

Prairieland Talk

One of O'Neill's Tragedies

By ROMAINE SAUNDERS, 4119 South 51st St., Lincoln 6, Neb.

From Middlebranch to the Keya Paha, from Dorsey to Dustin, from Star to Stuart, from the Niobrara to the Elkhorn and beyond. A land where young hearts have throbbled to the tender emotions of romance, where men and women sacrificed and did the deeds of pioneer heroes, where Vigilanters committed crime in a pretense of punishing crime, a land where tragedy spread its dark shadow at times. It was just an oilcloth mask that hid the face of him who had a leading part in one of those tragedies. Barret Scott with Mrs. Scott and their little daughter and a young man then making his home with them, were on their way to their home at the southwest limits of O'Neill, coming home from a visit to Scott's former home in the Scottville community. They had got as far as a point called Parker where stood a few sod walls of a one time settlement some 12 miles north-east of town. The man behind the mask stepped out from behind those sod walls, shot and killed the horses drawing the Scott buggy. Others of the group behind those sod walls came to life and got into action, bound Scott's arms and legs, loaded him in a wagon and drove away.



Romaine Saunders

One of the group paid Mrs. Scott the courtesy by taking her and her daughter and young friend within reach of the home of the nearest settler, then drove away to join those who had taken Scott. The three fugitives reached the house of that settler, told what had been done, and that gracious pioneer prairie dweller brought them into O'Neill. Mrs. Scott went at once to the home of J. H. Meredith at First and Everett streets and told the Merediths the story. Mr. Meredith at once got into action and a group of men were soon on hand, got into buggies and started out to see what they could learn. It was the month of December in 1894. Knowing something of the way the Vigilanters did their stuff, the group of fellows from town, Clyde King at that time editor of *The Frontier*, being with them, drove north to the Eagle, followed the creek to the Niobrara river. Arriving at the Whiting bridge they found a rope hanging from the bridge, so concluded Scott had been hung there; the rope cut and his body fell into the icy waters of the Niobrara river. For some days the waters were fished over where not frozen to thick ice. One of the searchers at an opening in

the ice hooked something, pulled it up; it was the lifeless body they had been hunting for. The dead man was laid out on the bank by the river and the group of searchers sat down by it and wept. Where that dead man lay was on the Boyd county side of the Niobrara, so Boyd county officials were notified and came to go through the legal procedure in such cases. Scott was brought to O'Neill and his body prepared for burial at Biglin's, many going there to view it.

Clyde King wrote a beautiful editorial about "Poor Scotty", which was copied by the *Omaha Daily Bee* and other papers. The editorial appeared in *The Frontier* the first week in January, 1895. Maybe *The Frontier* editor of today will reprint it.

Barret Scott had served as county treasurer of Holt county. It was a period of hard times in the 1890's. From time to time a hard-pressed citizen would come to Scott with a hard luck story and ask for help. Scott used up the county's funds to help the needy, did in a small way what the late President Roosevelt did in a big way and was considered a great guy for so doing, while Scottie was hung for doing likewise.

His bondsmen made good part of the loss to the county. One or two of the group who killed Scott were tried in court on a charge of murder but not convicted. So closed another tragic scene. Scott had the open helpful hand and generous heart of the pioneers who settled on the prairies of north Nebraska. His father had warned when the Republicans were considering Barret as their candidate for county treasurer that his son might use county funds to help the needy if elected county treasurer. The writer and Scott were with a group of fellows on horseback out in the Dry Creek country on a wolf hunt one Thanksgiving day. He and I became separated from the others and we ran onto a prairie wolf, took off after it until the wolf stopped, sat down on its hind quarters, looked at us as much as to say, "Here I am, what do you want of me?" Scott's reaction was the same as mine. Let that creature of the wild go—it has as much right to live as we have. But the other riders found us with our wolf, came their horses on the run, dismounted and killed the beast of the prairie.

Frontiers Ago

50 YEARS AGO

Sixty horse power Thomas Flyer auto offered for sale or trade by William Boedicker. Mrs. Fitzsimons left Sunday for Chicago to select spring stock of millinery. . . . Walter Martin dies February 15 in Omaha hospital following long illness. . . . City Council decides to use five electric street lights at a cost of \$40.50 per month.

25 YEARS AGO

County roads completely blocked by huge drifts of snow. . . . Martin Wright of Ewing dies February 11 following heart attack. . . . Ashes start fire at hotel but quickly extinguished without damage. . . . George Geary, 82, Innan pioneer, dies of old age complications. . . . Temperatures reported at 23 below for several nights. . . . Corn feed beef offered at 13 cents per pound the hind quarter at Barnhart's Market.

16 YEARS AGO

Dr. H. D. Gildersleeve is new Scoutmaster. . . . City parking meters arrive but group seeks an injunction. . . . Simon W. Schaaf, 58, dies in Atkinson. . . . Hogs and cattle runs light at O'Neill. . . . All teachers in the Inman public schools reject contracts for next school year. . . . Dr. and Mrs. F. J. Fisher return from California trip and visit with new grandson.

5 YEARS AGO

Mary Claire and James Gilg win speech laurels in Holt County 4-H speech contest. . . . Services held for M. H. Horiskey, 73, retired railway postal clerk who died February 11. . . . Dorothy Louise Donohoe of O'Neill weds Buddy Eugene Floyd of Sidney, Ia. . . . Pfc. Marian G. Kraeger of Amelia is transferred to Munich, Germany to attend officers school. . . . Leonard P. Engler of Stuart and John L. Bohn of O'Neill get U. of N. degrees.

The Long Ago At Chambers

50 YEARS AGO

Fresh oysters advertised at 50 cents per quart. . . . J. Norwood Mill is up for sale or exchange at Niobrara. . . . C. E. Martin of the Southfork area caught eight wolves this week. . . . Fred Jensen will hold a public sale of 7 horses, 47 cattle, 11 hogs and machinery at his place 11 miles southwest of Chambers.

25 YEARS AGO

Zero weather and blocked roads continue. . . . Fuel shortage becomes a serious matter to Chambers and surrounding territory. . . . Five year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Pete Martensen succumbs to burns. . . . Neigh closes schools, library and business places in effort to avert coal famine. . . . Chambers school closes. . . . Snow plow built by group of local men in attempt to open streets.

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Orchard News

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Jack Classen New Fire Chief At Orchard

Members of the Orchard Fire department, retired members and the rural fire district officials held an oyster feed and meeting at the Legion club Monday night. Jack Classen was elected chief; Clifford Erb, assistant chief; Floyd Menning, president; Byron Oltjenbruns, vice president, and Lyle Schlessener, secretary treasurer. Chief Bob Adam reported that fire helmets and a stretcher have arrived and are available for use.

Library board met Friday morning in the town hall. The following officers were elected for another year: Mrs. Carol Clifton, president; Mrs. E. E. Bruce, vice president, and Mrs. Bernard Kellogg, secretary and treasurer.

The Mothers' March of Dimes netted \$155.37 for the polio fund. Mrs. Raymond Stevens was in charge and she was assisted by Mmes. Homer Barton, Kenneth Bruce, Hoyt Sirek, Ed Bright, Lon Sawyer, Lester Raff, Floyd Steinberg, Gerald Berney, Jack Hildreth and Glen Robertson.

Highlanders extension met recently with Mrs. Lawrence Hauf with 16 members present. Mrs. Anton Pruss jr. and Mrs. Ferd Kihne gave the lesson on "Arthritis". Mrs. Harry Johnson assisted Mrs. Hauf.

Mrs. Wayne Holliday has opened a beauty shop in the basement of her home. It is known as **Fonda's Beauty Shop**. On February 3 Mr. and Mrs. Harry Butterfield were honored on their 35th wedding anniversary at the Spare Time cafe in O'Neill with a dinner. Those present were Mr. and Mrs. Donald Volquardson and Mark, Mrs. Lily Pospelil of Orchard and Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Grimm and Mrs. Lizzie Grimm of Ewing.

The Bloodmobile will be in Orchard April 5. Jane Schwager, a graduate of Orchard high school and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Schwager, has completed a beauty course at the Beauty school in Kearney. Miss Schwager is at present visiting her parents. Bridgetts Bridge club met with Mrs. H. O. Hill Tuesday evening. Mrs. Tony Pruss was a guest. Mrs. Lyle Schlessener and Mrs. Pruss won prizes. The next meeting will be with Mrs. Lyle Schlessener February 21.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Sparrow visited Sunday in the home of their daughter, Mrs. Wesley Johnson and family at Columbus. Mr. and Mrs. Marion Everhart and family of Blair brought her mother, Mrs. J. W. Edwards, home Saturday and spent the weekend with them.

Keith L. Curtis jr. is serving in the Navy and is stationed at San Diego, Calif., Naval base.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Mitchell attended the Wayne State-Nebraska Wesleyan basketball game at Wayne Friday evening.

The Heart campaign chairman is Mrs. Marvin Haswell. The quota for Antelope county is \$1,350. Mrs. Elmer Carpenter of Neigh is the rural chairman. Township chairmen are: Garfield, Wayne Lautenschla-

ger, Franchtown, Mrs. Lyle Switzer, Royal, C. H. Rouse; Verdigre, Everett Johnston, and Sherman, David Wilhals. Couples pitch club met Sunday evening with Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Nelson. Mr. and Mrs. Leon Mitchell, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Maple and Mrs. Richard Knapp. The next meeting will be with Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Lautenschlager February 26.

Thelma Drayton of Alvo is spending sometime with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Drayton. Gertrude Gribble and Mrs. George Johnson were Creighton visitors Friday.

Wayne Dempster and daughter, Betty, of Laurel were Sunday visitors in the Oliver Dempster home.

Mrs. Katherine Kennedy of Ainsworth was a guest in the Henry Drayton home Wednesday. Mrs. George Hamilton is visiting in the home of her son, Dwain Hamilton of Omaha. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Menning, Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Holliday and Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Menning and family visited in the Charles Watson home Sunday at Wayne. Mr. and Mrs. Glen Austin and son, Mark of Lawton, Ia., were Sunday guests in the Loren Wilson home. Mrs. Rustin and Mrs. Wilson were college roommates.

The Rev. and Mrs. Jesse Withee were Friday callers at the James Withee home. Lester Withee went to Sioux City Thursday to be with Mrs. Withee for several days. She is a patient at St. Joseph's hospital. Walter League of the St. Peters Lutheran church met Sunday evening at the church parlors. The Rev. Walter Seefeld led a group Bible study. Plans were made for "family night". The League plans to be host to a joint meeting of neighboring leagues February 26.

Mr. and Mrs. Waldo Davis and Marie of Ewing, Mrs. Louise Beal and Mr. and Mrs. Homer Barton and Linda of Orchard were Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Austin of Plainview to help celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary.

Kenneth Davis from Oregon is visiting his mother, Mrs. Gertrude Davis. Mr. and Mrs. Bob Utterback of Bloomfield visited in the John Stelling home Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Tibbs and Mr. and Mrs. Wendell Quigley of Norfolk visited Sunday in the John Stelling home. John Holliday returned home from the Plainview hospital Sunday, where he had been a patient for a week.

Mr. and Mrs. Glen McNabb visited in the home of Mrs. McNabb's sister, Mrs. John Stelling. Mr. and Mrs. Don Drager, Gary and Carol of Lincoln spent the weekend with Mrs. Drager's parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Stelling.

Mr. and Mrs. Homer Barton, Linda and Mrs. Louise Beal and Jan Withee were Norfolk visitors Friday.

Mrs. Blanche Fletcher is confined to her home with influenza. **Sunset Chapter 300 Order of the Eastern Star** met at the Masonic Temple Wednesday afternoon and evening with Mrs. Katherine Kennedy of Ainsworth as a special guest, district supervisor of District 16. Mrs. Henry Drayton, worthy matron, served a luncheon in her home at noon honoring Mrs. Kennedy and all the officers. Mrs. Drayton presented the supervisor with a corsage. A school of in-

Do You Know Your Neighbor?

"Know Your Neighbor" is not a contest. There are no prizes given for correctly identifying the person pictured. The only reward is the satisfaction of knowing your neighbor.



Last week's Guess Who was Bob Devo of Devo's Rexall Drug.



Here's an O'Neill businessman you've met.

Let's Welcome Newcomers

Most residents in our fair city will agree that O'Neill is a friendly place filled with hospitable folks, welcoming church members and cooperative business personnel.

However, it is good once in a while to look at a city through the eyes of newcomers. New people in a town, any town, are lonely, eager to make friends and to do their share in the community. This offers an opportunity that should not be overlooked as newcomers have an enthusiasm that is needed in community-building projects, drives and improvements. Churches and project clubs are quick to take advantage of this enthusiasm but often times the personal touch of friendship is slow in being offered. People are hesitant about making new friends, not because they are suspicious of strangers, but simply because most folks are too busy to take the time to call on their new neighbors. Naturally, after a year or so, a person no longer feels new as the moving adjustment is made and one feels a part of a community.

Isn't it possible, though, to help strangers in our city to feel at home a little bit sooner? Help them to feel happy that they have chosen O'Neill for their home—a place where they might build, do all their shopping, consider new enterprises and think of living here forever? What does the city of O'Neill do to welcome strangers here? Why not have a city hostess to call at the home of the newcomers and to welcome them with gifts and information concerning shopping facilities, churches, schools, location of city water department, council members for building permits, contractors, etc. A city hostess could form a newcomers club which might be sponsored by an auxiliary or extension club. What better way for new folks to meet and make friends. Definitely, an official welcomer would be an asset to our community. Without new residents, our city would die. Let's make people want to come here to live.

Why Is Government So Costly? (Lifelines)

During the present fiscal year our federal government is spending money at a rate that is equivalent to approximately \$2000 for every family in America. Government is not productive. It has nowhere to get money except from the people. Since this money is ours, or was ours, until we had to turn it over to the tax collector, we have a right to ask, "Why does government cost so much?" Is it because of the heavy expenditures for national defense? That is the impression the spenders of our money like to give us. But it is not true that defense spending is responsible for the growth of the public debt in recent years. In fact, current expenditures for defense amount to nine dollars per family less than they did in 1954. But non-defense spending is \$300 more per family than it was then.

Our government has become so costly because it has grown so big. We are supposed to have a federal budget, but the budget actually has expanded to such an extent that it is literally out of the control of the elected representatives of the people. Every year a budget is put together by thousands of government employees in hundreds of different agencies.

It is, literally true that nearly every federal agency has a group of employees who spend all their time drawing up the agency's next annual budget.

Our federal government has entered many fields of activity where it has no constitutional right to be and is spending a vast amount of money for purposes never contemplated nor approved by the American people generally. For instance, our federal government is not only the largest lender and the largest borrower in the country, but the federal government is also the largest insurer. The government is the largest producer of electric power in the nation. The federal government is the largest landlord and the largest holder of grazing grass. It is the largest holder of timberland and the largest owner of grain. The federal government is the largest ship owner and the largest truck operator.

Of course, our Federal Government is the country's biggest employer. To keep all its employees busy, our Government owns several hundred substantial corporations and nineteen thousand small businesses of all kinds, plus a large number of service organizations. These corporations lose money every year at a rate amounting to \$250 for every family in America.

But they do not go out of business simply because they are losing money, as any private company eventually would have to do. They simply chalk up a deficit and keep right on operating with borrowed money which becomes a part of the debt that you owe, and every American owes. The principle of economy in government is one of the most important that we could consider. This great nation of ours was built on the solid virtues of hard work, thrift, and frugality. These virtues are just as important today as they were in the early days of our nation.

But they are virtues that have largely been abandoned. Our Government has been spending the taxpayers' money recklessly and extravagantly for too long. As a result, we now have the highest debt in our history. Who is to blame? Shall we point a finger at a President or a Congress, or shall we be honest and put the responsibility where it really belongs, on each one of us, on our own apathy, on our own selfishness in not wanting to take time out from our own pursuit of material things to really be responsible citizens of the greatest system of freedom in the history of man?

The hard truth is that such practices as these, if a halt is not called, eventually will destroy the economy of the United States. And we can be quite sure that once our economy is destroyed, our whole way of life will go right down. The Mistaken will have won their greatest victory, and without a shot being fired. It is for these reasons that the principle of economy in government should be of the greatest concern to every American citizen. Simple honesty and basic morality call for sound economy in government; for waste is a sin and extravagance with the people's money is evil.

Uncle Sam was never meant to be Uncle Squanderer. To save our country, we are going to have to get back to bedrock principles and to those sound virtues of thrift and frugality from which we should never have departed.

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