

JOHNSON IS VICTIM OF AXE MURDERERS

TORNADO SWEEPS SEVERAL STATES KILLING SCORES

TEXAS, OKLAHOMA AND ARKANSAS HIT BY DESTRUCTIVE WIND STORM

Many Towns Wiped Out and Communication Made Impossible—Extent Damage Unknown

(By International Service) Dallas, April 10.—The latest figures available today placed the total number of killed by the tornado which swept north Texas, southern Oklahoma and Arkansas late yesterday afternoon, as one hundred and sixty-seven. Telephone and telegraph lines are paralyzed and details are unknown as many points in the three states are entirely cut off from the outside world. Reports state that several towns in southern Oklahoma have been entirely wiped out. The path of the storm in this section is said to have been two miles in width and extended through two entire counties in such enormity. Atchison, Kansas, reports snow drifts to the west of the city and on the Central branch of the Missouri Pacific railroad eight feet deep and covering a territory for many miles. Passenger trains and snow plows are tied up in the worst April blizzard in the history of the branch, which was built thirty years ago.

The storm came up from the Rio Grande valley with a high wind and heavy rain, gaining force until it tore thru the northern tier of Texas counties with the destructiveness of a tornado.

The little cotton town of Canaan was wiped out. Its cotton gin, church, school and cotton warehouse containing much of last year's crop of the nearby farmers, and its sixteen houses were all swept to the ground.

At Mineola the storm struck with severity. Three white women and eight negroes were killed and many others received such serious injuries that their deaths are expected.

Much damage was done to the prospective fruit crops in many sections, according to reports.

Telephone and telegraph wires were put out of service and it was not until today that full reports of the extent of the storm began reaching the outside world.

Shaw E. Ray, postmaster at Winnsboro, was authority for the statement of fifteen deaths in that community. Soon after noon he succeeded in establishing telephone communication with Greenville and asked that help be sent them. Six miles east of there, he said, fifteen houses had been blown away and four persons killed.

LOSS OF CATTLE WAS LIGHT IN BLIZZARD

Ranchmen Joyful Over Fact That Cattle Did Not Drift Much Before Blinding Snow

Reports reaching The Herald from over the ranch country indicate that the cattle losses from the blizzard which raged Sunday and Monday will be very light, as compared with the enormous losses suffered in April, 1913, at which time some ran up to \$30,000 in the case of one ranch.

Ranchmen report the losses this week at from three to thirty head. Because of the fact that some of the long phone lines are down, it is impossible to reach outlying ranches which may have suffered greater losses from cattle drifting into lakes, but this is very doubtful.

The comparatively warm temperature during the storm was responsible for the lack of drifting in the herds of cattle. Over a foot of snow fell in many localities and when the blizzard was at its height, was driven by a fifty-mile wind.

COMMUNITY CLUB SECURES EXPERIENCED SECRETARY

At a special meeting of the board of directors of the Alliance Community Club held last Friday evening, Mr. Rufus Jones, formerly of Williams, Montana, was employed for the position of secretary of the club and a year's contract entered into.

Mr. Williams, an ex-newspaper man of wide experience, comes highly recommended as a commercial man. He has held several important positions similar to the one here and in each and every case has made good. Mr. Jones is now on the job and getting in shape to do things for the Alliance. He solicits and merits the hearty support and co-operation of every man in the city.

THE HARPER STORE ENJOYS HEALTHY BUSINESS INCREASE

In these days of uncertain conditions few large mercantile establishments can boast of an increasing business and among that few is the big W. R. Harper store of Alliance. Already the business done in the spring lines by this popular house far exceeds that of other seasons and the demand is still on the increase. In justification of this Mr. Harper, the proprietor, says that he was exceptionally fortunate in being able to get a good supply of the very latest goods and that the buying public has been quick to appreciate the selection afforded and the rare quality of the goods offered. Mr. Harper is probably the largest user of advertising mediums in this section of the state and that it gets the business attested by this remarkable showing.

ALLIANCE GIRLS LOSE GAME AT SCOTTSBLUFF

Teams Well Matched and Game Was Hard Fought—Return Game Here Friday Night

In a hard fought and splendidly played game of basketball at Scottsbluff last evening the Alliance high school girls lost to their worthy opponent by a score of 14 to 10. The Scottsbluff team is regarded as one of the strongest in western Nebraska and had the advantage of playing on home ground.

Although defeated in the first game with the Bluffs the local team has great confidence that the Friday evening encounter at the high school gymnasium will result in victory for Alliance. Those interested in high school athletics and especially basketball are assured a good exhibition. The girls will appreciate the support of their friends.

BOYS WORKING RESERVE FILL BIG LABOR GAP

Farmers Find Help so Supplied Relieves Shortage and Proves Mutually Satisfactory

Time was, during the era of farm abundance, when the farm labor problem was one of elimination. The farmer took stock of his community labor resources and hired men who best suited his requirements. Now, in many cases, the question of obtaining an adequate labor supply is one of exploration, the farmer spending much time hunting for labor of any description.

"American farmers need labor of two classes—permanent labor to perform the year-round routine work on live stock farms, and emergency labor necessary during the harvesting, hay making and silo filling operations. The services of the boys' working reserve again will be enlisted while patriotic appeals doubtless will be made to the town people to assist, as far as possible, in their respective localities in harvesting the banner crops expected."

The statement above is from the columns of a well known Middle West farm paper. Note what it says: "Now—the question of obtaining an adequate labor supply is one of exploration, the farmer spending much time hunting for labor of any description."

The attention of farmers everywhere is turning to the question of where they will obtain the labor necessary for the harvest this summer. The crops are in—there is a sufficient supply of labor to plant them, but during the harvest season four or five persons will be required to every one who worked during the planting season. Where are they to be secured?

The Boys' Working Reserve is mobilized—ready to step into the gap in the ranks of farm labor during the coming season. Boys from 16 to 21 are available to aid in harvesting the record crops, estimated by the Bureau of Crop Estimate to exceed anything ever known. Through the Federal County Director, E. G. Laing of this city, requests are received for boys and they are then placed on the farms to the best advantage of both the farmers and themselves.

As to the former, in 1917 he was frankly skeptical of labor. Later it became a question with many farmers of boy labor or no labor. This gave the boys their chance, and they made good so conclusively that last year there was more demand than the available supply of boys could satisfy, and already the indications for 1919 are that thousands of boys will be demanded by farmers. Letters and verbal statements of many farmers attest their satisfaction with the work of the boys and the desire of many that a supply of boy labor be provided year after year without regard to war conditions.

BURLINGTON STOCK YARDS THE SCENE OF MOST BRUTAL KILLING IN HISTORY OF CITY, TUESDAY NIGHT—SLAYERS ESCAPE

ROBBERY BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN MOTIVE

Body Is Thrown on Railroad Tracks and Found After Switch Engine Had Passed Over It—Several Persons Suspected of Possessing Information Are Being Held by Officers

The most atrocious crime in the history of Alliance was committed Tuesday night when Charles F. Johnson, manager of the John J. Grier commissary and lunch room in this city, was murdered at the Burlington stockyards and his body thrown on the tracks to be mangled by switching trains. Discovery of the horrible crime, which it is believed was committed about nine o'clock, was made when the switch engine passed over the body more than an hour after the life had been taken in the most brutal manner imaginable, by a blow over the head from an axe. Robbery is believed to have been the motive for the horrible deed.

Mr. Johnson came to Alliance from Kansas City in September and entered the employ of the Grier Company as manager of the interests at this place. During the afternoon of the fatal day he remarked to a fellow worker that some "kid" had arranged a date for him with a woman, but did not divulge any names in the matter and as he occasionally left the place during the evening hours nothing was thought of the incident. About 8 o'clock he came to the postoffice for the mail of the members of the crew and returned shortly later with the letters which he received. Soon after this time he left the commissary, after carefully locking up as was his usual custom. No one connected with the place saw him take his leave and while the exact time is not known it is believed to have been about eight forty-five. A few minutes later one of the help, Jerry, as he is called, returned from the city and upon nearing the commissary noticed that the place looked as though it had been robbed. He went to the door and found the lock had been broken, whereupon he went to the bunk house, where the other members of the force were preparing for the night and notified them of the robbery. Together the men went to the commissary to investigate, but no one could be seen, and they decided to await the return of Mr. Johnson, the manager. When he did not show up Jerry was delegated to find him and it was while he was attempting to locate Johnson that he learned a man, unknown to the officers, had been murdered at the stockyards. He returned to the camp with the information, and J. C. Mills, head cook, immediately went to the Miller undertaking parlors on Third street fearing that it was possible that Johnson had met with foul play and at once identified the dead man. According to Mills, Johnson very often carried as much as two or

three hundred dollars upon his person, having the entire receipts for the day of the business and such other money as it was necessary to keep on hand from time to time. "He was as fine a man as I ever knew," said Mills, "and I don't believe he had an enemy." When shown the ax, with which Johnson's slayers had accomplished their deadly purpose, Mr. Mills immediately identified it as one that was used at the commissary.

When the officers arrived on the scene they at once found the ax, with which the man had been murdered, as it had been thrown, from the dock along the stock pens, into the pen adjoining. A pool of blood marked the spot where he had fallen when struck and which was done apparently as he walked along on the dock, by someone in hiding behind the large gates or in the loading run. Every cent of money, every paper of any description had been taken from the clothing and nothing was left with the exception of a gold watch and chain and a gold ring on the finger. Just below, on the track, could be seen the place where the body was evidently pushed by the slayers who it seems hoped that the switching trains would erase the evidence of their dastardly act.

As soon as Sheriff Miller was notified of the crime he deputized a number of men and made a diligent search of the entire yards. Every possible means of escape was cut off and all trains carefully watched; but thus far without successful results. The bloodhound, owned by Cal Cox, was taken to the scene, but was unable to take the scent. While a number of men have been examined and the officers are still holding several, nothing has yet developed that throws any light on the case. All efforts to locate the relatives have also proven futile and the remains are being held at the Glenn Miller undertaking parlors on West Third street.

FOUR WEEKS' COURSE IN TRACTOR OPERATIONS

State Engineer Johnson Anticipates Shortage of Trained Men for Road Work

To help provide trained men for road construction, the university has announced a four weeks' course for tractor operators, beginning April 14. Money is now available for the Nebraska road program, and the machinery that will be needed can be obtained without delay, but the one thing which George E. Johnson, state engineer, fears may hold up the work is the lack of trained men, especially tractor operators.

It is thought that 200 tractor operators will be needed. Mr. Johnson estimates their average wages at \$7 a day. Construction of roads will begin about the middle of this month. Mr. Johnson said that four contracts would be let during the week of April 14, and one a week after that for several weeks.

The short course will be given by the University school of agriculture and the training done in the agricultural engineering department at the university farm. It will consist of two lectures and six hours laboratory work five days a week for four weeks. Registration will be at agricultural hall, farm campus, Monday afternoon, April 14. Work will begin that afternoon. A fee of \$10 will be charged for the course.

Men will be trained in details of tractor operation and repair. The following subjects will be among those studied: Transmission, steering gears, governors, ignition, carburetion, valve timing, lubrication, bearings, trouble shooting, repairs, clutches, brakes, hitches, and babbitting. Men taking the course will have an opportunity to study and operate about twenty different makes of tractors.

DECLAMATORY CONTEST ATTRACTED BIG CROWD

Marie Howe and Wade Grassman Winners in Contested Department—Curtis Unopposed

The annual declamatory contest held at the Imperial theatre, Thursday evening, and participated in by students of the Alliance high school, attracted a crowd that taxed the capacity of the theatre. The program as arranged and carried out was one of the best ever presented by the school and the competition for the winning places and the honor of representing the school at the district declamatory contest to be held at Bayard, April 11, was very keen.

Mr. Edward Curtis, unopposed in the oratorical division, was the first on the program, after which Mrs. C. E. Hershman rendered, in her particularly pleasing manner, a splendid vocal solo. In the dramatic division Miss Marie Howe, who very ably delivered "The Going of the White Swan," was awarded the first place, and Miss Naoma McGillis second on "Skimpy." At the conclusion of this section Miss Josephine Ganson favored the audience with the rendition of a vocal solo.

In the humorous department Mr. Wade Grassman carried off the first honors, while Miss Alta Dye received the second award. The title of Mr. Grassman's address was "How Ruby Played," and that of Miss Dye, "A Telephone Romance." Mr. Townsend delightfully entertained the crowd with a violin solo, which was followed by the decision of the judges. The judges were: Mrs. Fry, Hyannis; Mrs. Chase, Crawford, and Miss McFadden, county superintendent of Cheyenne county, Sidney.

It is called the Victory Liberty Loan, but it is more than that. It is the Prosperity Loan for the people of this country stick to the job and see Uncle Sam through.

POLICE CHIEF MAKES A PLAIN STATEMENT

Chief of Police Oscar Reid since taking over the responsibility of this important position has made it known that he intends to enforce the law to the letter and that he will spare no violators when there is sufficient evidence to justify their being hailed into court. Among the several things particularly mentioned by Chief Reid is that gambling of every nature must be stopped; the sale of Jamaica ginger and like concoctions which may be used for the purpose of making one intoxicated must cease and that street disturbances are to be eliminated.

In this, Mr. Reid will have the hearty support of every law abiding, peace loving citizen, and it is to be hoped that he is successful in his efforts to clean up the city and make it a better place in which to live.

"WELCOME HOME" TO BE HELD NEXT JULY

Returned Soldiers Will Be Honored at Time of the Stockmen's Convention

The "Welcome Home" for the men who served their country in the great world war and returned, planned several months ago to take place during the summer has been set for July 4th by the committee in charge. This will be the last day of the stockmen's reunion and a very fitting time for the event. Plans now in the making will provide for one of the biggest celebrations ever held in the county.

Wild west performances will form a part of the program and the day will be devoted to making the boys feel the appreciation held for the splendid services rendered.

WOULD REVOLUTIONIZE THE POTASH INDUSTRY

Prominent Colorado Chemist Has Perfected Refining System for Potash Plants

According to A. B. Price, a prominent Colorado chemist who visited Alliance last week, the potash plants of western Nebraska should all be in operation by July 1, if plans which he has perfected for the refining of potash salts are adopted and the proper minor changes in plants made without delay.

Mr. Price is actively engaged in the potash industry of Colorado near Colorado Springs, where potash will be produced from tailings at the mines. Mr. Price interviewed prominent men in the Nebraska industry and apparently received much encouragement from them. He believes that the Nebraska plants can pay all expenses from the by-product, leaving the potash produced clear of all cost.

The people with whom Mr. Price is associated at Colorado Springs are erecting an expensive plant, at an old cyanide mill, where several millions of tons of tailings are dumped. The plan is to leach out the tailings, the potash and other salts being then reduced and refined from the water.

A prominent Antioch potash expert and chemist will make a trip to Colorado Springs this week to examine the method used by Mr. Price in detail. If it proves practicable, it should mean that the potash industry in Nebraska would revive quickly.

BANQUET AND SMOKER TO FIRE DEPARTMENT MEMBERS

Wednesday evening the annual installation of officers of the Alliance Volunteer Fire Department was held at the department club rooms. Following the installation of the new officials a splendid banquet and smoker was tendered the members by the new chief, Frank L. Merritt, and which was greatly appreciated by the large number present. Several talks were made, among which was one by Dr. George J. Hand, the new president, who outlined the functions and duties of the department.

Following the banquet several good athletic stunts were pulled that were very interesting. It was decided at the meeting that the fire fighters should organize from among their number a ball team and another meeting was called for this purpose for next Wednesday night. All those interested are urged to be present.

PAVING ENGINEER EXPECTED IN ALLIANCE THIS WEEK

Mr. Grant, of the firm of Grant & Fulton, consulting engineers, Lincoln, is expected to arrive in Alliance this week to commence the work necessary preparatory to the laying of the pavement. Grant & Fulton surveyed the city and established the drainage grades and are in splendid position to render the city good service in the improvement work now being undertaken.

CITY COUNCIL ORGANIZES FOR IMPORTANT WORK

MAYOR RODGERS MAKES APPOINTMENTS FOR YEAR—OUTLINES PLANS

Many Changes in Methods of Conducting Business of City Proposed by New Members

The last regular meeting of the old city council was held Tuesday evening and was presided over by the retiring mayor, Mr. W. E. Rousey. After the canvass of the votes in the recent city election an ordinance increasing the salaries of the city attorney and city physician was passed, which will provide for a salary of \$600 per year for the city attorney and \$300 per year for the city physician. The oath of office was then administered to the incoming mayor Mr. A. D. Rodgers, and the new members of the board and the present council then took up the work of conducting the city's affairs.

In outlining his policy, Mayor Rodgers was very brief and in his appointments he carefully selected those especially fitted for the places to be filled. In naming the committees he made each a committee of one and gave each full power to transact the business of his department. In this way the mayor believes that better results can be obtained by the reason of the elimination of the trouble often experienced in being able to get a larger committee to act. The committees follow: Claims—Harris, Hughes, Gavin; Streets and Alleys—East side, Moore; West side, Henry; Health and Sewer—Highland; Cemetery—Hills; Ordinance—Johnson; Finance and Purchasing—Harris; Light and Water—Hughes; Property and Insurance, Gavin; License and Printing—Grace Kennedy.

The other appointments made were: City attorney, Walter R. Metz; engineer, R. E. Knight; physician, Dr. George J. Hand; fire truck driver, L. E. Pilkington; chief of police, Oscar Reid, and night police, N. V. Taylor.

Superintendent Campbell, of the light plant, appeared before the council regarding the shipment of a new power unit, purchased under the former administration, which was due to arrive within the very near future and for which a substantial payment of the contract cost must be paid upon its arrival. The unit was bought at a cost of \$17,980, of which sum eighty per cent was to be paid upon delivery. Investigation developed that no arrangements for the liquidation of the obligation had been made and that while the unit can, no doubt, be used to advantage, the plant could also operate very well without it. Supt. Campbell denied having recommended the purchase and said that while it was true that in case of a serious breakdown the city would be out of light during the night, he believed that it was not absolutely necessary that the unit be installed.

The matter of the condition of the new well at the city water works, sunk last year and which has never been of much use because of the presence of a large quantity of sand, was taken up and discussed. It seems that the concrete walls, which were to keep out the sand, proved defective and caused the breaking of the pump and that unless the sand can be kept out the well will be entirely useless. The matter will be taken up with the contractors who had the work in charge.

Mayor Rodgers stated that the council was not ready at this time to take up the city manager proposition and until such time he would make no appointments for the positions of superintendent of the light plant and street commissioner. The street improvements proposed and the matter of the extension of the water mains on Platte and Emerson streets were laid over until the next meeting, to be held April 22.

Hugh Beal asked for and was granted a lease on the city farm for a period of two years, which is the unexpired portion of a three-year contract now in force. In the discussion that ensued the taking up of the lease proposition, it developed that some attention was needed at the septic tank located on the farm. Councilman Harris made a good suggestion when he suggested that when again called upon to make extensions in this line the same be made to extend to Snake creek two miles to the south. The terms of the lease to Mr. Beal are \$170 per year, payable in advance.

It is essential to a sound economic program that smaller savings, as well as larger capital, finance Government operations.