

# The Plattsmouth Journal.

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## Blackmailer Given a 3-Year Prison Term

Elmo Imbler, Kansas Youth, Charged With Attempted Extortion From Knabe Family.

Wednesday afternoon in the district court before Judge James T. Bagley, Elmo Imbler, charged with attempted extortion and blackmail of Henry Knabe and Edward Knabe, was given a sentence of three years in the state penitentiary.

To the charge of blackmail and extortion preferred by County Attorney W. G. Kieck, the defendant pleaded guilty and was given his sentence at once, the severest penalty of the law being given.

This ends a daring attempt to force Mr. Henry Knabe, one of the wealthy and prominent farmers of Cass county, and his son, Edward, to bring \$10,000 to Omaha and leave it for the writer of the threat note, later revealed as Imbler.

The capture of Imbler at Omaha was accomplished on Sunday, June 19th and represented some fast and clever work on the part of Sheriff Ed W. Thimman of Cass county, who had the co-operation of the Omaha police in the handling of the actual arrest.

Sheriff Thimman had the parties threatened, follow the advice of the blackmail letter as far as the direction to deliver the package to the Y. M. C. A. at Omaha to await being called for, the Knabe's to leave the package and at once get out of the city. The sheriff had the car containing the Knabe's followed by his own car, while Leslie Thimman, a son, in the role of a hitch-hiker, was picked up by Knabe along the highway north of this city, these settings being given in case the blackmailer decided on a sudden stop of the Nebraska man before the delivery of the package. As soon as the package was delivered Mr. Knabe and son returned home, leaving the money parcel at Omaha. When a taxi driver called for the package he was traced to the Henshaw hotel where Imbler was found and attempted to claim the package and was placed under arrest.

The taxi driver who had called for the package stated that he had been commissioned to call for the package. Accompanied by the police he returned to the Henshaw hotel stand, where Imbler came up and claimed the package as the Omaha police arrested him. The prisoner had a lady companion who was, however, found to be innocent of any part in the attempted extortion.

Imbler has been here in the county jail since the arrest in Omaha to await trial, having at first decided to plead not guilty, but later changing the plea.

**Text of Letter.**  
The letter received by the Knabes read in part:  
"Henry Knabe and Son: Do not notify the law or you will be sorry for the rest of your days. Do as you are instructed and all will be well. We know that you have money. We have spent a long time looking you up, and several others around there—two to be correct.  
"You're the first to get a letter, and whatever you decide to do will help us. If you refuse and notify police we will make an example of you for the rest.  
"Suit yourself, we win either way. Your house and phone are being watched night and day, and you are being watched—have been for over a month. We will have plenty of time to get even.  
"You get 10 thousand dollars in cash. Have at least half of it in \$20 bills. Buy two large boxes of candy, open them carefully, remove bottom layers and put the money in their place, get wrapping paper and wrap both well. Tie and with ink write the name of Mr. Fred Peterson, care of Y. M. C. A., Omaha. Don't mail, but on Sunday, June 19, at 4 p. m., take the package to the Y. M. C. A. in Omaha and leave with party in charge at that time, and tell them that Peterson said he would call for it.

**Several Threats.**  
"Then get the hell out of town. Don't fail. Put this letter along with money. If you fail it may be five years from now that we may get you.  
"Here is just a few ways we have of doing it:  
"You might get picked off

with a gun as you are walking about your house.  
"You might get blown up, or we might kidnap you and hang you ... to a tree.  
"Your car might blow up, or go off the road and kill you.  
"You might die of poison.  
"We're going to make an example of you if you tell the law. The rest will come through after they see what happens to you. Your every move is being watched, so don't be a fool.  
"We have every reason to think that you can get this amount without trouble or we would reduce it. Don't keep the numbers of the bills if you don't want someone to slip up behind you and cut your throat or slip a knife in your ribs.  
"The law is damn smart, but so are we. Tell the law and you both will be dead sooner or later. Remember, make only one package."  
The letter was unsigned.

## Heavy Wind Sweeps Over East Nebraska

Some Damage to Crops and Farm Buildings Reported in South Part of Cass County.

A strong wind blowing from the south and southeast early Wednesday evening did some small damage to crops and farm buildings in several parts of the county, reports reaching here state.

The wind storm was general in the southeast part of the state and in the northeast and northwestern Iowa, reached the height of a small tornado.

In the vicinity of Nehavka, reports reaching this city state, there was a great deal of corn whipped by the wind and small farm buildings suffered at the hands of the wind. In this locality the wind was a hard straight blow for some two hours, oats which had just been cut and were lying in small bundles in the fields were blown by the wind, in some cases being blown into the road.

In some of the localities farther south a rain followed the wind storm but here only a slight sprinkle of rain preceded the wind, the rain not being sufficient to lay the dust.

**PLEASANT REUNION**  
Tuesday closed the pleasant family reunion extending over the week-end at the home of Rev. and Mrs. H. G. McClusky, when the several guests returned to their respective homes.

The gathering included their daughter, Catherine, who is attending the summer session of Hastings college; the four sisters of Mrs. McClusky, Mrs. A. T. Aller and Miss Freda Hughes of Lindsborg, Kas., Mrs. R. B. Elliott and son, Marvin, of St. Joseph, Mo.; Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Fridlund, of Craig, Neb., and her brother, Mr. C. E. Hughes of Fort Worth, Texas.

The days spent together were filled with varied pleasures. The brother and sisters have not gathered in complete numbers since the death of their mother, twenty years ago, for with her going, the parental home became only a place of memory.  
The occasion which brought them together at this time was the 25th wedding anniversary of Rev. and Mrs. McClusky.

**FUNERAL OF MRS. KALASEK**  
From Thursday's Daily  
The funeral services of Mrs. Josephine Kalasek was held this morning at 10 o'clock from the Holy Rosary Catholic church on west Pearl street. The service was attended by a very large number of the old friends of the departed lady and of the family.  
The funeral mass was celebrated by Father Marcelles Agius, pastor of the church, assisted by the choir.  
The large number present and the beautiful floral remembrances silently attested the deep feeling of sorrow felt at the taking away of this long time resident of Plattsmouth.  
The interment was at the Catholic cemetery in the west portion of the city, the body being borne to the last resting place by six of the grandsons of the departed lady, John and George Kalasek, Robert E. Sedlak, Robert and Carl Hronek of Pocatello, Idaho and Thomas J. Walling.

**Journal Want-Ads get results!**

## School Teacher Ends Life Friday; Burned to Death

Miss Gertrude Mortensen, Teacher in Plattsmouth School Committed Suicide Friday at Home.

Miss Gertrude Mortensen, 39, teacher in the Plattsmouth public schools for the past two years, committed suicide Friday at her home in Herman, Nebraska.  
Miss Mortensen had given no intention of her rash act and had quietly gone into the yard of the family home, saturated her body and clothing with kerosene and then applied a match to the garments, inflicting injuries so severe that she died early this morning.

The unfortunate young woman lived through hours of intense suffering before death came to her relief and she regained consciousness enough to request the attending physician to notify the Plattsmouth board of education and the pastor of her church, Rev. O. G. Wichmann of the St. Paul's church of the tragedy.

The message of the suicide came as a great shock to the friends here. She had been one of the hard working members of the city teaching force, having taught the second and third grades of the Columbian school for the past two years. Untiring in her school work and also in the various organizations of the St. Paul's church, friends here ascribe the reason for the suicide as a sudden breakdown and nervous strain.

Miss Mortensen is survived by the parents and a brother and sister, all residing at Herman. The sister had been here for the last week of school and accompanied the sister home where Miss Mortensen had planned to spend the vacation and return here in the fall.

While here Miss Mortensen had made her home with Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Rawls and who had found her a most charming and cultured Christian lady, one who had won a host of friends for herself since coming to this city. That she had suffered a sudden breakdown was felt by those who knew her best, as the cause of the rash act.

**HELPS BEAUTIFY CITY**  
In late years the tendency to devote more time to the landscaping and care of the grounds and surroundings of homes, has become much more pronounced and today has resulted in the city having a large number of beautifully arranged and well kept lawns and gardens.

One of the attractive places on high school hill is the formal garden at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jess F. Wurga, at 11th and Vine streets.  
The west lawn has been landscaped and has as one of the chief features a large fish pool, which is stocked with some 200 of the gold and silver fish. The pool is large enough to permit the growing of water lilies and cat tails, the fish finding the shade of the plants a feature that they enjoy to the utmost.  
A large concrete garden seat near the pond also adds to the charm of the scene, while leading to the rear entrance to the home is a heavy grape covered arbor, a spot of joy and comfort on the hot days of the summer.  
The formal garden has a large bed of varied hued snapdragons white beds of asters, gladioli and other of the later summer flowers are coming on and will lend their beauty to the general appearance.  
Mr. and Mrs. Wurga have devoted a great deal of time to the garden and fell well repaid in the pleasant and attractive surroundings they have brought to their home.

**ANNOUNCES ENGAGEMENT**  
Mrs. B. W. Livingston entertained at a ten-thirty breakfast at her home, announcing the engagement of her daughter, Vivian, whose marriage to Henry A. Hill will take place at their home on July 20th.  
Eight of her most intimate friends attended. The out of town guests were Misses Marie Robertson and Catherine Flynn of Omaha and Mrs. Burr R. Davis of Wayne.

## WIDENING OUT STREET

Lincoln avenue near the scales and unloading platforms of the Norfolk Packing Co. is being widened out so that the delivery of raw material to the packing plant can be made without blocking the traffic on the avenue. This work will give the company an easy access to their plant and which will be badly needed as the season for the delivery of sweet corn is at hand.

The dirt that is being removed in the widening of the avenue is being placed to good use in the filling of the south Fifth street hill from the alley to Pearl street, as well as on Granite street from Sixth to Seventh. These streets have been washed badly by rains and it had become difficult to travel and the new dirt will greatly aid in the improving of the roadway.

## Burlington Makes Changes in Train Schedule

Under New Arrangement No. 6, Eastbound to Make Regular Stop—No. 26 to Serve This City.

The Burlington railroad which has just announced the discontinuance of two of their Chicago-Omaha trains, No. 25 and No. 4, have also made several adjustments of their service to cover the taking off of the trains.

Under the changes proposed, to be effective at once, this city will have a really better service than they have had in the past few months, having an early morning train for the east and an afternoon westbound train.  
Eastbound train No. 6, due here at 7:23 a. m. will make this city a regular stop in the future instead of a flag stop as before, making it possible for persons from the west and Lincoln to reach this city.

The "Schuyler" train or No. 26, which operates over the short line from Omaha to Ashland via Louisville, will be routed into this city, reaching here from Omaha at 3:15 p. m. and will after making the stop here resume its schedule to the west to connect at Ashland with the west-bound trains.

## BOARD STILL IN SESSION

From Thursday's Daily  
The county board of equalization, composed of County Commissioners Gorder, Farley and Chapman, County Clerk George R. Sayles and County Assessor W. H. Puls, is still in session at the court house, busy in checking over the various complaints received as to the tax assessment, also in checking up the possible reduction in the valuation of real estate in the county.

There has been an exceptionally large number of pieces of real estate to look over as the requests for adjustment of taxes and this has occupied the board for some time since the opening of the session on June 16th.  
The board is expecting to get their work of checking completed this week and will then be able to announce the result of their investigations and determination as to valuation reductions.

## TAKEN TO PENITENTIARY

From Thursday's Daily  
This morning Deputy Sheriff Ray Becker departed for Lincoln, taking Elmo Imbler, convicted blackmailer, to the state penitentiary to start serving his three year sentence. Mr. Becker was also accompanied by Clerk of the District Court Ledgway, Leslie Thimman, and E. G. Stollenbarger, who will make a trip through the state prison and look over its activities for a few hours.

## HAVE LARGE CROWD

From Thursday's Daily  
The regular Wednesday special bargain festival of the local merchants drew one of the largest crowds so far this season and last evening there was an unusually large number out to participate. The streets were filled with cars while several hundred of the residents of the community crowded the sidewalks in the main business section of the city.

## Reduction of Land Values in Cass County

Flat Fifteen Per Cent Reduction on Real Estate and Improvements; Exempt Fraternities.

The board of equalization of Cass county, which since June 16th has been considering the claims of tax reduction from individuals as well as the real estate of the county as a whole, is now closing their work.  
The board voted Thursday to make a flat reduction of fifteen per cent in the value of real estate and improvements in the entire county which had been recommended by the county assessors at their meeting in April.

A resolution was also adopted in which it was voted to make a reduction of five per cent on tracts of five acres or more in all high school districts of the county. This was made under a recent supreme court decision involving this question and which was brought to the court from Salline county. This is not a flat reduction over the county, however, and the following reductions in the various districts was voted:

District No. 1—12 per cent.  
District No. 17—6 per cent.  
District No. 20—6 per cent.  
District No. 22—10 per cent.  
District No. 23—8 per cent.  
District No. 35—10 per cent.  
District No. 95—9 per cent.  
District No. 103—8 per cent.  
District No. 104—10 per cent.  
District C-7—6 per cent.

This reduction in high school district applies to tracts in the incorporated cities and villages as well as the precincts.  
It was also voted to exempt from the tax list the property of fraternal societies where the property is used for exclusive religious, charitable or educational purposes and where such property derives no revenue.

County Assessor Puls and his assistants are checking the figures of the land values and the reductions proposed and expect to have the same ready by the first of the week when they will have the exact figures of the value of the lands and the amount that will be taken off by the reductions.

The board has a number of individual complaints to pass on and after making these reductions will take off the per cent in the school districts and then make the flat fifteen per cent reduction.

## HOLD CONFERENCE

The fourth quarterly conference of the Methodist church was held last evening at the church and attended by the heads of the various church societies and organizations. The conference was presided over by Rev. C. C. Wilson, of Omaha, district superintendent. The church reports were given by the official board and committees of the church, showing that the church has enjoyed an excellent progress in the past year despite the general conditions which have hampered the finances of the church to a large extent by curtailing the contributions to the various activities.

Under the guidance of Rev. C. O. Troy, the church has made splendid progress in its spiritual work in the community. All of the church societies have shown gains in their activities in the year and the close of the conference year generally found marked advancement in all lines.

## ENJOYS AIR TRIP

Miss Helen Westcott, who is home to enjoy a short vacation from her work as secretary of one of the large churches of Lincoln, departed for Des Moines, Wednesday. Miss Westcott made the trip by air, flying from the Omaha airport Wednesday afternoon and in two hours was at the Des Moines flying field. She found the trip very delightful and feels that this modern means of travel is one that she will take in the future when going any distance. The flying conditions were good and the trip one of real delight to the Plattsmouth lady. The air route brought her to Des Moines many hours ahead of the schedule of train or bus.

## SHOWING IMPROVEMENT

From Thursday's Daily  
Mrs. R. R. Otreodosky of this city, who underwent a tonsillectomy at one of the Omaha hospitals a week ago Tuesday, returned home last evening and is now reported as doing very nicely, altho she is still suffering some from the effects of the operation. Mrs. Otreodosky returned home a few days after the tonsillectomy, but her condition was not the best and it was found necessary to have her taken back to the hospital for treatment and where she has been for the past week. The many friends will be pleased to learn that she has so far recovered as to be able to return home and is showing signs of improvement.

## Church Asks Return of Rev. Troy to Charge

Able and Popular Pastor of the First Methodist Church Here, Is Asked to Return.

Rev. C. O. Troy, who has for the past two years served as the pastor of the First Methodist church, will again serve this charge if the wishes of the members of the congregation have any weight with the conference of the church in the fall.

The close of the church year and the last yearly conference held on Thursday, saw the congregation unanimously join in the request for the pastor to continue the work of the charge here for the coming year.

The return of Rev. Troy to the church here would be a matter of pleasure to all of the residents of the city, whether members of the church or not. Rev. Troy has made many friends in the community outside of his own congregation, who would regret very much if he should not be assigned here for the coming year.  
He has given the church the benefit of his able services in the pulpit and the conduct of the church affairs and ranks as one of the ablest pulpits orators in the eastern section of the state.

## ENJOY FISHING PARTY

There should be plenty of the finny tribe for all of the officers and employes at the court house Saturday, if all expectations come true. This morning Sheriff Ed W. Thimman and Clerk of the District Court Ledgway, throwing dull care away for a few hours embarked on a fishing trip. The party left for the Platte river with a large array of some improvements made at the various small parks over the city. The work consists of the painting of the stream. The two officials are very fond of this sport and expect to attain dat Garfield park and a large number of the seats and benches have been treated to a coat of the green paint that adds to the general appearance of the park. Mr. Brittain reports that this morning he discovered that one of the benches, freshly painted had been used by someone, the result being that there is somewhere in the city some soiled garments from the green paint.

## VACATION IS OVER

Chief of Police Joe Libershal this morning started in on his regular routine of duty following his two weeks vacation. The chief has spent his time largely in work at home and on a visit to the west portion of the state where he has land interests. He is greatly refreshed by the rest and was busy today on the duties of his office. While Chief Libershal was on his vacation, Officer David Pickrel was engaged in looking after the day work on the police force and will now return to his regular night position.

## ARRIVE FROM THE WEST

From Thursday's Daily  
Mr. and Mrs. Marion Duxbury and family, who are moving from their home at Oakland, California, to this city, to reside, arrived here last evening. They made the trip by auto and reached Hastings Wednesday morning and were met late Wednesday afternoon at Lincoln by Judge St. A. H. Duxbury and family who accompanied them on to this city. The many old time friends are pleased to have this estimable family back in camp. En route east they are to stop at Pataskala, Ohio, to visit with their relatives of Mrs. McClusky for a home for the present at least.

## DEPARTS ON VACATION

Rev. and Mrs. H. G. McClusky are expecting to leave Sunday on their summer vacation, journeying to New York for a stay of several weeks in the Odoraduck mountains in that day afternoon at Lincoln by Judge St. A. H. Duxbury and family who accompanied them on to this city. The many old time friends are pleased to have this estimable family back in camp. En route east they are to stop at Pataskala, Ohio, to visit with their relatives of Mrs. McClusky for a short time.

## W. J. Stadelman Ends Life July 5 at Hollywood

Former Resident of This City Ends Life by Shooting Himself with Shotgun.

William J. Stadelman, 60, former resident of this city, committed suicide at Hollywood, California, on Tuesday, July 5th, messages from the California city state.

Mr. Stadelman, who had been conducting the Steakhouse, located on Hollywood avenue, Hollywood, was found by policemen in his car on an isolated road early on the morning of July 5th. Stadelman had placed the muzzle of a twenty-eight gauge shotgun in his mouth and then pulled the trigger, the police reports of the case state.

The letter of Stadelman to the wife was as follows:

"Mother, I wish I could take you with me.  
"Dear Mary:  
"The world is upside down and I am on the underside, hanging to a string that has finally broken, but I have always loved you and you have been a great help to me.  
"Through all my life I feel, on account of the miserable manner that I have attempted to care for you, that you will be better off without me.  
"Tell Jean to be brave as she has always been and tell Fred and Dick they are the greatest boys in the world.  
"God bless you and all and may He forgive me.  
"The struggle is too great.  
"DAD."

The funeral was held at Hollywood on Thursday.

Mr. Stadelman is survived by the wife and one daughter, Jean, and two sons, Fred and Dick, to whom the suicide came as a terrible shock.

Mr. Stadelman was a son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Stadelman, Sr., old time residents of Plattsmouth and where he had grown to manhood. He was engaged here for some years as the manager of the Parmelee theatre when it was first opened and also was engaged in the operation of a bowling alley for a number of years. He moved to California many years ago and was for some time engaged in the real estate business at Santa Monica, and then moved to Hollywood where the family are now residing. In the past year he has suffered severe financial reverses and which led to his ending his life.

## IMPROVEMENTS AT PARKS

The city park board is having some improvements made at the various small parks over the city. The work consists of the painting of the stream. The two officials are very fond of this sport and expect to attain dat Garfield park and a large number of the seats and benches have been treated to a coat of the green paint that adds to the general appearance of the park. Mr. Brittain reports that this morning he discovered that one of the benches, freshly painted had been used by someone, the result being that there is somewhere in the city some soiled garments from the green paint.

## FEELING SOME BETTER

George Klinger, who has been ill at the home here for the past few weeks, last evening had a very easy night and felt a great deal rested today as the result. Mr. Klinger is, however, in grave condition and must be kept quiet at all times and accordingly is unable to have any visitors. The many friends regret to learn of the condition of the patient and trust that he may be able to again regain his strength and resume his usual activities.

## DEPARTS ON VACATION

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