

PrairieLand Talk

A Farmer's Problems

By ROMAIN SAUNDERS, 4110 South 51st St., Lincoln 6, Nebr.

City dwellers and public officials manifest concern over the "farmers' problems." The problems of life are on the trail of all from the dish washer at the M & M to the editor at his desk down here on south Fourth street. The problem of the farmer down there in the Nebraska corn and wheat country is where next to go for a little fun. He and family take it all in when they go to town, have dollar dinners at the public eating places, load up the car with good grub purchased at the great food markets, a goodly slice off of the hind quarter of beef and a gallon or two of milk—not a milk cow on the farm any more. But go back to the '80's and '90's Farmers got 11 cents a bushel for potatoes, five cents a bushel for corn at one time, three cents a dozen for eggs.

His name was Smith. At his place twenty miles south of O'Neill an afternoon 70 years ago he pitched up a hay-rack load of hay. Next morning at day break he hitched four horses to that load of hay and started for O'Neill, pulling up at the De-Yarman livery and feed barn a little before noon, unloaded that hay for which he received five dollars, fed his horses, stepped over to Bentley's store and got a nickles worth of crackers and a dime's worth of cheese; went back to his wagon to sit down on the hay rack to eat his lunch of crackers and cheese. Then to the grocery store to buy what the remainder of that two bucks would get to take home to the family. Farmers' problems: Smith and others like him had a way of their own in dealing with life's problems.



Romaine Saunders

The sunlight shines from the fair blue sky in the eastern heavens this calm July morning. I withdraw from the concrete walks where hurrying feet are on the go and step away from paved streets where traffic rushes by. Alone for a time sitting by a stately tree and feet at rest on the velvet green where nature spreads its robe of unspoiled sod. Yes, alone for a time amid the scenes of nature I drink again from the fountain of outdoor beauty. And was there not one once who withdrew from the human throngs along the shores of the Sea of Galilee and found rest and quiet meditation up there in the Judean hills. As I rest this quiet morning where a touch of green-robed nature remains that human hands have not laid waste and look out upon the scene where lordly trees stand robed with leaves of silken freshness, we sense the pleasure of withdrawing for a brief hour from life's daily activities and sit down where none can molest or make afraid.

Five, whose names begin with a G are still a part of the active business life of O'Neill, and their

family ties run back to the beginning of things in the old town—Gillespie, Gallagher, Gatz, Golden, Grady. Another has recently dropped out of the business circles and turned his back on it all, Mr. Gilligan. His father, the late Dr. Gilligan, came to O'Neill in the long ago and held forth in the Holt county bank building that stands at Fourth and Douglas streets and that had been the scene of three bank busts.

Functionaries down at the Statehouse are to tell visitors when they will be permitted to tour our twenty million dollar state capital building. Does that magnificent structure belong to the few guys elected to office or to the citizens of Nebraska?

We understand that up at Valentine a building is being built, the property of the Cherry county historical society, the building to cost \$12,000 and to be headquarters of the society and the repository of materials of historic interest. Cherry county has had a somewhat thrilling past and no doubt the society will give it their devoted attention. Perhaps no county in this state has had an equal to that of Holt in stirring events but as yet I know of no move to organize a Holt county historical society. As a starter, may PrairieLand Talker suggest (as a group, to put a historical society over) Frank Brady and Mrs. Dr. McKee of Atkinson, Harry White and Link Sageser down in the Amelia country, Lloyd Gillespie and Mrs. J. W. Rooney of O'Neill, Walter O'Malley and Mrs. Hugh O'Neill of the north country, and one at least down at Chambers, at Ewing, Inman and Page.

She may be about fourteen; she is an animal lover. Her dog was gone. Then an appeal was made to the Humane Society. Towser was not among the society's canine collection. But they offered her a dog soon to become a mother. Taken to her home the new dog gave birth to nine pups. Then the family dog was located under the garage. Now eleven dogs are there to feed where there had been but one.

The eight grain elevators in the Capital City were about swamped as the loads of wheat rolled in from the fields in Lancaster county. Good grain, lots of it, and more than a dollar a bushel. Wheat growers reaped a harvest of filthy lucre as well as the stuff that goes into our loaves of bread. While the wheat harvest goes on in sight of the towering Statehouse figure of a sower I take it that Ray Bly and others down in grass-robed Swan precinct are sitting on their mowers cutting the season's hay crop. The wheat field must first be plowed and planted before there is a harvest. The prairieLand grass grows without the touch of a human hand but for human hands to pile in stacks of hay that which the unplowed prairies give them.

Editorial

An Impressive Council

"You cannot judge a city council by what it does not do . . ."

A Kansas daily newspaper said it just recently in its editorial columns and it was meant, not so much for the ears of the council as it was for the citizens that voted the men in.

The column was quite ironic and reflected the spirit of mistaken citizens although it was written as though it came from one of the councilmen.

The time has come to take a look at the record of O'Neill's present council—it's about as impressive, we believe, as any in the state.

But how do you pin a rose on men who would be embarrassed if you told them you thought they were doing one of the finest "bang up jobs" you had ever seen?

What can you say to a group of men who are far-sighted enough to realize that this city needs paying, that it needs new water facilities, that it needs a storm sewer—even if they knew they were to get an adverse reaction from friends? What do you say to men, who would be embarrassed if you thanked them openly, for keeping an "eye" on the future?

You can quote this newspaper on this statement: You can judge this council by what they do, for the way they handle their open meetings, for the way they listen to objectors, and for their decisions.

Good Old Days

(Dakota County Star)

We strongly suspect that those "good old days" that everybody talks about weren't as thrilling as the time lapse has made them.

We have things much better today—high taxes and all—than our predecessors. And in case you don't agree, the Retail Merchants Association of Nebraska this week came up with some 1872 office rules that were found recently in an old file in Boston.

If you were working for a large firm back in 1872, chances are your employer would hand you a set of rules resembling the following:

- Office employees each day will fill lamps, clean chimneys and trim wicks. Wash windows once a week.
- Each clerk will bring in a bucket of water and a scuttle of coal for the day's business.
- Make your pens carefully. You may whittle nibs to your individual taste.
- Men employees will be given an evening off each week for courting purposes or two evenings a week if they go regularly to church.
- After 13 hours of labor in the office, the employee should spend the remaining time reading the Bible or other good books.
- Every employee should lay aside for his benefit during his declining years so that he will not become a burden on society.
- Any employee who smokes Spanish cigars, uses liquor in any form, or frequents pool and public halls or gets shaved in a barber shop, will give good reason to suspect his worth, intentions, integrity and honesty.
- The employee who has performed his labor faithfully and without fault for five years, will be given an increase of five cents per day, providing profits from business permit it.

Good Investment

One of the least obvious attractions, (at least to those of us who live in O'Neill), in the city is the swimming pool.

To give you an idea of what this does to a city, consider this: Five hundred children took advantage of the swimming lessons at the pool this year.

Over 50 percent of the children are from out of town.

This means that their parents must come to O'Neill with the children. The parents are an important part of the trade territory. The swimming pool is one of the best investments this community ever made.

Just A Beginning

Perhaps you noted in the newspapers that the betting handle at Ak-Sar-Ben in Omaha established a new record despite a two per cent tax levied against pari-mutuels this year.

In view of this fact, you can mark our word that a bill will be introduced in the Nebraska Legislature in 1961 to increase the tax on racing.

It's much like the sales tax has been in other states . . . two per cent is just the beginning.

So far Nebraska has been able to elude that sales tax which has mushroomed in other states.

We Are Not Alone

It appears that O'Neill is not the only community in the area suffering from a water shortage.

Lynch, too, has its troubles. The folks up that way have recently improved their main street, park and are ready to improve their city hall. They have now been asked to conserve water where possible.

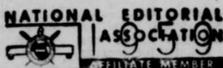
In O'Neill, drillers will be busy for a week or more. Their first attempts at drilling the well just south of town resulted in a minor cave-in, and shoring material had to be sent for. The cave-in was not serious, but will result in a slight delay.



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Frontiers Ago

50 YEARS AGO

Candidates for nominations for county offices have filed their petitions and requests to have their names put on the ballot for the primary election, August 17. . . . Work on the Naylor building was resumed after a delay waiting for cement for the foundation. . . . Several Iowa parties were here looking over Holt county real estate with a view to investing. . . . Married: Clarence Campbell and Miss Nellie Skirving. . . . Agricultural Hall undergoing a thorough overhauling and was remodelled preparatory to the great exhibit being installed at the coming State Fair. . . . A ceremony of laying the corner stone for the new St. Patrick's church was planned for August 4, 1909. . . . R. W. McGinnis of Lincoln was looking after his creamery interests here. . . . A harvest picnic was planned at the M. A. Summers place sixteen miles east of O'Neill. County Judge Malone was invited to make an address. Death: G. A. McCutchan of Spencer.

20 YEARS AGO

Sister Mary Catherine of St. Mary's Academy in O'Neill celebrated the Golden Jubilee of her

consecration to God in religious life. . . . Ted Sirek, son of Mrs. Helen Sirek, O'Neill won third place at the Archery contests sponsored by the State Recreation Department held at Fremont. . . . Mrs. Idilla Brumtsaugh of Inman celebrated her 81st birthday. . . . Joe Schollmeyer was in the city and said that he and Mrs. Schollmeyer, accompanied by their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Elvin Axbury of Gross plan to leave for a trip to the northwestern coast for a trip to the northwestern coast for a month. . . . John McBride of Superior, Wisc., formerly of O'Neill, was in the city visiting some of his old friends. . . . Mrs. Wilhelma Stein celebrated her 83rd birthday. . . . The recreation center again plan Day Camps. . . . Mary A. Utley is slowly recovering from a serious operation in a hospital in Stuart. . . . H. J. Hammond, P. C. Donohue, M. H. Horiskey and William Martin returned from their Minnesota fishing trip.

10 YEARS AGO

The city of O'Neill once more was on top in the struggle with its inadequate sewerage disposal facilities. . . . The descendants of the late Pulaski and Elizabeth Reed held their 14th annual reunion at the Page park. . . . A half dozen dogs were reported to have died in a few days in west O'Neill. At least one of the dogs showed symptoms of strychnine poisoning. . . . Shirley DeGeorge, 3-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John DeGeorge, Omaha, broke her left leg when she fell from a slide at Ford's Park, while visiting Mrs. DeGeorge's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lyle McKim. . . . Thirty-seven Holt, Boyd, Boone and Wayne

county public school teachers planned an educational six state tour of the West. Elja McCullough was the tour manager. . . . Married: Miss Isabelle Walnofer, Stuart and Albert Ralph Tooker, Atkinson at Atkinson. Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Sullivan were feted at a surprise party in honor of their 25th wedding anniversary. . . . Deaths: Anson Fauquier 51, O'Neill, he lived on a farm near Chambers for 36 years.

FIVE YEARS AGO

The North Nebraska Builders headed by Harry E. Ressel and Francis Gilg began clearing an acreage on O'Neill's north side which 34 additional residential building lots have been platted. . . . O'Neill Rockets handed the Bassett town team a 5-4 defeat on the Bassett diamond. . . . Sebastian Pongratz, 82, brother of George Pongratz, Emmet, arrived to visit the Pongratz families in Holt county. It was the first reunion of Sebastian and George in 60 years. . . . Vaclav Uhlík, former Czechoslovakian army ordinance captain, and his young wife and their two small children were O'Neill visitors. . . . O'Neill stores were warned by federal officials of counterfeit \$20 bills now being circulated in Nebraska. . . . Married: Miss Myra Mitchell, Bassett and Richard Shaw, Atkinson, at Bassett. . . . This week's Frontier featured a story on "Curley" Washack and his untold hours of work on uncounted items of costume jewelry and ornaments. . . . Deaths: William J. Harris, 88, Ewing, a barber for 70 years; John Peter Protivinsky, 73, retired O'Neill grocery merchant.

CAPITOL NEWS

By Melvin Paul
Statehouse Correspondent
The Nebraska Press Association

LINCOLN—There is \$896.9 million more worth of property on the tax rolls in Nebraska this year. Unofficial tabulations of reports from counties to the State Tax Commissioner show tangible property—against which the state levy is applied—is up \$117.3 million about a 5 per cent boost. Intangible A property, which is cash and accounts receivable, climbed \$144 million, about 35 per cent. For intangible B property—mainly stocks and bonds—the increase is \$335.4 million, or about 130 per cent. Unofficial estimates are that the higher values will result in \$23 million more revenue for the state, counties, cities, school districts and other governmental subdivisions. The figures, plus those for railroads, will be taken by the State Board of Equalization on or before August 2 to determine the state property tax levy for 1959.

Observers credit Sen. Terry Carpenter of Scottsbluff and the Legislature for producing the big boosts. Carpenter conducted a one-man tax violation investigation and then came up with remedial laws which were passed by the Legislature. The total increase is much more than even Carpenter had speculated. He had guessed at \$300 million more in value. None of the figures include values of the railroads operating in Nebraska. The State Board of Equalization, in a bizarre decision, increased worth of the railroads for tax purposes by \$2.5 million.

There are five members of the board, three Republicans and two Democrats. The hike for the railroads carried 2-1, with Gov. Ralph B. Brooks, chairman, and State Treasurer Richard Larsen, member, voting for the boost and Auditor Ray Johnson against. Brooks and Larsen are the Democratic members of the board. State Tax Commissioner Fred Herrington disqualified himself from voting. The fifth member was not at the meeting. The action, which came as a surprise after a cut of \$26 million had been proposed for the railroads, produced the strongest scrapping in the statehouse in recent years between members of opposing political parties. Brooks and Herrington shouted at each other during the heated debate. Herrington said it seemed "incredible" that politics had entered into the proceedings of the board. Brooks denied his decision was political. He said it would have been the same regardless of which party he represented. Herrington said his decision was also not based on politics. He added he had always felt the tax commissioner should not vote after having prepared a formula for presentation to the board, which is used to value the railroads. The governor argued that "railroads are flying high" with the stocks "at the highest point in history."

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New Party Chief

The Republican party has named a new state chairman, Charles Thoné of Lincoln, 35-year-old attorney and former administrative assistant to Sen. Roman Hruska.

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