped Mark Hendricks Friday sort and load his Angus cattle he sold to Ed Brondyke of Fulton, Ill. Joe Hendricks sold several truckloads of cattle to the same buyer and they were shipped Friday. They have sold cattle to this buyer the past 10 years. . . Mr. and Mrs. Mark Hendricks and family were Saturday dinner guests at the Omer Poynts home. . . Leroy and Keith Hipke and Charles Chaffin visited Roger and Rodney Dobias Sunday afternoon. Charles Chaffin spent Friday overnight with Rodney Dobias. . . Henry Heiser was a Friday morning guest at the Mark Hendricks home. . . Mr. and Mrs. William Malou and Billy were Thursday evening visitors at the Barbara Milnar home visiting Billy's grandmother, Mrs. William Milner of Chestert, Pa., and aunt, Mrs. Gilbert

spent Sunday at the Frank Kilmurray home.

O'NEILL LOCALS Keith Abart attended a state credit meeting in Fremont Sunday and Monday. . . Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Norbert Clark were Mr. and Mrs. Charles Luben of Inman and S. Irley Luben of Norfolk. . . Mr. and Mrs. Russell Nutter and family and Mrs. Cathrine Nutter of Theford arrived Monday, October 1, to visit at the Charles F. Nutter home. . . Miss Barbara McCarthy and Miss LaDonna McNulty were home for the September 30 weekend from St. Catherine's

School of Nursing. They are the daughters of the George M. McCarthy and the Jim McNulty's. . . Larry Fox returned Monday, October 1, from Harvard where he had taken his cousin, Larry Joe Hoppens. Larry stayed a week with Larry Joe and on the way home stopped in at Grand Island to visit the Joe Luth home until Monday. . . Capt. and Mrs. J. T. Butcher and Susan of Smyrna, Tenn., left last week for California where Captain Butcher will study at UCLA for two months. They plan to visit her parents, Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Golden, on their way back from California in December.

It Happened In NEBRASKA---



"Though the Overland Mail was slow by today's standards, its coaches made remarkably good time over the prairie. On a trip to southern Nebraska, a four-horse team pulled almost half a ton of mail and 14 people a distance of 14 miles in 52 minutes. Only 16 miles per hour—but pretty good for real, live "horsepower."

Speaking of "mileage," have you noticed how much further your entertainment budget goes when you serve guests a sparkling, refreshing glass of beer? For beer goes so well with food, with conversation, with a game of cards. Be a congenial host. Serve beer, a beverage that belongs!

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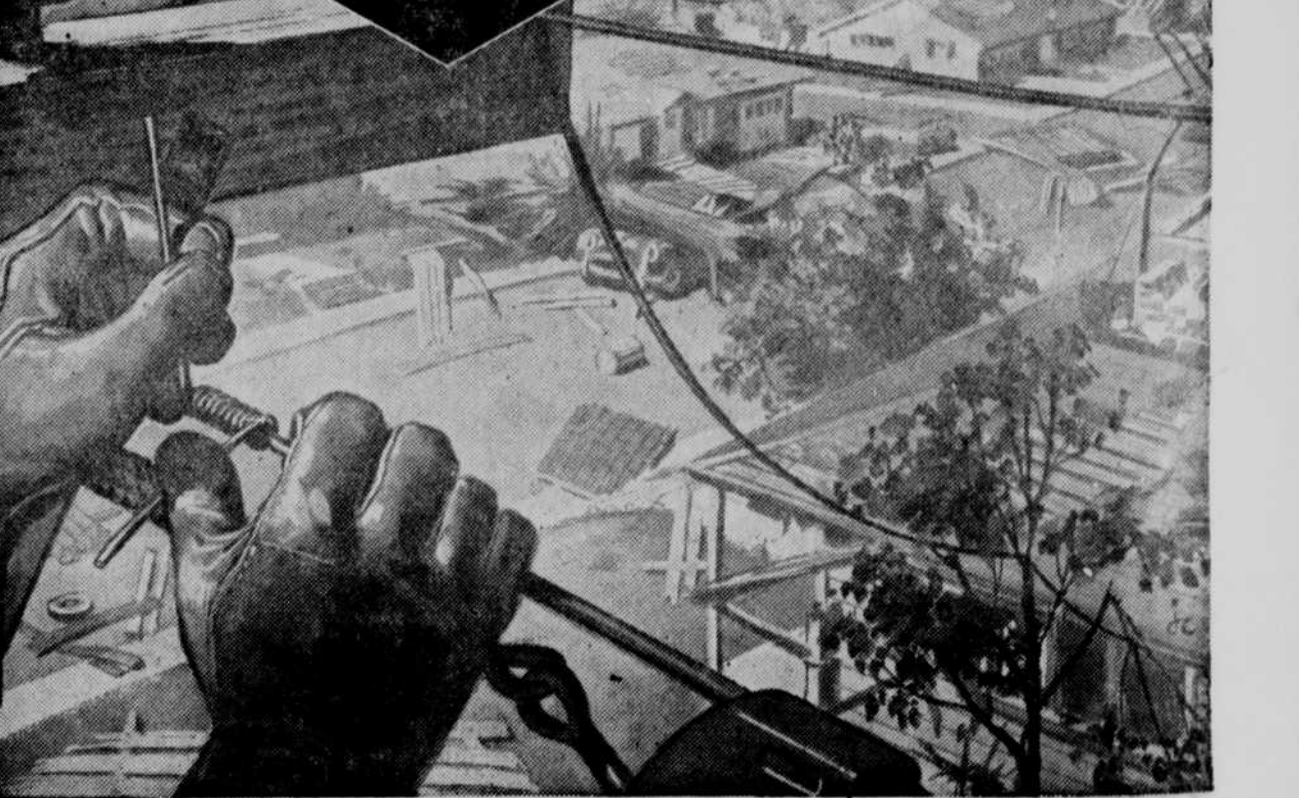
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Editorial

Buffett Indicts Both Parties

Former Congressman Howard Buffett, an Omaha investment banker who served four terms in congress during the forties and retired voluntarily, chose national newspaper week and a gathering of more than two hundred editors and publishers from four states to express little faith in either major political party's "lip service to the constitution and individual freedom."

Speaking before the Interstate Editorial association's 35th annual convention in Sioux City's Mayfair hotel, Mr. Buffett charged newspaper editors and Nebraska with a major responsibility in restoring to the people of the nation the strength to govern themselves again.

Ironically, the association had invited GOP President Dwight Eisenhower and Democratic Presidential Candidate Adlai Stevenson to appear; neither could arrange the date. Buffett completely omitted personalities from his address, entitled "The Ramparts We Watch," and roundly scolded both parties for tendencies "toward socialism and totalitarianism."

The speaker first reminded that the nation is spending 43 times as much on military defense as it was 20 years ago; then pointed out that "both ancient and modern history record that major nations have gone down because the moral and spiritual defenses have been neglected while the military still was strong."

With an eye to what he termed "the rotting from within" which has destroyed major nations in the past, Mr. Buffett painted a not-too-optimistic word picture of the "rotting" in the nation's current civilian area of defense.

"This area of defense," he said, divides naturally into four sectors, as follows: "A well informed people. "A sound financial structure. "An electoral system that enables the people to chart the course of government. "Fidelity to the spiritual truths on which America was built."

In regard to the first bulwark of American independence—a well informed people—Mr. Buffett said that in 1951 "the then president of the United States issued an executive order establishing censorship in the various executive agencies and departments of the federal government." He quoted the noted editor, David Lawrence, who said the order had "phraseology as sweeping as ever used in a dictatorship . . . and was unprecedented in American history. "Many hoped that when a new administration took office in 1953, the situation would be changed for the better," Mr. Buffett said. "It was not. A presidential letter dated May 17, 1954, seems to have intensified the conditions of censorship and suppression of news."

Quoting Kent Cooper, a chief executive of the Associated Press for a quarter of a century, the speaker said, "American news propaganda (that is to say, government-sponsored propaganda) . . . being planned for peacetime operation . . . perhaps is doing its part to push the world on to the cataclysm which could end civilization. "At every level of American government there is an apparent reluctance to allow the people to have the facts," the speaker said. " . . . Governmental executives seem increasingly to mistrust the discretion and wisdom of citizens. "Secrecy in government," he added, "cannot survive prolonged publicity properly administered. "This task, it would seem, is a major responsibility of your profession," the speaker asserted. Regarding the soundness—or unsoundness—of the nation's financial structure, Mr. Buffett referred to Lenin's statement that the surest way to

overturn the existing social order is to debase the currency. He cited the many cases in which inflation has been the weapon used to force other lands from capitalism and freedom into socialism and despotism.

"Will America follow this same road? "I don't know. But I do know this—for years the paramount financial fact in America has been the relentless dilution of the purchasing value of the American dollar. . . It may be the decisive political influence of our time."

Discussing the problem of restoring self-government to the electorate, the speaker asserted that while both parties' platforms paid lip-service to the constitution and individual freedom, neither party endeavors to support the former or preserve the latter.

"The American people," he said, "are not given the clear-cut issue between conservatism and socialism to vote on, because in actual practice, neither party works to effect conservative policies."

He charged both parties with passing legislation which " . . . shrinks the area of personal independence. . . Moreover, today the policies espoused by both lead inevitably to a socialistic government. "As they (members of both parties) reject Herbert Hoover's plea for less government mastery of our lives, their campaigns are mostly noisy quibble over detail, name-calling, and bi-partisan promises of pie-in-the-sky, made on the insulting premise that we have become a nation of belly-lovers."

Mr. Buffett asserted that both in 1932 and 1952, the voters of the nation elected candidates pledged to conservative platforms. Both times the pre-election promises were shamefully broken, he said.

In regard to fidelity to the spiritual truths on which America was built, the speaker said, "In the political sector, those holding power flout moral and spiritual truth as though God and His justice were only a mirage."

In treating this bulwark, he discussed the nation's behavior in "twice in one generation crossing the ocean to engage in vain and futile global war" . . . the current "policy of global intervention" . . . and "the shiny ideals discarded after each of the major wars."

"A nation that drops atomic bombs on a civilian population of a beaten enemy seeking peace has strayed far from the paths of love and brotherhood. That is on record," he said.

Mr. Buffett, who heads an investment firm, does considerable writing and carries on correspondence with such prominent Americans as Herbert Hoover and Gen. Douglas MacArthur.

THE FRONTIER

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