

"THE NEW WEST UNITED STATES"



LINDSAY DENISON.

A very graphic story of the recent Tripp county land rush...

They broke down the gates of the Omaha railroad station...

I meandered into it on Monday. It wasn't so bad then. The railroad people had begun to feel cheerfully remissent about it.

Braden and Reynolds at Work.

The journey through the night was a broadening experience. The really educational part of it didn't begin until Norfolk Junction.

"Here," one of them would say, "how many did Jones and Ellsworth say they had on Second 107? Six hundred and fifty? Two hundred for Dallas? Where's Pete? Pete! Say, Pete, put out a call for Elmer and the rest of that crew that got in here on Third 8 and get up a Fourth 107 to leave here on the arrival of Second 107 about 2 o'clock. They'll want seven cars and a baggage. Now jump!"

The shank shook, there was a blinding headlight glare in our eyes and a train rumbled past the windows and stopped. "Mr. Reynolds, what is that?" "I'll find out, Mr. Braden."

So it went for three hours, until Fourth 107 pulled out ahead of First, Second and Third 107s for Dallas.

with but a single accident, that of a drunken man falling in front of a moving train—and only once in a long while a complaint or an angry word.

Each train had three conductors and two extra brakemen; one conductor to run the train and the other two to collect fares and keep the peace.

But the real education came after they had sorted the crowd on the platforms and had taken the O'Neill passengers off the Dallas trains, almost by the scruffs of their necks, and had taken the Dallas passengers off the O'Neill trains, had given everybody a chance to eat and had seen to it that most of the women passengers were settled in the most comfortable car of the train.

The Ride Out of Norfolk.

The journey out of Norfolk into the night began with wrath and disgust, personal and impersonal; with contempt for the shallow brutality of magazine editors and self hate for having entered into the quest of entertainment and edification of magazine readers; with utter shame for the stinking herds of humanity who were running, like greedy cattle to the feeding troughs, for the very remote chance of winning a free farm.

In the first place one with even the rudiments of a sense of humor cannot long support himself in despising fellow mortals for grimy hands and obviously unclean linen and perspiration when one knows that he is himself just as filthy.

"Hi! hi! George!" shouts an aged brother with tobacco-bedraggled whiskers, "here's a feller from New York. Now ask him what he thinks of your fool guarantee for bank deposits. Ask him, I dare ye!"

But through it all there is one ringing, singing overtone, clear and thrilling as the strains of The Star Spangled Banner: "We are the United States, thank God!"

South Dakota, comprising about one-third of the old Rosebud Sioux Indian reservation, had been practically cleared for white settlement. The Rosebud Sioux who wanted to become farmers in Tripp county made their choices a year or more ago and farms were allotted to them.

So there had to be a drawing. It was the only fair way. An auction or any competition other than that of luck would have meant that a free and equal chance was denied to those who needed the farms most—the farmers' sons and daughters who had been crowded off the farms into the cities as clerks or school teachers, or bartenders, or worse—God save the mark! Nevertheless there was a condition of the drawing which was necessarily unfair.

The writer heard this sum referred to frequently as "the ante," but was unable to find the signification of the term. The requirement of personal attendance on the borders of the land, however, served the purpose of a guarantee of good faith and also was based on the presumption that the would-be settler must desire to look at the land before applying for his farm.

I, postoffice, aged... years, height... feet... inches, weight... pounds, in support of this, my application for registration for the next land opening to be held after the date hereof, do solemnly swear that I am a citizen of the United States, or have declared my intention to become such; that I am not the owner of more than 160 acres of land, and have not heretofore made any entry or acquired any title to public lands which disqualifies me from making homestead entry; that I honestly desire to enter public lands for my own personal use as a home and for settlement and cultivation, and not for speculation or in the interest of some other person; that I present this application for that purpose only, and have not presented and will not present any other affidavit of this kind.

The foregoing was subscribed and sworn to before me, after it was read to or by affidavit, this... day of... 19... at... This application must be sworn to at one of the places named in the proclamation.

This matter of raising your right hand and swearing that the facts in this affidavit are true is ordinarily easy enough. We do it, within reach of the Atlantic breezes, every little while, and think no more about it.

on you: Here, after all, was the United States, the heart of them. Here was everything from Lexington and Bunker Hill to El Caney; everything from the Boston Tea Party to the unpleasantness between Keweenaw Landis and Standard Oil; everything that is the essence of this nation, no matter how thoroughly that essence was disguised elsewhere or how freshly it reeked in Dallas.

"Billy the Owl" and "Crook Nose Jake."

First of all, Dallas and the drawing at Dallas were clean. This was partly due to Judge Witten, partly to the Jacksons—of whom much more hereafter—but most of all to the sort of thing which made you stop and count it hundred before you signed that affidavit. There was a public conscience at large in the Tripp county opening.

So it came to Billy the Owl and Crook Nose Jake, for instance. If ever you encountered a long-banked individual with a mole over his right eyebrow, like a sinisterly elevated second eyebrow, and soon thereafter were jostled and lost your scarf-pin or your pocketbook, you have met Billy the Owl. In traveling across the country with campaigning politicians I have seen Billy the Owl culled out of the crowds and hustled away by the police of a score of cities.

"Hello, Mac," said they, "what you doing here?" "Police," said Mac, broadly smiling still.

"Is the graft good?" inquired the Owl. This was merely a perfunctory question. Nobody could look at that crowd without knowing how good the graft might be.

"The crooks looked stupidly at Mac for a full half minute. He meant it. An impassable blank wall had risen between them and the Promised Land. One by one, without the courtesy of a good-bye, they picked up their bags and turned their faces to the railroad station, muttering bitter curses to one another as they went.

Keeping Straight for Fear of "Mac." It was also part of the scheme of things that homeseekers should go away with pleasant memories of Dallas and without regrets for waste and shame. The town was "clean." There were some gambling tables, to be sure; public sentiment demanded them; but they were so carefully supervised that there was practically no "ripping" of drunkards or boys. Philanthropists who desired to force you to accept a complete set of collar buttons and studs, as good as gold and much more durable, or the best razor in the world and a handsome scarf pin all for thirty-five cents, flourished and spindled abominations on the open street, and all the vile and slimy exorciseses of a rush camp, little and big—these were suppressed as fast as they appeared.

him. His was about the only audible voice of misery I heard in Dallas. "I'm down and out," I heard him groan; "there's no use being good to me. Let me die!"

A Great Piece of Luck for Another Old Boy. No, it was not the only voice of misery. There was a big old man with eyes like a Newfoundland dog and close clipped hair. He came up to me, as everybody who knew the sight of another man's face came up to everybody—between train times.

A Gentle Reminder of Breakfast. The plan did not stop with the protecting and cherishing of the registering visitor. Three well graded roads were built out across Tripp county, all converging at Dallas; this, lest other border towns, north, west or south, might by accident become the center for the trade of the 5,000 new farmers.

Where Jealousy Played a Part. Nor was it all good-natured; that would have been fatuous and silly. New towns cannot grow in a new country without rivalry. And there was all the bitterness of strife which is in the story of Bay City and Saginaw, St. Paul and Minneapolis, Tacoma and Seattle, San Francisco and Oakland, Beatty, Rhyolite and Bullfrog.

The Winners and Their Excitement. Of the drawing, of Judge Witten's patience and tact, of the two tiny girls, Donna Rose (the real Rose of the Rosebud) and Virginia Wagner, who kicked up the 114,960 sealed applications with their feet and picked out the first winners, and the two small boys, Wesley Teuth and David Haley, who relieved them for the last two days, the daily newspapers have told. But some of us, who stayed over to see what Dallas would be like when the drawings were finished, saw the best things of all, and the saddest.

"I'm Down and Out." Said One. The writer was around aiding and abetting when Frederic Thompson and the lamented Elmer S. Dundy were inventing the new Coney Island, the type of all the amusement trolley parks across this country now. Superficially, Dallas may seem to have been something like that; but if it does not seem to have been something more, then what is written here is a satire. For there was more. This was not a mere jaunt or an excuse for laughing and forgetting toil and sorrow for a night. These thousands were hungering for homes and soil of their own; they were longing for the chance to dig in it, sweat over it and make the land fat; and, being of us, being United States, they went into the effort to realize this longing with a cheerful understanding that the chance was small—eager, but resolved to make the best of disappointment—resolved to laugh and to try again some other way and some other day. Some woman (I think it was the ever-blessed Mrs. Callender) who was nursing a sick man across the hall, gave me the keynote, one night. He was a gambler; he was dead broke, deserted by the other gamblers who were also broke and could only leave him twenty-one dollars; he was ill almost to death with pneumonia and everybody was taking turns sitting up with

him. His was about the only audible voice of misery I heard in Dallas. "I'm down and out," I heard him groan; "there's no use being good to me. Let me die!"

"Now, Mr. Connors," the woman's voice answered, gently, "that's no way to talk at all. Not here in Dallas. Act like a winner, even when you think you're not."

A Great Piece of Luck for Another Old Boy.

No, it was not the only voice of misery. There was a big old man with eyes like a Newfoundland dog and close clipped hair. He came up to me, as everybody who knew the sight of another man's face came up to everybody—between train times.

One of the altogether delightful memories of a lifetime is the way the old boy came piling down the street to catch me just as I was leaving Dallas, and (free from shivers or the smell of whiskey) told me that he had drawn a claim and that he was going to pick a farm twenty miles from any town and send for his wife and kids and start over again.

There was really nothing to be angry about. After two weeks in the Rosebud country, I had forgotten my east-of-the-Missouri manners. That was all.

a lantern out by the shed where the typewritten announcements of the results of the drawing were posted. This lasted for three days after the last name was drawn; betokening one after another of the bitterly disappointed, going out secretly to look the whole list over again to make sure that there had not been some overlooked name—it was so easy to miss one name in six thousand. (They drew a thousand extra names to provide for forfeitures.)

These forlornly hopeful people made a cluster about the shed all day long, too—all the more pitiful because every one in Dallas who and won a chance knew of it, within ten minutes after the name was announced. The news traveled like a light flash.

It was all good, the bitter and the sweet together. We may be better than our fathers were, some of us. The best that was in the fathers, though, is with us yet. It is a mighty United States—and healthy.

Along between Cleveland and Buffalo on the way back to New York there came a time in the lounging car of the Limited when it seemed as though the man sitting opposite was as lonely and as unoccupied as I was myself. And so I went over and sat beside him and began telling him some things about Dallas and the Dallas people, what the big Swede told about Eckstrom, and the rest. He was polite. But when I paused for breath, he said, "Really, how singular" and he picked up a newspaper and turned so that the light would fall on it properly and—so that his back would be toward me.

There was really nothing to be angry about. After two weeks in the Rosebud country, I had forgotten my east-of-the-Missouri manners. That was all.

Railroad News.

Humphrey Democrat: J. Greenwalt of Brainard, has become agent for the Northwestern at this place in place of Frank Flock who is now at Petersburg temporarily as relief agent. Mr. Greenwalt was here some time ago as relief agent. He is a man of pleasing personality and we hope he will find Humphrey a congenial place in which to live and do business.

Fremont Tribune: In order that a Fremont surgeon could get aboard it to hurry to the bedside of a patient, the Northwestern's evening north-west-bound train was held twelve minutes at the union passenger station—Dr. R. H. Rhoden had been summoned to perform a surgical operation as a last resort in heroic efforts to save the life of a man who resides near Scribner. The operation was performed.

S. B. Lopp, who has been a brakeman on the Burlington between South Sioux City and O'Neill, successfully passed the examination of that road and also of the Omaha, and is now a conductor. Conductor Lopp has a run between Sioux City and O'Neill.

Exeter Enterprise: E. S. Agur has been promoted to the joint agency of the Northwestern and Santa Fe at Superior. He has been one of the leaders in a long list of popular railroad men who have been stationed in Exeter during the last twenty-five years. He will be checked in about the first of February.

Conductor O'Neill, the old-time Northwestern passenger man between Lincoln and Missouri Valley, has been absent from his run for several days on account of illness. He has been laid up at his home in Missouri Valley. Conductor Braun, also of Missouri Valley, is on Mr. O'Neill's run during the latter's absence.

Estimate of Expenses.

State of Nebraska, county of Madison

This is to certify that at a meeting of the board of county commissioners, held at the court house in Madison, Nebraska, on the 12th day of January, A. D. 1909, that being the first regular meeting of said board in the month of January, 1909, the following estimate of expenses of Madison county for the year 1909 was prepared and, on motion, the same was adopted.

Table with 2 columns: Item and Amount. Includes County bridges (\$25,500.00), County roads (16,000.00), General Fund items, Riprapping streams (3,000.00), County institute (100.00), County printing (1,500.00), County attorney's salary (1,000.00), Care of paupers (3,000.00), Fuel, postage and expense (1,500.00), Books, stationery and supplies (1,500.00), Election expenses (3,000.00), Salary county assessor and deputies (3,500.00), Soldiers' relief (800.00), Poor farm expenses (1,000.00), County superintendent's salary (1,600.00), Salary clerk of board (500.00), County commissioners' salaries (3,000.00), Bounty on wild animals (500.00), Jailor's fees (1,500.00), Janitor's salary and expenses (1,500.00), District court, jurors' and county officers' fees (7,000.00), Insanity commission (1,200.00), Aid to agricultural societies (600.00), Furniture and repairs to court house and insurance (1,500.00), Clerk of the district court's salary (500.00), Salary of sheriff and assistants (2,000.00), Witness my signature and the seal of said county this 14th day of January, A. D. 1909. George E. Richardson, County Clerk.