

### Pawnee Scouts One of Army's Most Colorful Organizations

Nebraska can lay claim to one of the most colorful organizations in the history of the United States Army: the Pawnee Scouts. Organized by Maj. Frank J. North, of Columbus, it served the Army well in the long struggle against the fierce and warlike Sioux and Cheyennes, hereditary enemies of the Pawnees, and the most formidable barrier to white settlement of the Great Plains, it was stated this week by James C. Olson, superintendent of the State Historical society at Lincoln.

In his weekly press release entitled "Out of Old Nebraska," Olson declared that from 1864 to 1877, when the hostile plains Indians finally were subdued, the Pawnee Scouts "were in the thick of almost every fight against them." They knew the country and the ways of their enemies. They represented the cream of Pawnee manhood, always eager for

a fight and able to withstand hardships and danger beyond anything an ordinary soldier of the plains could or would have endured.

The Scouts were outfitted like regular cavalymen, and wore the uniform of the United States Army with a great deal of pride. They did, however, continue to wear the traditional Pawnee scalp lock, as if saying to their enemies, "come and get it." Also, if there was time, before going into battle they always stripped the saddles off their horses and rode bareback into the fray.

Much of the credit for the success of the Pawnee Scouts must go to their leaders. Maj. Frank North, in command of the Scouts, and his brother Capt. Luther North, were among the great figures of the Old West. Frank North probably was unexcelled in his knowledge of the Indians and

in his ability to get the utmost of them. Luther North, while not the great leader his brother was, had a reputation as one of the best shots in the West and was a good man to have in a "tight place."

The Norths were really a pioneer Nebraska family, having arrived in the territory in 1855, a year after it was organized. They lived in Omaha for awhile, but in about three years moved up the Platte Valley to a point near where Columbus now is located.

After the Pawnee Scouts were mustered out of service, the North brothers started ranching on the Dismal river, in partnership with their old friend Buffalo Bill. The Norths managed the ranch, thus allowing Bill to continue travelling around the world with his Wild West show.

Frank North died in 1885, in the prime of life. Luther North lived until 1935, most of the time in Columbus. His recollections of his early activity and that of his brother (now on file in the library of the State Historical society) provide Nebraska with important documentary material regarding a significant phase of their history.

to go to 300 feet. Out of this necessity developed one of the most colorful figures of old Nebraska: the well-digger. One of the first of these was Joseph Grewe, known throughout the Sandhills, where his exploits became almost legendary, as "Dutch Joe."

For a number of years the pioneers had tried in vain to dig wells on the high tablelands. Some dry holes were sunk as deep as 200 feet and then abandoned. Many of the pioneers came to believe that well water simply couldn't be found away from the streams. In 1884 Dutch Joe proved that it could be.

On his homestead in Cherry county he dug down through the hard, dry Niobrara chalk rock for over 200 feet, and there he struck the abundant underflow of pure cold water. The news of his accomplishment spread all through the Sandhills, and Dutch Joe was in constant demand. During the next seven years he dug over 6,000 feet of wells, with each well ranging from 100 to 260 feet in depth.

Dutch Joe never used well digging machinery. Just a pick and spade, with a bucket at the end of a rope to haul out the dirt and rock. One day in 1894 he went down to the bottom of the first well he had dug to clear out some obstruction. He sent up a bucket of rock. When it got almost to the top of the well, the catch broke and the rock hurtled 200 feet down upon the hapless well-digger, killing him instantly.

Another famous well-digger was Nels Christensen, who for more than 30 years dug wells on the high tablelands between the Niobrara and the Lodge Pole. Some of his wells went down to 300 feet in depth. His pick and shovel now are in the museum of the State Historical Society—that is, what's left of them. It is estimated that in the hands of Mr. Christensen they dug more than two miles of wells, perpendicular measure.

There were numerous others. All of them had great courage, and risked their lives every day they worked. Many of them were smothered to death by cave-ins.

**Adequate Water Supply Settler's Biggest Problem**

One of the most serious problems facing the plains pioneer was that of obtaining an adequate supply of water. Without such a supply, he simply couldn't exist, and much of his time was taken up trying to get it.

The early settlers who located in the valleys along the streams had a relatively easy time of it. They could get water from springs, or from the streams themselves. When wells were dug, an abundant supply of water usually was struck at twenty or thirty feet. This information was reviewed this week by the superintendent of the State Historical society, James C. Olson, in his weekly press release, "Out of Old Nebraska."

Those who went on to the high plains, however, faced an altogether different problem. Water was not to be had there at depths of less than 100 feet, and frequently it was necessary

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**Backwiths Entertain Church Worker**

Mr. and Mrs. Verne Beckwith entertained at dinner for Miss Lena Smith Wednesday. Miss Smith is a member of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian church. She met with all the Presbyterian Sunday-school teachers in the surrounding area and discussed Sunday-school education at the Presbyterian church here.

**Green Newcomer**

EMMET—Mr. and Mrs. Herman Grothe and family visited at the Nelson Hansens, Jr., home and to see the new baby, Jane Ann, Sunday evening.

**Guardian of the Law**

By GEORGE C. CHERNISH

THE commissioner said wearily, "Look Steve, we've got to have action—understand? The crime wave is growing worse by the hour. I know you're busy, but that won't cut ice with the mayor. He's demanded results. Now it's our move."

Police Captain Steve Brant leaned back in his swivel chair. Piles of newspaper clippings and photos of wanted men littered his desk.

"We'll get them." Steve's voice was resolute. "These things take time, you know." Commissioner Drury stiffened. "I agree. But you're taking too long. Far too long."

"It can't be helped. We're not miracle men."

"I don't care what you are. You better do something quick or make room for someone who can."

Steve's retort died on his lips as the commissioner spun on his heel and left. Steve made a mental summary of the case as it stood to date. About a month ago, the two men believed responsible for most, if not all, of the current hold-ups, had



"Young Stark caught 'em. He needed help but he gets the credit."

pulled their first job. Titled the "Black Hoods" by the local press, because of their disguise, the sinister pair had embroiled the entire city. So far, the police hadn't a single clue.

Steve scowled as the phone rang. An irate voice: "This is B. J. Turner, over at the East End Groceries. . . . Say, that new cop you took on sure is a dilly. . . ."

"What's your trouble?"

"That cop's nuts. He takes a notion to pick on me about every other day. . . . I'm getting fed up, captain. . . . The awning in front of my store is a half-inch lower than the by-law allows. . . . He wants to give me a summons. . . ."

Steve suppressed a chuckle. "Don't let him worry you, Turner. I'll have him smarten up."

"You'd better," abruptly, "or I'm seeing the mayor."

When the rookie patrolman came in off the beat that afternoon, Steve rang for him. He came in hesitantly. Steve said sharply, "You'll have to brighten up a bit, Stark. Learn to use your noodle." He explained about the complaints.

"But he broke the law sir!" the rookie insisted.

"Technically—yes," Steve told him. "In the light of everyday common sense—no!"

Steve dismissed the rookie, shook his head dolefully and called it a day.

A week later Commissioner Drury strode into Steve's office. The hold-up last night. The Black Hoods again.

Steve remained silent.

"I've just come in from the mayor's office," Drury went on. "He gives you a week to pick them up." He paused a moment. "And that Stark kid. Fire him now. He's just a nuisance."

"He's Dan Stark's boy." Steve shook his head sadly. Dan Stark had been his best friend. And before he cashed in, with a gangster's bullet in his chest, Steve had promised to see that his kid got a break.

As the commissioner left, Steve made up his mind. Let them do their own dirty work. Good cops weren't made overnight. They all had to learn.

He rang for a prowler car brought from the garage. This might be his last day; his last chance to view the city from the seat of a police cruiser. Drury was ruthless. More than one cop had learned that to his regret.

As he prepared to leave the phone rang. The desk sergeant was on the line, bubbling over with excitement.

"The Black Hoods—young Stark caught 'em! He needed help but he gets the credit—later found their weapons, hoods and all!"

"A marvelous piece of work," the commissioner was saying. "Who tipped you off, Stark?"

The rookie shook his head. "Nobody, sir," proudly. "I arrested them under Section five, Sub-section two of the city by-law."

"Thunderation!" Steve gasped. "Section five!"

The commissioner looked puzzled. "What's that cover?"

"Spittin' on the sidewalk," the rookie said.

**CHAMBERS NEWS**

Mrs. Clarence Kiltz returned Wednesday from Fremont where she had spent several days visiting relatives and where she attended the wedding of a nephew.

Mrs. Andrew Gilbert returned the last of the week from Omaha where she spent 10 days with her daughter, who was in a hospital there.

Clair Grimes and Milton drove to Omaha Sunday and brought Mrs. Grimes home after spending several weeks with her daughters, Mrs. Robert Cocran and Mrs. Loran Coppac.

Mr. and Mrs. George Atkinson and boys were supper guests in the Clyde Burge home Friday.

Mr. and Mrs. Al Liedtke and Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Medcalf were in Norfolk Saturday on business.

L. W. Taggart spent Saturday and Sunday in Sioux City with his mother, Mrs. L. L. Fairbanks.

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