

Helicopter Flyer's Radio Contact with Ship Silenced

CHAMBERS — Chief Aviation Pilot Duane Thorin, 32, a highly-decorated veteran of World War II and the Korean war, officially has been reported missing in action in the Far East.

He disappeared on February 8, while on a rescue mission. He radioed his ship, from which his squadron was flying, telling that he had landed unhurt behind the enemy lines and that he was taking cover. Three weeks later he again established radio contact. Some supplies were dropped to him and a companion. Then began another long silence.

The navy announced last Thursday that Chief Thorin was officially listed as missing in action in the Korean theater.

News of Chief Thorin and his copter having been knocked



—The Frontier Photo & Engraving
CAP Duane Thorin . . . his mother died without knowing his fate.

down by enemy fire was not immediately made public by members of the family at Neligh, Chambers and O'Neill. This was because of the critical illness of the airman's mother, Mrs. Clara Thorin, who died late Saturday.

The 68-year-old woman died without knowing the fate of her illustrious son.

Chief Thorin has been decorated several times for his helicopter duty in the Korean war. One day he pulled more than a hundred Siamese seamen to safety after their ship had run aground in dangerous waters. The rescue was carried out under enemy fire.

Chief Thorin's wife and children reside in San Diego, Calif. This week they received his personal effects and the word that the navy now believes the veteran navy airman is now a prisoner of war.

Senator Kerr Coming Friday

O'Neill will be included in the Nebraska-wide speaking schedule of U.S. Sen. Robert S. Kerr, fiery Southern democratic candidate for presidential nomination.

Senator Kerr and his retinue will arrive here early Friday for a 9 o'clock breakfast at the Town House. The Holt county Kerr-for - President club, headed by John R. Gallagher, of O'Neill, has invited the public to attend the get-acquainted meeting.

"We'd like to have a fine turnout," Mr. Gallagher said. "We're inviting everyone, regardless of party affiliation."

Senator Kerr and party will spend the preceding night at Norfolk and will move from O'Neill to Grand Island for a noon engagement, then to North Platte for the evening.

Kerr's Nebraska chairman is Bernard J. Boyle, prominent Omaha attorney and former O'Neillite.

Chairman Boyle said, "Nebraskans have a treat in store for them when they hear and meet Mr. Kerr. He is probably the most colorful orator here since the days of William Jennings Bryan."

Petitions Out for City Candidates

Petitions were in circulation Monday and Tuesday in behalf of seven candidate for municipal posts.

Signers were sought in behalf of:
J. E. Davis (incumbent), for mayor.
Joe Stutz, for city council, Second ward.
L. M. Merriman (incumbent by appointment), for city council, First ward.
Emmet Crabb, for city council, Second ward.
O. D. French (incumbent), for city clerk.
John C. Watson, for city treasurer.
John Kersenbrock, for mayor.
Municipal and school election will be held in connection with the primary election on April 1.

Mrs. Iwle McKim received a letter from her son, Lyle, that he has landed in Korea. The ship on which he sailed had 800 men and 30 women aboard.

SIDELIGHTS ON THE Calkins Slaying

The impact of the tragic news brought grief and sorrow to thousands of friends of the veteran peace officer. And it produced anger and bitterness against the killer.

Holt Sheriff Leo S. Tomjack frankly admitted that he doubted if the proved killer would be safe in the Holt jail on the third floor of the courthouse.

On every street corner, behind every desk, in school corridors, at each store counter and in every home the Calkins murder was the chief — and virtually only — topic of conversation during the week.

Tom Allan, Omaha World-Herald reporter who headquartered at The Frontier during his four-day stay, said:

"The immediate impression a stranger gets is that Chet Calkins was a well-liked, beloved peace officer; that he was one in a thousand; that he had no enemies and shared none of the contempt and ill-feeling that accompanies 'coppers' in the cities."

Hundreds View Body—
The body of Chief of Police Calkins lay in state at the Biglin Brothers funeral home from 4 p.m. Saturday until the funeral hour on Tuesday.

By 6 p.m. Saturday several hundred persons had visited the bier and had paid their respects, including scores of school children. Chet Calkins had been (Continued on page 4)

Dale Bell, Retired Farmer, Expires

CHAMBERS—Funeral services were held at 2 p.m., Monday, March 10, at the Methodist church in Chambers for Dale Bell, 66, who died at 2 p.m., Thursday, March 6, in the O'Neill hospital. He had been in failing health several years.

Dale Bell was born at Clarinda, Ia., September 7, 1885. His parents were Mr. and Mrs. Willis R. Bell, who were born in Ohio. He came to Chambers with his parents in 1887 and resided on their farm until a few years ago. At that time, due to ill health, he retired and moved into Chambers.

He was a member of the Keller Presbyterian church since childhood, and a member of the IOOF lodge since June 15, 1909.

The late Mr. Bell had suffered for a number of years from a lingering illness caused by Parkinson's disease.

On November 16, 1951, he entered O'Neill hospital, where he remained until his death. The body was taken to Biglin Brothers mortuary.

Rev. L. R. Hansberry officiated in the funeral rite and burial was in the Chambers cemetery. The music was furnished by a mixed quartette composed of Mrs. Kenneth Adams, Mrs. Art Miller, Ernest Farrier and Ray Hoffman. Lela Corcoran was the pianist.

Glen Adams served as usher and Mrs. Glee Grimes and Mrs. Clyde Kiltz had charge of the flowers.

The pallbearers were Kenneth Adams, Charlie Grimes, Louis Taggart, Walt Richards, Alfred Walters, Edgar DeHart, Bill Turner and Earl Medcalf.

Relatives and friends who came from a distance were: Mrs. Hazel B. Miller, of Chicago, Ill.; Mrs. Hattie Richardson and sons and Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Goff, of Ord; Mrs. Hubert Rice, of Loup City.

Mrs. Thomas Curran Dies at Neligh

Mrs. Thomas Curran, 75, died at 9 o'clock Monday evening, March 10, at her home in Neligh, where she had been ill about a year.

Funeral services will be conducted today (Thursday) at St. Patrick's Catholic church here, starting at 9 a.m. Very Rev. Timothy O'Sullivan, church pastor, will officiate and burial will be in Calvary cemetery.

A rosary was offered Wednesday evening at Biglin Brothers. The late Mrs. Curran was a daughter of Patrick and Mary McCormick McDonald. She was born in Illinois. Rose McDonald married Thomas Curran in 1901. Mr. Curran died December 19, 1949.

Survivors include Sisters—Mrs. H. L. Davis, of Plattsmouth, and Mrs. Agnes Bandt, of Phillipsburg, Kans.; brother — Thomas McDonald, of Salem, Ore.

Rev. Wright, Former Pastor, Succumbs

Rev. Virgil C. Wright, a former pastor of the Methodist church in O'Neill between 1938 and 1942, died at his home in Fayette, Ala., on Thursday, March 6.

News of the death was received by Rev. V. R. Bell, present pastor. The late Reverend Wright resided at 715 Winston st., Fayette, Ala.

Calkins Murder Picture Story on Pages 3, 4, 15

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Police Chief Calkins Murdered; Search for Slayer Unavailing



O'Neill's Chief of Police Chet Calkins, 51 . . . for more than a generation a symbol of honesty, fine citizenship, law and order. — The Frontier Engraving

Quotes About Chet

Judge D. R. Mounts, Fifteenth judicial district: "Chief Calkins was a very good, very capable officer. He was an underpaid officer. Chief Calkins was diplomatic and loved. One ex-convict whom Chet had helped apprehend has been in my office since the murder and he spoke a glowing tribute. The man with the record said that Calkins had pointed out where he (the ex-convict) had been doing wrong, set him straight and he had been going straight ever since. I think that's a wonderful tribute to Police Chief Calkins."

State Sen. John Adams, Omaha Negro: "I am so sorry to hear the news. I met Mr. Calkins during a stopover at O'Neill. I was never better treated or more courteously treated than during the few most pleasant moments it took Mr. Calkins to drive me to the rail station."

J. E. Davis, mayor of city of O'Neill: "Chief Calkins was a friendly, courteous, courageous officer. The officials of the city of O'Neill will do everything within their power to bring to justice the guilty murderer."

Julius D. Cronin, veteran O'Neill attorney and former county clerk (Continued on page 5)



Auto "A" simulates the 1951 Kaiser sedan and the patrol car is parked in the position where, witnesses say, Chief Calkins had parked to inspect the Kaiser's trunk. The body of the slain officer was discovered in darkened cruiser car about 2 a.m.—Omaha World-Herald Photo.

Investigators Up Against Stonewall in Search for Street Assassin

Authorities are baffled in the search for the mysterious slayer of O'Neill's Police Chief Chet Calkins, 51, whose bullet-ridden body was discovered about 2 a.m. Friday at the wheel of his cruiser car.

The body was found by Walt Calkins, a brother of the chief, within an hour after the slaying had taken place. Initially, Walt, a plain clothes night policeman, thought his brother had suffered a heart attack. He summoned Dr. L. A. Carter from a nearby office-apartment. In the dimly-lighted front seat of the cruiser car, the doctor felt the pulse of the chief and pronounced him dead.

It wasn't until 30 or 40 minutes later at Biglin Brothers mortuary that it was discovered Chet Calkins, a beloved police officer, had been shot to death at point-blank range.

O'NEILL BURIES ITS POLICE CHIEF Church Unable to Accommodate Throng

"Greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for a friend."
That was the main thought in the scripture read by Mrs. B. J. Hoile, of Norfolk, during funeral rites held Tuesday afternoon, March 11, at the O'Neill Methodist church. Mrs. B. J. Hoile, reader from the First Church of Christ, Scientist, Norfolk, was assisted by Rev. J. LaVerne Jay, O'Neill district Methodist superintendent.

The eulogy was spoken by Reverend Jay, substituting for the regular Methodist church pastor, Rev. V. R. Bell, who had suffered a heart attack.

"He was indispensable to the community, and his kind cannot easily be replaced," the Reverend Jay continued.

"Chet Calkins was a good man, a fearless man. He knew no fear. He was more than a police officer. He was a confidant to many young men who might otherwise have been traveling the wayward path," Reverend Jay said. "Chet Calkins was a symbol of honesty, fine character, good citizenship and law and order. His deeds will live forever in the minds of the people he served."

Reverend Jay said, "The congressional medal of honor is awarded to our military heroes on the field of battle for performing deeds far beyond the call of duty. Certainly this good beloved man," he continued, "is deserving of a comparable honor, because he gave his life for those whom he loved and served."

"Mr. Calkins was an impartial friend of soldiers traveling to and from the wars, of wayfarers, and of school girls who learned to depend upon his protective courtesies and deeds. He delivered many of them to their doorsteps."

"Many first-offenders might have been jailed. But Chief Calkins counseled them, lectured them, and gave them good advice."

"He was a soft-spoken man, even when dealing with hardened criminals."

Borrowing from the scriptures, Reverend Jay said: "He that loseth his life shall find it."
"The criminal death of Chief Calkins is a symptom of war. This is a time," he said, "when we should search our hearts and turn away from selfishness and live the unselfish life exemplified by Chet Calkins."

Reverend Jay closed his eulogy by quoting from the poem by Sam Walter Foss, "Let Me Live in the House by the Side of the Road and Be a Friend to Man."

The Methodist church sanctuary could not begin to accommodate the hundreds of persons who came to pay their last respects. The crowd of more than a thousand persons overflowed into the basement and into the annex building where loudspeakers carried the funeral message.

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Immediately notified were Holt County Sheriff Leo S. Tomjack, Holt Attorney William W. Griffin and State Patrolman Frank Dineen.

The chief's immediate family was advised death had been caused by a heart attack.

Word of the murder was flashed on the state police radio in the early winter morning hours and an extensive manhunt for the killer or killers was begun.

The slayer emptied six bullets from a revolver into the veteran police officer's heavily-clothed body. At least five of the shots pierced the general area of the upper right chest but one entered the heart. There were gun powder burns on Calkins' gloved left hand where one bullet had ripped the thumb and had pierced the web between the thumb and index finger. There were also left arm powder burns. This suggested to authorities the killer was either seated beside Calkins in the cruiser car or was entering the car. In any event, the shots were fired point-blank on a slight downward angle.

No one residing in the area reported hearing the quick, successive cracks of the pistol, further establishing close-range sadistic triggering. The sound may have been muffled by the interior of the car and the closed doors and windows.

When Walt Calkins found the body the chief was slumped over the steering wheel. His right hand clutched a lighted flashlight. The ignition, spotlight and headlight switches on the car were turned off. Later investigation revealed a splash of blood on the steering wheel.

The chief of police, who had held the job for 17 years, made his customary rounds of the city earlier in the evening and the only unusual feature was the record-breaking crowd of persons at the class B district basketball tournament.

He watched his son, Donald, 18, play with the O'Neill high Eagles against the Neligh Warriors in the semifinals competition. Hundreds of out-of-towners were in the city, principally from Plainview, Neligh and Broken Bow—enthusiasts from these towns following their respective basketball teams.

Calkins mingled with many at the game. He customarily put in a brief appearance at most public events.

By midnight the town was about emptied of visitors. He took some mail from several hotels to the North Western railroad station to be placed aboard the eastbound train due shortly after midnight. Calkins did not wait for the train, running a little late, and left the station at 11:55 p.m.

About 12:30 a.m. he met Walt and they investigated a small cluster of persons drinking in the rear of a business establishment. After that the two officers visited briefly and separated. Chet gave no indication he was eyeing suspicious characters or that there was anything but orderliness.

Between 1 and 1:15 a.m. at least five persons said they saw Calkins talking with a man and inspecting what was presumed to be about a 1951 model Kaiser sedan, blue or green. Stories of (Continued on page 8)