

CONFESSED THE MURDER

WALTER REISENWEAVER, SEVENTEEN YEARS OLD, SAYS HE COMMITTED FOUL MURDER OF CHARLES F. JOHNSON ON NIGHT OF APRIL 8th.

STORY IS TOLD WITH VERY CLEAR VOICE

Circumstantial Evidence and Developments from Car Robberies Enable the Officers to Secure Complete Confession—Held to District Court, Without Bail, for Trial

Walter Reisenweaver, seventeen years of age, Saturday afternoon confessed having committed the gruesome murder of Charles F. Johnson, at the stockyards in Alliance on the night of Tuesday, April 8th, and Tuesday morning of this week entered a plea of guilty to a charge of first degree murder in the county court of Box Butte county. He will be held for trial in the district court and from which court sentence will be passed. Until such trial he is held, without bail, on the order of County Judge Ira E. Tash. During the several days prior to the confession and through a long, hard examination this young murderer at no time showed any signs of emotion, nor has he since admitting his guilt appeared frightened or even disturbed. His statement, though brief, was plain and a complete confession, even to the extent of his moves both before and after the killing. At the outset, after confessing the murder, he steadfastly denied having robbed his victim, but later admitted taking the dead man's pocketbook and finally revealed the disposition he made of the same.

At the time of the discovery of the murder and the identification of the body, suspicions were had that Reisenweaver had knowledge of the assassination, but nothing more than circumstantial evidence could be obtained. He had been seen, by the employees, at the commissary early in the evening, but had disappeared several hours before it became known that Johnson's life had been taken; and was not seen by the officers until the time of his arrest, the morning following, on another charge. He had been quite intimate with the slain man and from the very apparent fact that the murder had been committed by some one who knew Johnson's habits and some one who knew that he often carried considerable money on his person when he left the place of business at night, the officers derived their first clue.

For some weeks cars standing in the yards were broken into and robbed and while in pursuit of evidence which would lead to the conviction of the robber, Burlington Officer Smith found that Reisenweaver had sold a pocket-knife that answered the description of one taken from the way car of Conductor McKenzie. This together with the fact that the same tool which had been used to open the cars were employed to break the lock at the commissary, convinced Smith that Reisenweaver knew more of the murder than he was telling. It also proved to be the force which finally wrought from Reisenweaver the story of the worst crime ever committed in this section of Nebraska.

In relating the story of the murder the youthful murderer said that he had taken supper at the Grier boarding house, after having finished his day's work, and had gone to his room at the Nebraska House and changed his clothes, putting on a suit of blue serge; then he went to the library where he intended to return a book he had borrowed, but upon finding the library closed he returned to his room with the book. He next went to the commissary and shortly thereafter Johnson left in the direction of the west commissary. Looking after Johnson he noticed, he said, a colored man following Johnson and the idea of striking him on the head entered his mind. After looking for some sort of weapon he walked to the stockyards and awaited the return of his victim and when he saw Johnson approach he hid behind the large gates and made ready for the blow that killed Johnson. As he was going through the dead man's pockets and in which he first declared he found but a handkerchief he again saw the colored fellow, who it appeared had followed Johnson the entire course of his walk, and again he hid himself in the commissary. From the commissary he claims to have gone east along a string of cars until he came to the viaduct, where he hid the money and discarded the pocketbook by throwing it into a coal car standing near, where it was later found by the officers. He then proceeded toward the Nebraska House, across tracks, and after a thorough wash that eliminated every particle of possible evidence retired for the night. When asked if his rest was disturbed by the thoughts of what he had done, he said that he slept well, and seemed astonished that such a question should be asked. The following morning he appeared for work

at the stockyards as usual, and it was here that he was picked up by the officers. What became of the money, taken from the pocket of Johnson and which Reisenweaver claims to have hidden at the viaduct, may never be known, at least the officers were unable to locate it after a thorough search.

The theory that Reisenweaver had an accomplice in the horrible deed was shattered when he told the officers that he was unaided and added that he needed no assistance.

The young man's preliminary hearing was held Tuesday in Judge Ira E. Tash's court and upon his plea of "guilty" was bound over, without bail, to the District court. He gave his home as Sheridan, Wyoming, and said that at he had but a short time ago been discharged from the services of Uncle Sam.

The Sheridan Post, of Tuesday, this week, has the following to say: "Following a confession to authorities in Alliance, Neb., to the murdering of Charles F. Johnson, manager of the Grier Commissary at that place, Walter Reisenweaver, age 17, son of John Reisenweaver, a boiler maker residing at 1155 North Custer street, this city, was placed in jail to await trial for his gruesome deed. * * * Mr. and Mrs. John Reisenweaver are very well known in this city and are held in high esteem by all who know them. Both are respected members of fraternal organizations in this city, and Mr. Reisenweaver has been a trusted employee of the Burlington for many years. Young Reisenweaver, when a young lad, never revealed any of the desperate characteristics which have now landed him in jail, and it is believed that he fell into disrepute while shifting for himself since he left home."

THE PAYING ENGINEER TAKES UP HIS WORK

City Council Holds Special Meeting That Work May Be Expedited

Engineer William Grant, of the firm of Grant & Fulton, Lincoln, arrived in Alliance Wednesday morning and has already begun his operations as consulting engineer and inspector for the city in the paving work that is soon to be done.

Last evening Mayor A. D. Rodgers called a special meeting of the city council for the purpose of going over matters preliminary to the paving and at this meeting Mr. Grant was present and made a few suggestions. One of the first things done was the appointment of a paving committee, composed of Councilmen Harris, Highland and Johnson, by the mayor. This committee is to have charge of the preliminary work and will make such suggestions to the council as it deems advisable. The width of the proposed pavement was next taken up and after much consideration and discussion, the suggestions of Mr. Grant were adopted. The engineer suggested a 60-foot pavement and 20-foot walks on streets of one hundred feet width, 50-foot pavement and 15-foot walks on 80-foot streets, and 40-foot pavement and 10-foot walks on 60-foot streets.

On First street, which is really but one-half a street in width, the paving will be 22 1/2 feet in width with seven and one-half feet on the one side, for walks. It was the sense of the meeting that the above specifications would provide ample width for the handling of all traffic that is now or ever will be necessary over the pavements and that the additional width of the sidewalks will prove very beneficial. It will also lessen the cost to the property holders in that the cost of laying sidewalk is less than that of the pavement. The white-wash system will necessarily be changed by the action and the clusters placed six feet toward the center of the streets.

The city attorney was instructed to draw an ordinance creating a drainage district comprising that section of the city which is to be paved. Storm sewers will without a doubt be provided also.

The actual work on the paving now promises to commence within a very short time. Bids for the various kinds of pavements will at once be asked for and upon the expiration of the time specified by law for the designation of the pavement to be used and the privilege of filing objections to any certain kind, the council will at once proceed to let the contract.

MRS. E. W. BELL PASSED AWAY THURSDAY NIGHT

Mrs. E. W. Bell, for twenty-six years a resident of Alliance, passed away at the home at 710 Laramie avenue, last Thursday night, following an attack of uremic poisoning. On Thursday afternoon Mrs. Bell went to the dental office of Dr. J. M. Kennedy and it was while waiting in the reception room of the offices that the attack was first apparent and although medical aid was at once summoned and she was taken to her home, she succumbed to the attack, at about nine o'clock that evening.

The deceased was a native of Scotland, having been born at Ellensburg in 1867, but coming to America at a very early age. In 1885 she was married to E. W. Bell, who survives her. One daughter is also left to mourn the loss of an always kind and loving mother. She is Mrs. Bernard Phelan. Two brothers and a sister also survive.

The funeral services were held at the home at 9:30 Saturday morning and the remains were shipped to Friend, Neb., for burial.

NEW ELEVATORS FOR BOX BUTTE COUNTY

Western Grain Company Planning to Install Large Grain Elevators for Handling Crops

Alliance and Hemingford, with probably Berea, are to be the sites of large grain elevators which will be erected during the summer and begin caring for the enormous grain crop of the county to be harvested this coming fall, according to a promise made to The Herald representative by a prominent western grain operator when interviewed on Monday of this week. On learning that his company expects to build a large number of elevators this summer, The Herald called his attention to Box Butte county, with the result that an investigation was made which resulted favorably to the establishment of the elevators here.

The company plans to erect an elevator at Hemingford and perhaps Berea with a capacity of 20,000 bushels of grain and an elevator at Alliance with a capacity of 50,000 bushels. Alliance will be made the cleaning station for a string of elevators from Billings east on the Burlington, the grain collected at these elevators to be shipped here, unloaded and cleaned. It will then be re-loaded and shipped to the Omaha market.

The company now has several Wyoming elevators in operation. It plans to eventually have not less than 150 of them in southern Montana, northeastern Wyoming, southwestern South Dakota and northwestern Nebraska, with a seat on the Omaha Grain Exchange, covering a territory approximately 300 miles square.

The company now does a large business in alfalfa and prairie hay, buying for large Omaha consumers and distributors. They will probably erect in Alliance, in connection with the grain elevator, a large hay warehouse.

Rufus Jones, secretary of the Alliance Community Club, is taking an active interest in the proposition of securing the elevator enterprise, and is preparing figures and other interesting facts which will be furnished to the company in making their plans for the erection of the elevator.

WOULD CONTINUE ALL STATE HOME GUARDS

Adjutant General H. J. Paul Notifies Company Commanders that Governor Desires Organizations

Roy C. Strong, captain of the Box Butte Home Guards, has received the following communication relative to the state Home Guard organizations, from H. J. Paul, adjutant general of the state of Nebraska:

Having been informed that a letter had been sent out prior to my having taken over this office requesting that Home Guard companies continue in service until further orders, but receiving numerous inquiries as to the desires of the governor on this subject the following for your information is deemed necessary.

It is Governor McKelvie's wish that all Home Guard companies continue to be a live and active organization, subject to call, up to the reorganization and acceptance of the National Guard, after which time the governor looks with favor upon the continuance of the organization as a social and semi-military organization, but without military authority, and believes that much benefit and good will come from such continuation.

This office has secured a quantity of blank discharges that will be furnished upon application of company commanders, which will give to each member leaving the service something to show for valued services rendered.

Upon completion of the reorganization of the National Guard each Home Guard company will be notified of same and they can then elect to continue as suggested in paragraph two or disband, and in case disbandment is chosen a specific date should be set and same should be accomplished with some ceremony in which this office will be glad to render every assistance possible.

It is requested that this circular letter be read to all members at the next regular meeting after its receipt.

ALLIANCE TEACHERS ARE EMPLOYED AGAIN

School Board Arranges for Instructors in School for Coming Year

The scarcity of school teachers is already felt in the schools of Alliance, that is, the demand has already been apparent. This week the board entered into contracts with those of the present staff who had not already signed up and the corps for next year promises to be an exceptionally efficient one. The following teachers are those re-employed:

High School—Mr. Prince, Miss Bargey, Miss Keith, Miss Elliott, Miss Beal.

Central school—Miss Johnson, Miss Crocker, Miss Lockman, Miss McCollister, Miss Williams, Mrs. Kase, Mrs. Emerick.

Emerson school—Miss Ganson, Miss Soper, Miss Jennings, Miss Hledik, Miss Beals, Miss McHugh.

From the Omaha Bee: Louis Kulakofsky of the Central Market was calling on Miss Helen Levy in the Adelaide apartments at Forty-ninth and Dodge streets, when the storm hit this section, carrying off the front portion of the apartment house and wrecking Kulakofsky's automobile which stood in front of the building. The former home of Miss Levy's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Saul Levy, in the Bemis park section, was demolished in the tornado six years ago.

F. H. Bronkhorst, in charge of the supply affairs for the Elks fair, left Tuesday for Denver, where he purchased a line of articles for the fair.

HADN'T MET SECRETARY

An Alliance business man the other day expressed a little surprise in his not having yet met the new secretary of the Community Club. "Why, he hasn't been to call upon me and I am very busy," was the reply when asked to what he attributed the condition. True it is he is a very busy man, but—what about Rufus Jones? Well, at least, he is busy, too. Coming to Alliance and the Community Club but very recently, Mr. Jones has been able to find ample occupation and in getting the office details arranged to comply with his desires and the unfinished business cared for he has found no "time to do the 'get acquainted' stunt to any great proportions. However, should it occur to you that he is the stranger within the gates and that it is entirely proper that you should call upon him, Mr. Jones will be found glad to welcome you and to give you such time as your mission will require.

Call on him—get acquainted—you may like him.

TWO HUNDRED YANKS HOME FROM GERMANY

Troop Train Bearing Heroes of Argonne Forest Passed Through the City Last Night

Two hundred U. S. soldiers, just returned from the battlefields and Coblenz, Germany, where they were stationed as a part of the army of occupation, passed through Alliance last night bound for Camp Lewis, near Seattle, Washington. The detachment was made up of boys from Oregon and Washington and was being sent to Camp Lewis for discharge. It was a part of the 347th Field Artillery and the 91st Division.

More fortunate than some of their comrades who were sent overseas, these lads saw seven days actual fighting in the Argonne woods sector and they were united in the expression of the horrors of the now famous battle. After the signing of the armistice they were sent to Ensch, about midway between Coblenz and Treves, and as an indication of the hardships which they endured, one of them told of the trip to Brest from Ensch. In Europe railway cars, as many know, are much smaller than those with which we are familiar. In each of the small stock cars, which were used for the transportation of troops because of the inability to get others, forty-two men, their rations, fuel for five days, two stoves for heating purposes and all packs and souvenirs carried by the men were crowded. Sleeping was done in relays—what was done at all—and upon the arrival of the detachment at Brest some of the men were forced to enter the hospital for treatment.

Private E. L. Frizzell, one of those who passed through Alliance last night, told of splendid treatment at the hands of the German people after the cessation of hostilities and said that he can not imagine what is meant by the claim of a food shortage in Germany, if his experiences are a criterion. He said the cellars were filled with wines and liquors, the storehouses with meats, flour and such other edibles, and that no where did he find evidences of a shortage. In telling of the treatment accorded them he said "at that time they were fed entirely 'at home' and that in his case when he would return from the city, after a few hours leave, during the evening hours the lady of the house would invariably prepare something for him to eat.

For a time the American soldiers were not allowed to converse with the Germans, after the armistice was signed, and at all times gatherings in public places were forbidden because of the danger of riots and fights. One American, in the detachment, entered a German business house and when he found the likeness of Kaiser Wilhelm hanging in a very conspicuous place he tore it from the wall and completely destroyed it.

The boys arrived in New York from Brest, France, March 30th. They were held in New York a couple of weeks waiting upon discharge orders. They are indeed glad to get home again, but express themselves as willing to do again what they have done should the need arise.

A plain drunk paid a fine of \$25 and costs, \$30 in all, in police court Monday morning. Another fellow arrested for being intoxicated gave a cash bond and went his way.

equipment being on the ground now, 640 acres is in the Greary dome northwest of the Big Muddy field and a well is being drilled within one mile of our holdings and is down more than 2,000 feet. If this comes in a producer it will place considerable value on our acreage. We have eastern parties negotiating for a contract to drill this tract and may be able to get work started in the early spring.

"There promises to be much activity in the Wyoming fields this year and we are exceptionally well located in the two places as above."

GRIFFITH OIL COMPANY MAKES RAPID GROWTH

Now Has Four Producing Wells in Kansas and Is Adding to Wyoming Oil Holdings

The Griffith Oil Company, in which many Herald readers hold stock, reports rapid progress being made in the development of its oil holdings in Kansas and the adding of recent valuable holdings in Wyoming. Wyoming oil stocks have all been jumping to high level the last few days, due to the increasing activity there and to the bringing in of new gushers. A gusher in the new Lance Creek field, located twenty miles north of Lusk, northwest of Alliance, which was brought in last Friday, is estimated to be spouting 20,000 barrels every twenty-four hours. It is reported to be still out of control and shooting oil for more than 100 feet above the oil derrick.

James A. Armour, former Alliance man, now secretary of the Griffith Oil Company, announces that the annual meeting of the stockholders of the Griffith Oil Company will be held at the office of the corporation, in the city of Deadwood, on the 25th day of April, at 2:20 o'clock p. m., for the purpose of electing directors, hearing the report of the board of directors and for the transaction of such other business as may be brought before said meeting.

The following statement regarding the affairs of the company accompanies the notice of the meeting:

"The company has recently completed a well on the DeMott lease in Montgomery county, Kansas, and now has four producing wells on this tract making an income sufficient to carry the normal expense of the company. This fulfills our drilling obligations on this lease and makes our title perpetual.

"Our 890-acre tract in Wilson and Montgomery counties, referred to in a former letter, is attracting much attention as a prospective gas field, there being a large production of gas brought in just recently not far distant, and it is our intention to drill our next well in this location. We count this one of the best speculative chances we have ever had and should we be able to develop a large flow of gas it will place the company in a very enviable position.

"In addition to the above we have recently acquired 1250 acres of land in the Wyoming fields, 640 of which immediately adjoins the Carter company's holdings in the Bolton Creek dome southwest of Casper where they are preparing to begin operations upon, their rig and most of the

PHILLIPS ADMITS SALE OF BOOZE WHEN ARRESTED

OWN STORY CONVICTS HIM ON AT LEAST TEN SEPARATE COUNTS

Denies Any Knowledge of Operations of Others—Fined One Thousand Dollars and Costs

C. E. Phillips, proprietor of the Dew Drop Inn, formerly the Red Diamond pool hall, was arrested Sunday night by Policemen Reid and Taylor and Special Officer Smith of the Burlington, after a search of the Dodge touring car belonging to Phillips which revealed three pints of whiskey. Throughout the entire day the officers had been watching the operations of their man, and when he returned to his place of business about midnight, after a short drive, they instituted the search that procured the necessary evidence. He was taken to the county jail and on Monday morning was given a hearing before County Attorney Lee Bayne. In this hearing Phillips pleaded guilty to having liquor illegally in his possession and to having sold at least eight pints and on as many different occasions. When asked where he obtained the whiskey he said he had purchased it from a fellow, whose name he did not know, from Edgemont. In this the officers were unable to shake the defendant and in all other questions wherein they attempted to obtain a clue as to the operations of other dealers in contraband liquor, he was very rigid and nothing of value was gained.

The whiskey has been buried in the ground at a place about a mile and a half from the city according to the story told by Phillips, who said that he had paid \$40 for a quantity of two gallons. His first sale was made during the latter part of February, he said, and that since that time he had sold at least eight pints, the exact number he did not recall, but that the three pints found when he was arrested was a part of the original two gallons. In the car at the time of the arrest was a Marlin pump gun, twelve gauge, and a 32-20 Smith & Wesson revolver.

When the trial was held in county court Phillips entered a plea of "guilty" in accordance with the statement made to the county attorney and Judge Ira E. Tash assessed a fine of \$1,000 and costs, amounting in all to \$1014.40. This was \$100 each for ten counts and the costs in the case. He has, as yet, been unable to pay the fine and is still in jail, but had raised a part of the amount necessary and claims he will be able to get it all.

John Weaver, who it seems was interested in the behalf of Phillips, denies emphatically the charge that he flashed \$500 for the bond of the accused man on Sunday night, but admits having told the officers that "they" could get it and would if the bond was arranged.

Sheriff Miller, his deputy C. A. Laing, Chief of Police Oscar R. M. and his assistants and Special Officer Smith are firm in their declaration that the bootlegging must cease and seem to be pursuing the proper course to bring about the desired results.

CITY PHYSICIAN MAKES TESTS CITY'S WELLS

Dr. George J. Hand Takes Samples of Water for Analysis to be Made

City Physician Dr. Hand yesterday inspected the four wells in the Burlington yards and the city's wells and took samples of the water contained therein for the purpose of having analysis made and the true contents of the water ascertained. While it is not thought that the wells inspected are unsafe, it is deemed advisable to have the analysis made that any unhealthy condition, which might possibly exist, may be corrected.

In making the inspections and preparing for the analysis Dr. Hand has done something that has probably not been done for several years. At least, it is thought that the water has not been scientifically tested for a number of years.

Harold S. Thomas, located at Coblenz, Germany, has forwarded to The Herald an interesting war souvenir—a genuine German Iron Cross, of the second class. He is also forwarding other interesting war souvenirs. The Herald has received from him some pictures which show him on the streets of Coblenz. In one of the pictures he is shown leaning against a "barrel" of beer. The "barrel" stands twelve feet high and contains 22,800 pounds of beer. "Almost enough," he says "to last a German of Coblenz for a whole week."

The special election held in Scotts Bluff county on Tuesday decided the court house bond issue fight, which was bitterly fought by those interested, in favor of the bonds, and a new court house to cost \$200,000 will now be erected at Gering, the county seat.