

# Calkins Murder Holt's Biggest News Story in '52

Easily the biggest news story of the year just ended—1952—was the Chet Calkins murder mystery. The 51-year-old O'Neill chief of police was slain early on the morning of March 7 while in his cruiser car on Everett street, midway between Third and Fourth.

The unknown assassin escaped with the aid of three lucky breaks. (1) No one residing in the vicinity heard or saw the shooting; (2) snowfall covered auto tread and footprint marks; (3) an hour or more elapsed between the moment the chief's body was found dead and when it was discovered his body had been riddled with bullets.

The Calkins mystery and the unsuccessful search for the assailant held the attention of midwesterners for weeks on end. Developments were watched very closely by thousands of interested persons—many of whom had recounted friendly relationships with O'Neill's chief.

Reams of newspaper and radio copy were published on the Calkins story. But the murderer is still at large, and authorities still pressing the search have a grim determination to find the slayer.

All other violent deaths made big news during the year. Marine Pvt. Donald D. Miner of O'Neill became Holt's first fatality in the Korean war. There was the auto-truck tragedy near Central City in which Mr. and Mrs. Lyndon McKamy and Mrs. McKamy's mother, Mrs. Christine Muff, died from injuries. Charles Edward Barnes, a navy youth home on leave to attend his father's funeral, died in an auto accident on a country road near Atkinson. Mrs. H. H. Miles of Dorsey was fatally injured in a highway accident near Wisner. Mrs. Emmet Slaight was accidentally killed by gunshot. Little Barbara Ann Bauer of Deloit was fatally injured when a cabling rack ran over her body. And there were others.

St. Anthony's hospital completion, its dedication and formal opening—September 25—created big news on the brighter side throughout the year.

Other ranking stories were: The outbreak of vesicular exanthema, which restricted hog selling for more than a month; the Missouri river flood, while some 40 miles distant at its nearest point, exerted an effect on the area; the dispute pertaining to the future routing of U.S. highway 281 from the Niobrara river north to the South Dakota line; the Niobrara river basin development plans, and, of course, the passing from the scene of the pioneers, whose numbers now have dwindled to a handful.

The editor presents a thumbnail chronology of the just-ended year in the paragraphs that follow:

## January

3—The stork was buzzing snow-blanketed Holt county but failed to alight with 1952's first baby. . . The numerical prefix "36" was restored to auto license plates. . . Ramon Bright and son Ardiell, became owners of the Schulz store. . . Four sons of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Hammon of Lynch are in the armed forces. . . Nineteen registrants got draft orders. . . Deaths: Mrs. Agatha Heeb of Emmet; Earl Makenson of Royal; Maynard Pelster of Elgin, killed in truck accident.

10—Laurence Haynes succeeds James W. Rooney as secretary of the Chamber of Commerce. . . Linda Lee Tolbert becomes winner of the Holt baby derby. . . Elgin Ray succeeds his father, Hugh Ray, as manager of the Speltz-Ray Lbr. Co. . . A. M. Batenhorst of Stuart is new chairman of the Holt board of supervisors. . . Marine Cpl. Allen M. Zempel of Page has been wounded in Korean fighting. . . Don F. Engel succeeds Walter G. Sire as Boyd county agent. . . Deaths: George M. Rost of Page; Frank Hytek of Stuart; David Deaver of Gehring, Ia., formerly of Page; Mrs. Henrietta Lieswald of Chambers; Mrs. Clarence Farr of Emmet; Mrs. Jake Pfund of Galt, Calif., formerly of O'Neill; John Rihaneck of Lynch.

17—Burglars had an abortive try at the Bristow bank. . . An O'Neill-Winner bus hearing was conducted here by the railway commission. . . Snowdrifts near the Savage and Powdrell places near Deloit are reminiscent of the 1949 blizzard. . . Deaths: Alfonso Beelaert of Ewing.

24—Gerald Lounsbury will go to St. John, Kans., to manage a J. M. McDonald Co. store. . . The region was battered by a 90-hour blizzard, obliging 30 persons to overstay their visit at the Alex Frickel farm near Celia. . . Mr. and Mrs. Michael P. Stenger of Lynch observed their 50th wedding anniversary date. . . Yearlings will be valued at \$75 for tax assessment purposes. . . A saddle club is being organized here. . . Start of the 16th annual county cage tournament was delayed 24 hours due to the storm. . . Contributions for the march of dimes campaign are lagging. . . Spirited bidding marked early auction of state school land leases. . . Deaths: Augie Wood of O'Neill; Mrs. May Belle Lines of Inman; Mrs. John Sobotka of Inman; William Backhaus of Atkinson; Mrs. Hannah Stevens of Page; Arthur G. Rouse of O'Neill; A. E. Sammons of Amelia.

31—Rev. Samuel D. Lee is new pastor of the First Presbyterian church. His last assignment was a mission at Barrow, Alaska. . . Both democratic and republican

## February

7—Top Angus bull at an auction here brought \$2,000, consigned by Ray Siders and purchased by Alfred Martens; top Hereford brought \$1,710, consigned by Whitaker & Whitaker and purchased by Max A. Baird of Brunswick. . . Charles W. Jones was knocked unconscious in a mysterious accident. . . Keen bidding continues in school land leases. . . Richie Ashburn, Philly baseball star, will appear in a basketball exhibition game. . . Deaths: Rev. John Caldwell of Sioux City, formerly of Stuart; Chris U. Yantzie of Milford, formerly of O'Neill; Thomas Henry Walsby of Stuart.

## March

6—Holt will furnish 10 draftees this month. . . Pvt. Edward H. Albrecht of Atkinson was wounded in the neck during Korean fighting. . . Kenneth Waring of Middlebranch has been appointed to the board of supervisors, succeeding Borg. . . Melvin Marcellus and Harry R. Smith have become affiliate members of the Holt soil conservation district. They are implement dealers. . . Holt county X-ray survey revealed four tuberculosis sufferers and 21 suspects. . . The St. Mary's Cardinals captured the district class C basketball crown at Atkinson. . . Deaths: Mrs. Gertrude Grace Sherman of Los Angeles, Calif., formerly of O'Neill; Miss Frances Schoula, formerly of Atkinson; Todd Tomlinson of Lynch; Sam McCartney of Stuart.

13—Police Chief Chet Calkins, 51, was slain by a mysterious murderer during the early morning hours of March 7. His body was found about 2 a.m. in his cruiser car by his brother, Wait Calkins. It was originally thought death was caused by a heart attack. It wasn't until the body was taken to the mortuary that it was found to be bullet ridden. . . CAP Duane Thorin, a navy helicopter pilot, was downed behind the Red lines in Korea and is believed to be a prisoner-of-war. . . Capt. Thelma Kiltz of Chambers returned from Korea front lines duking. . . Deaths: Dale Bell of Chambers; Mrs. Thomas Curran of Neligh, formerly of O'Neill; Rev. Virgil C. Wright of Fayette, Ala., formerly of O'Neill; Mrs. Clara Thorin of Neligh.

## April

3—The search for the slayer of Police Chief Calkins is still unavailing. . . O'Neill public school teachers get a five percent pay boost for next term. . . Taft and Butler swept the Nebraska GOP primary. Tennessee's Estes Kefauver won blessing of Nebraska democrats in presidential primary. Voting was light. The city election was very quiet. . . Mrs. Helen Kreyborg is the new Holt home agent. . . The Chambers high girls' volleyball team amassed an impressive season's record. . . Deaths: Ed Clausen of Stuart; J. H. Butler of Independence, Mo., formerly of Inman; Mrs. Arnie Mace of Chambers; Chauncey V. Wood of Chambers.

10—Holt will furnish 20 men to the draft in the next 60 days. . . Burglars got \$400 in loot at the Gailen Motor Co., Atkinson. . . Still no new developments in the Calkins slaying. . . O'Neill's



Police Chief Chet Calkins . . . his assassin is still at large.

Scranton, Pa., colony near here quietly observed its 75th anniversary of the emigration. . . A new telephone switchboard has been installed at Amelia. . . Deaths: R. W. Plank of Atkinson; Mrs. Adaline Kelly of Page; Harold Steward of Lynch.

## May

1—O'Neill has a new 15-thousand-dollar fire truck. . . Dr. F. J. Fisher announced he will move to Norfolk. . . Several school land lease bids, although highest

received at the auction, were rejected and leases on parcels were again offered. . . A statewide Catholic Daughters of America party was held here. . . A national director was a guest. . . The new St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran church at Orchard has been dedicated. . . Deaths: G. A. Fox of Columbus, formerly of O'Neill; Dr. Milton E. Pettibone of Sidney, formerly of O'Neill; Mrs. Ella Karr of O'Neill; Russell C. Everett of Atkinson.

8—Miss Donna Fuhrer, widely-known O'Neill crippled girl, received an O'Neill high school diploma. She had never been inside a classroom. The city's schools graduated 77 seniors. . . Vic Halva recounted the Titanic disaster. He was a survivor of the famous luxury liner, 1912, sinking of the luxury liner. . . Illness has forced Rev. V. R. Bell, Methodist pastor, to retire. . . A friendly deer visited the Inez rural school. . . Fish have been caught in ruts of roads near Chambers where water stands everywhere. . . George M. McCarthy has been elected state deputy grand knight of the Knights of Columbus. . . Deaths: Thomas Leroy Slattery, of O'Neill; Phillip Keating of Atkinson; Arlen Haney of Atkinson; Walter Horiskey of O'Neill; Chris Sorenson of Page; Mrs. T. W. Olney of Greybull, Wyo., formerly of Chambers.

15—The Calkins reward fund —\$1,550— is now considered closed. . . Holt county eighth grade promotion exercises were held in the O'Neill high school auditorium. . . Mrs. Charlotte Honeywell celebrated her 85th birthday anniversary. . . An oil heater in the Mode O'Day store caused extensive damage to merchandise when a minor explosion filled the store with soot and smoke. . . Deaths: P. B. Hart of O'Neill; Ralph Cobb of Stuart; Joseph Zaborowski of O'Neill; P. J. Keating of Atkinson.

22—The annual St. Mary's academy alumni banquet was attended by over 250. . . The annual Holt extension club picnic will be held in Ford's park. . . Thirty students enrolled in the summer band school which began May 19. . . Patrolman Robert Gude of Nebraska City has been assigned to the O'Neill patrol in the Nebraska safety patrol. . . Officers started from scratch again in their investigation of the murder March 7 of O'Neill Police Chief Calkins. . . Deaths: Mrs. Albert Frost of Atkinson; Edwin L. Jardee of O'Neill.

29—Miss Mary Lou Wilson was chosen as queen of the Lions club. . . Judge Lyle E. Jackson of Neligh was to give the memorial address in the Legion auditorium. . . Harry Jolly has been appointed to the O'Neill police force. . . Miss Bernadette Hynes was chosen "Miss Task Force" at Ft. Leavenworth, Kans. . . Deaths: P. T. Welsh of Hyde Park, Mass., formerly of O'Neill; Dell Johnson of Atkinson; Mrs. Edward E. Angel of Spencer; Joseph G.

Boyle of Omaha; Mrs. William Snider of Ewing; Charles Homolka of Amelia.

June

5—Holt county authorities are searching for a 24-year-old escapee from a Minnesota mental hospital who abandoned a stolen airplane three miles northeast of Ewing. . . The construction of the new rural Bethany Presbyterian church began six miles northeast of Chambers. The estimated cost is \$20,000. . . Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Harkins of Inman celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. . . The new basement of the Christ Lutheran church of O'Neill was opened for use for the first time since the building operations began last fall. . . Deaths: James Harding of Whiting, Ia., formerly of O'Neill; Lyle G. Moss of Amelia; John Stauffert, Jr., of Page.

12—Within 10 minutes after the outbreak of fire at an Emmet Hay Co. barn, the structure was reduced to ruins. The barn contained 157 tons of hay. Loss was fixed at \$7,000. . . William W. McIntosh was elected president of the Chamber of Commerce. . . The dam and 28-acre lake at Atkinson has been restored by the state game commission and will be opened as a recreation spot on July 1. . . The blanket 4-mill school tax levy law was ruled invalid by the state supreme court. The escapee from the mental hospital in Minnesota is still at large. . . Deaths: Charles Edward Morsbach, Inman.

19—D. C. Schaffer was elected president of the Nebraska Stock-growers association. The city council voted against the move of a tavern building on the corner of Madison and Douglas streets. . . The Legion revealed a plan for a 70- to 90-thousand-dollar swimming pool. . . A twister demolished the drive-in theater screen. . . Seven men left for the selective service. . . M. J. Golden won the 31st annual open golf tournament held at the Country club. . . Robert Shoemaker was elected head of the Knights of Columbus. . . Deaths: Mrs. Frank Kramer of Atkinson; Mrs. Zack Frances of Camas, Wash., formerly of O'Neill; Mrs. Bailey Miller of Atkinson; William F. Eisele of St. Edward, formerly of O'Neill; Lyle Andrew Gilbert of Bristow.

26—The Frontier enlarged its newspaper pages to eight-column (formerly seven columns) by 22 inches (formerly 22 inches). . . The John Conard combination store and postoffice in Emmet was burglarized for the second time in 18 months. . . Buick dealers from a wide area convened in O'Neill. . . Four Lyndon McKamy children were orphaned when their parents and Mrs. Christine Muff were killed in a car-truck collision near Central City. . . Joseph George has contracted to teach social science and literature courses at St. Mary's academy. . . Mr. and Mrs. Nels Nelson celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. . . Deaths:

31—Rev. John Thomas is new pastor at the Church of Christ. (Continued on page 5)

3.—O'Neill's municipal water shortage entered the critical stage. . . Rev. Wallace B. Smith of Hemingford has been appointed to fill the Methodist vacancy here. . . Two youths admit burglarizing the John Conard store at Emmet. . . Bert Bertolini has joined the staff of the Gilligan's Rexall drug store. . . The McKamy - Muff funeral rites, Mrs. J. T. Fletcher of Orchard; Mrs. Fred Prange of Atkinson; John F. Kazda of Atkinson.

## July

10—Rev. and Mrs. Ward Smith and family returned to Chambers for a furlough from their mission station at Tocomancho, Honduras, Central America. . . Mr. and Mrs. George Colman of Inman celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. . . The Bethany Presbyterian church near Chambers held a service for the dedication of the cornerstones of a 1936 model fire truck was placed in retirement. . . Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Smith of Page celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. . . Mrs. H. H. Miles of Dorsey was killed July 8 when the car in which she was riding struck a bridge near Wisner. There are 4,900 car licenses in Holt. . . Death: Harry A. Snyder of Atkinson.

17—Charles Edward Barnes of Atkinson was killed July 15 while home on leave when his car overturned. . . Alfred Carroll was elected new Legion commander. . . An Elgin plane crashed after striking an REA line near Chambers. . . Clifford Harding gets Winner, S.D., star route mail contract. . . Two Plainview men were injured in a car-truck crash while on their way to Norfolk to donate blood to the victims of the Miles-Jenkinson accident. One was Fred Ristow, formerly of O'Neill. . . The water department has drilled test wells to find a new well to relieve the water shortage. . . Deaths: Mrs. James Humpal of Atkinson; Mrs. Joseph Krska of Atkinson.

24—The Dorsey Presbyterian church marks its 70th year since its organization. . . Mother Bertrand arrived to take the responsibilities as the head of St. Anthony's hospital. . . O'Neill was the site of the annual meeting of the North-Central Nebraska Press association. . . Five Cizek brothers and their sister held their first reunion in 49 years at Spencer. . . A cave-in spoiled the well urgently needed to ease the water shortage. . . On an informal poll on parking meters, business and professional men cast a 34-14 vote against them. . . Deaths: Dave F. Murphy of Tecumseh, formerly of O'Neill; Lyle S. Smith of Ewing; Ralph Pinkerman of Lynch; Ella Lydia Renner of Inman.

31—Rev. John Thomas is new pastor at the Church of Christ. (Continued on page 5)

## January Clearance Sale!

### NEW and USED MACHINERY NEW REFRIGERATORS and FREEZERS

New Super "C" Tractor	\$1650.00
New Super "M" Tractor	\$2825.00
New 11 1/2-Ft. McCormick Disc Harrow	\$ 235.00
New 15-Ft. McCormick Disc Harrow	\$ 275.00
New 18-Ft. McCormick Disc Harrow	\$ 315.00

### TRACTOR PLOWS LESS TIRES

Two-Furrow 14"	\$248.00
Two-Furrow 16"	\$252.50
Three-Furrow 14"	\$325.00
Three-Furrow 16"	\$331.75
No. 185C Pull Type Lister	\$289.00
No. HM 46 Lister, Mounted Type	\$259.00
Four-Section Flexible Harrow	\$138.00
Grain Drills 18-7, Complete with Grass Seed Attachment	\$500.00
Manure Spreaders, No. 200 Tractor with Rubber Tires	\$398.50

### REFRIGERATORS

HA-82 Refrigerator	\$200.00
HA-83 Refrigerator	\$225.00
HA-84 Refrigerator	\$250.00
UA-87 Refrigerator	\$225.00
UA-95 Refrigerator	\$250.00
No. 158 Freezer Chest	\$425.00

### USED MACHINERY, TRACTORS and TRUCKS

"H" FARMALL, Completely Overhauled and Guaranteed	\$1200.00
F20 FARMALL, Overhauled and Guaranteed	\$ 400.00
REGULAR FARMALL (as is)	\$ 100.00
MODEL "B" JOHN DEERE, Overhauled and Guaranteed	\$ 300.00
"C" FARMALL, Completely Overhauled and Guaranteed	\$ 800.00
M-M MANURE SPREADER, like new	\$ 200.00
8-FT. KEROSENE REFRIGERATOR	\$ 50.00
DEMPSTER LISTER	\$ 125.00
Three Furrow MASSEY-HARRIS 14" PLOW	\$ 150.00
Three Furrow MCCORMICK NO. 8 14" PLOW	\$ 200.00
RODICK LEAN 15-FT. DISC HARROW	\$ 125.00
FERGUSON 12-FT. DISC HARROW	\$ 100.00
1943 K3 INTERNATIONAL TRUCK COMBINATION BOX	\$ 550.00
1946 K5 INTERNATIONAL TRUCK, less box	\$ 550.00

MANY OTHER PIECES OF EQUIPMENT AT PRICES YOU WILL BE GLAD TO PAY.

## RALPH W. BLACK

Phone 2611 Complete Shop Service Spencer



St. Anthony's hospital . . . half-million-dollar medical center completed, dedicated, opened.