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LOOKING BACKWARD THIRTY-FIVE YEARS

Indian Legend of King Hill and Queen Hill; Patterson's Turkey Kidnapped Hallowe'en Night.

ROCK BLUFFS IN PIONEER DAYS

James A. Walker Barricaded from His Store; Old Horse Put in School House Dressed to Resemble Teacher.

(By Basil S. Ramsey)

Thirty-five years ago Rock Bluffs was one of the most flourishing towns in Nebraska. It had a large trade from the surrounding country, including no small amount from the Iowa side of the river.

The town is somewhat peculiarly situated. In front, the Missouri river flows from the north southwesterly and then southeasterly, thus forming a kind of circle or bend. To the north a hill towers high up called "Queen Hill" and to the south another called "King Hill," from the top of either the other can be seen. Indian tradition tells why these high hills or bluffs were so named.

Many, very many years ago it is said the hills and dales, with their abundance of trees and water and rich herbage and grasses, were a camping ground for Indians of different tribes. And it is said the hills yet contain many relics of the aborigines of the long ago. Tradition claims that a noted Sachem—an Indian king passed into the happy hunting grounds while his tribe was encamped at this place. He had been a mighty warrior and hunter in his day—had led a most strenuous life—in the chase after buffalo, deer and scalps. On the occasion of his funeral, thousands of warriors, young braves and dusky maidens attended the sad obsequies. And on top of "King Hill," with face turned northward, head toward illimitable space and feet toward the center of gravity, that is, in perpendicularity the old Indian king was planted. Thus, he traditional origin of "King Hill."

The old king's consort—the Indian queen also sickened and died. She had lived during many, very many moons. In fact she had outlived all the old king's other squaw-wives and she too deserved a regal place of final rest. So just north of Rock Bluffs, on "Queen Hill" with her face turned toward her husband on "King Hill," and after the manner of her husband's sepulture, the old Indian queen was placed in final repose. And thus we have the traditional origin of "Queen Hill."

But we started to write some reminiscences of Rock Bluffs more than a third of a century ago. Thirty-five years ago Rock Bluffs had prosperous, prominent business men and firms. Nearly every line of business was represented, including trades and professions, with one exception among the latter. There were no lawyers, which fact many erroneously supposed to be the cause of so much quietude and christian fellowship among the people generally.

Among the leading business men were Patterson & Walker and Joseph Shera, general merchandise, including grain, the latter being loaded into steamboats at the foot of "King Hill" and shipped to southern markets. Of these three business men, James A. Walker alone survives and now lives upon his large and beautiful farm near Murray. Henry Craig and Robert Fitch were leading carpenters and contractors; Mathias Spohn operated a grist and sawmill; Henry Clopper made and supplied boots and shoes; Azro Smith, horticulturalist and gardener, supplied flowers and vegetables; William W. Graves led in the manufacture of brick and a leading contractor in brickwork. His widow, Grandma Graves, now nearly ninety years old, still resides in the old home at Rock Bluffs.

Our own "Bill" Jones and his most estimable family were then citizens of Rock Bluffs. "Bill" dealt extensively in horses and then as now, with the exception of his much better-half and children, was more devotedly attached

to the horse than to any other of God's good and useful creatures.

The leading physicians and surgeons were the late Dr. F. B. Reed, of Peru, Neb., and the late W. E. Latta, of Lincoln, Neb.

Nearly every christian denomination was represented, the leading church organizations being the Presbyterian, the Christian and Methodist.

Rock Bluffs contained a large Grange organization and a number of its members made purchases direct of that famous firm—Montgomery Ward & Co., of Chicago.

At that time Rock Bluffs was one of the most progressive towns in the state in educational matters. For many years before, its public school, under the principalship of Prof. Joseph D. Patterson, had ranked among the best in the state. In 1870 he left the public school and founded Naomi Institute, which, under his principalship, had no superior in the state. The writer succeeded Prof. Patterson as teacher of the public school. Both schools were largely patronized and of the students a number became prominent. Among them, the late A. J. Graves, became a prominent attorney and for two years one of Cass county's ablest prosecuting attorneys. His brother, J. D. Graves, of Peru, became a leading attorney of Richardson county and at the late election was a candidate for supreme judge on the prohibition ticket.

Charles L. Graves, another brother, also became an honored member of the legal fraternity, but early developed a decided taste for printer's ink and about twenty years ago founded the Union Ledger, one of the newest, brightest and best weekly papers in the state. Charley, when a school boy at Rock Bluffs, could invent and carry to successful termination more innocent mischief and be found "not guilty," than any boy we ever saw. This ability and trait of character were considered indisputable evidence that Charley possessed strong elements of a great and successful lawyer.

Another Rock Bluffs school boy—George J. Spohn, now of Superior, Neb., wended his way upward. With his father's family he located in Nuckols county; was elected county superintendent of schools and later state senator from that county.

In those early days the people of Rock Bluffs were among the most hospitable and cordial to be found anywhere, and no citizenship ever represented greater congeniality. Everybody was the friend of the sick or needy. The citizenship comprised representatives from many states, those from Missouri predominating. And these citizens had brought with them many of the customs in vogue in those states from which they emigrated. Among these customs was one which seemed common to all places—that of properly observing Hallowe'en and on each recurrence of this night it was expected something would be done in old Rock Bluffs.

Strange too, Hallowe'en devilry was not confined to the boys and girls. The best men—merchants, mechanics, church members and sometimes even preachers would take a hand. The only persons that didn't indulge were the school teachers. Generally speaking the principal leaders at this time in such sport were Harrison Smith, Dr. Reed, J. M. Patterson, J. A. Walker, Henry Craig and Isaac Nelson, now living near Murray. Of course there were many other volunteers in the service. One Hallowe'en night a gang with the above named as leaders, started out for customary business and lots of it was done.

At a late hour the crowd adjourned for just one year. But all of them didn't go home. They waited until they knew Patterson had got home and in bed asleep. Somehow it was learned that Patterson had just purchased an extra fine turkey for Thanksgiving and was keeping it in the cellar. Some of the boys knew just where to find the outside cellar door and knew it was never locked. Well, the remainder of this vandal crowd, Hallowe'ened that cellar and kidnapped Patterson's turkey and no trace of it was ever found.

But the most unrighteous act of Hallowe'enism ever perpetrated in Rock Bluffs or anywhere else was on Hallowe'en night 1872. And it was perpetrated on a trio of innocents—the writer, who was school teacher, the old schoolhouse and John Stafford's old horse. The schoolhouse was situated on Main street with a door opening to the east and one to the south. These doors were never locked as thieves and tramps were then unknown at Rock Bluffs, and everybody had implicit confidence in everybody's honesty. The house was commodious, well seated, with a large rostrum for the teacher.

Well, early the next morning after Hallowe'en night 1872, the teacher, as was his custom went to sweep out and fire up for the day's work. The east door was open and one of the pupils, then a young girl and now living not far from Murray, had just come to school and was only a few feet away. She seemed very much amused about something. The teacher stepped to the door—but suddenly stopped. A scene met his eye which would make the most devout angel swear. Piles of hay, corn, oats, compost, liquid of an alkaline solution, all mixed together and scattered over floor, rostrum and desks! The blackboard hadn't even escaped. Upon it were marks, symbols and signs as though somebody or something had tried to solve a supposed problem in algebraic quadratics.

Well, the teacher didn't sweep out just then, but started on a double-quick for Patterson & Walker's store. He wanted to see Patterson, who was treasurer of the school board. Patterson couldn't be found, but he met Jim Walker, the junior member of the firm. The air all around Jim was surcharged with lightning and scintillating pyrotechnics. As was his custom he too had gone early to the store to fire up and sweep out. The Hallowe'eners had been at the store and had blocked the entrance by the front door with two or three cords of wood and did likewise to the entrance by the rear door. Jim couldn't get in by the door route unless he dug his way through the woodpiles. The two friends, common sufferers, met and exchanged courtesies by quotations from a standard work on cuss-ology. Walker finally remarked: "Well, Ramsey, I'll surrender. You are the first person I ever met who could out-cuss any person I ever heard, including myself. Go back and clean out the school house and I'll crawl through a window and sweep out the store."

Failing to find Patterson, who was suspected of having a hand in the devilry, the teacher went back to the school house and soon discovered the horse that had been made a protem professor in the school house that Hallowe'en night. It proved to be an old one—about forty years of age, and belonged to one John Stafford.

For months it had found a living grazing the hills and valleys around Rock Bluffs and age had made it as docile as a lamb. When first seen that morning by the teacher, the old fellow was quietly grazing among the gipsen weeds just south of the school house. Its head didn't look quite natural. There seemed to be some unusual and fantastic ornamentation there. A close inspection disclosed the fact that the old horse was wearing a hat. The hat seemed to be a combination of the Horace Greeley and Mexican sombrero style—white and broad, drooping brim. The Hallowe'en had cut holes through the hat through which they had slipped the horse's ears and otherwise fastened the hat on the horse's head with twine cords or strings.

But, as we have said, that old horse was gentle as a lamb—so gentle that a Rock Bluff school board with the help of Ike Nelson, could and did, as was subsequently learned, after a long search that night, found him away up on "King Hill," and cutting the brush for a pathway, led the old fellow down the road up which he was led and pushed for more than a mile. Reaching the school house, they led and pushed him in and onto the teacher's rostrum, where he was decorated with a hat on his head and penholder stuck behind his right ear, with an abundance of corn, oats, hay and bedding, Stafford's old horse was made first assistant principal of the Rock Bluffs public schools.

The school board at that time consisted of the late James M. Patterson, the late Harrison Smith and Henry

Craig, whom we have mentioned. But the school board had help that night. The late Dr. F. B. Reed and our pioneer friend, Isaac Nelson, of near Murray, were among the horse trainers that night.

But the teacher still couldn't see any fun in such devilry nor any justification in turning a handsome school house into a filthy, carelessly kept horse stable. He went to his home still anatomizing in something like geometrical progression where he met his sister, Mrs. Bella R. Waterman, now of Hay Springs, Neb., and who presided over the teacher's home. She surprised her brother by showing much merriment and advised him not to be angry and say naughty words; that no doubt some of his best friends had put the old horse in the school house in the spirit of fun only.

Her counsel won the day. The teacher subsided, yielded, succumbed. He took with him a shovel, a quantity of soap, stable fork, broom, mop-rag, grain sack, wheelbarrow, ordered a barrel of water and, as he now remembers, commenced humming to himself that old familiar hymn, "Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow," proceeded to repair all damage done—

To the old school house
That Hallowe'en night
By the Stafford's old horse,
The Schoolboard, Doctor and Ike.

A QUIET THANKS-GIVING DAY

Football in the Afternoon and Union Services at Night

With the air as balmy as a day in May, and the sunshine as warm and bright as "the good old summer time" the annual Thanksgiving day was celebrated in this city. During the morning very little business was done, and during the afternoon, visiting was the sole purpose of the people. The dinner was passed very quietly, and all seemed well satisfied with what the year had brought them. During the afternoon, the football game was the leading attraction, and was witnessed by a good sized crowd of eager and enthusiastic people. Plattsmouth won the game by a score of 10 to 1, both teams showing lack of practice, and was a very pleasant affair. Clarence Beal, who played left half back for the home team, made two long runs and a touch down in each case, which made the bleachers resound with cheers.

The Union services at the Christian church in the evening was well attended and enjoyed by all of the crowded house. The opening was "Onward Christian Soldier," by the choir of the church and the reading of the proclamation issued by Governor Sheldon, by Rev. J. H. Salsbury, with a solo by Mrs. Mae Morgan, and a song, a Thanksgiving number by the quartette, consisting of Victor Anderson, Joseph Wales, J. R. Rummerfield and D. C. York. Then the prayer by Rev. Salsbury, and a short talk, and the introduction of the speaker of the evening Rev. A. A. Randall, by Rev. A. L. Zink. The address of Rev. Randall contained thoughts that were truly sublime, and clothed in very beautiful language, he holding the attention of the audience to the end in a very interesting talk. Taking it all in all, the entertainment was one which consisted of all the parts being rendered in that excellence which makes the entire program worthy of praise. As one man from out of the city said this morning "it was well worth a trip which he made from Albion, to hear the evening's services."

Former Citizen Visiting Here.

Roscoe F. Dean and wife, formerly of this place but now of South Haven, Mich., came in Wednesday evening and is visiting with relatives and friends in and south of the city. Mr. Dean is very enthusiastic in regard to the place in which he lives, saying it is four hours by boat across the lake to Chicago, and he turns his home into a summer resort during the warm season, besides conducting a fruit farm, sending his fruits to Chicago, which is always a good market.

Elias S. Frye No Better.

Mrs. Thomas Frye, who has been at Iowa City, Iowa, for some time nursing her brother-in-law, Elias S. Frye, returned home yesterday morning and reports Mr. Frye as being in no way improved. He has a cancer and it has eaten his neck to such an extent that the trachea is exposed for some three or four inches. No hopes are entertained for his recovery, though a physician whom they have from New York, says he can effect a cure. Mr. Frye is well advanced in years and with none two much strength to combat the disease makes the struggle for life and health one against odds, though he is making a manful fight.

HAPPY HANKS-GIVING WEDDING

Miss Bessie Brady, of This City, and Mr. John Cox, of Olewein, Iowa.

John Cox, of Olewein, Iowa, stepped off the train last Wednesday and quietly walked up the street and secured a license at the court house, and in the evening he and his affianced bride, Miss Bessie Brady, strolled over to the Methodist parsonage and were united in marriage by the Rev. A. A. Randall, at about 8 o'clock.

These two young people were schoolmates in the pleasant little town of Watson, Mo., where they grew up as children, and while they learned their lessons in the school they learned to love each other, and though the ever-changing circumstances of fortune separated them they were ever constant in each other's love. After the school days at Watson were over, Mr. Cox entered and took a course at the normal school at Peru, this state, while Miss Bessie went to a school at Craig, Mo. Here her health gave way and she had to cease school, not having an opportunity of completing the course which had been her desire.

After the wedding, a reception of the immediate friends was held at the home of the parents, and the happy couple departed on the late train for St. Joseph, Mo. At the station were congregated the "Mandy Club" in force, of which the bride was a member, intent on giving the party a merry departing, which they evidently did, and from the amount of rice that was scattered over the platform at the Burlington station, they should surely have good luck.

After visiting at St. Joseph the newly married pair will go to Northboro, Iowa, where they will be the guests for a short time with a sister of the bride, and then will visit at Watson with the groom's parents, returning here to visit for a short time next Sunday, and will be at home to their friends at Olewein after the first of December.

She, with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. Brady, moved to this city some two years since, and during her stay has been engaged as a saleslady in the Coates dry goods company's store, being a very efficient and courteous lady. Mr. Cox, after having completed his course in the school at Peru, entered the employ of the Connor Bros., who operate a department store at Hamburg, Iowa. Here he soon was at the top, and was made one of the purchasers as well as the leading salesman. About a year since he was sent to Garden City, Iowa, to open a store at that point, and after continuing there for about six months it was deemed advisable to move the store to a larger town, and it was located at Olewein, where he has charge of the establishment, which carries a \$30,000 stock and is enjoying a good trade. There Mr. Cox has a home furnished for the winsome bride, which he has secured in one of the fairest daughters of our beauty garden of pretty girls.

ANSWERS THE LAST ROLL CALL

Death of William McCully, a Former Citizen of Plattsmouth

The following is taken from the Condon, (Oregon) Globe, of November 22, 1907, giving an account of the demise of a former citizen of Plattsmouth, where he was well known to many of the older inhabitants, and where he was particularly active in G. A. R. circles: "William McCully died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Dan Thouvenel on Sunday at 3:30 in the afternoon after eating a hearty meal, and apparently in his usual health. The old gentleman was born in Clarifield county, Penn., Oct. 1st, 1829, and at an early age enlisted in the Civil war on the Union side. He resided at Plattsmouth, Nebraska, for a number of years, came to Washington and from there to Condon two years ago, and died on Sunday, November 16th, as aforesaid. Thus passed away an old soldier full of years and honors, being wounded three times at the battle of Gettysburg after taking part in many other engagements, fighting bravely for the Union. Mr. McCully was for many years a member of the Methodist church. The funeral took place on Wednesday, services being held at the house by Rev. G. W. Riggs, after which his earthly remains were laid to rest in the cemetery here, amidst many sorrowing friends."

The Journal is informed that the deceased has a number of relatives living in Cass county, among whom are several grandchildren. From the above it appears that the old veteran died rather suddenly, after living longer than the usual years allotted mankind. He lacked only two years of being 80 years of age. During his residence here he made many lasting friends, who will regret to learn of his sudden death.

Received in Honor of Her Son.

Mrs. Magdalena Vallery will give a reception to her friends this afternoon and evening in honor of her son, L. H. Vallery and wife, who are here visiting a few days. Mr. Vallery formerly lived in this place, and has been away for a number of years. He is now located at Hutchinson, Kan., where he has the management of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Co. About two months since these young people were married, and not being able to get away before they take advantage of the first opportunity to visit Mr. Vallery's aged mother. They expect to return to their home some time tomorrow.

THE PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

The Populist Vindicated by Present Policies.

"Present conditions are certainly to a great extent a vindication of those policies and principles which have for years been advocated by the populist party," said Silas A. Holcomb, former governor and justice of the supreme court of Nebraska, and now a resident of Seattle, Wash. Judge Holcomb is now a guest at the Lincoln hotel and will remain in the city for two or three days. He will also visit Omaha and his old home at Broken Bow, returning to the west in about a week, says the Lincoln News.

"The course that has been pursued by the national administration for the past two or three years and the policy which has been inaugurated in many of the states, show that the populist leaven has been working and that the people have been aroused to a realization of the fact that in the past they have allowed themselves to be misrepresented, while the corporations and other special interests have been all too well represented," said the judge.

"If regulation of railroads and other corporations is effective, that is all that the populists or anyone else can ask for. Thorough regulation and the prevention of discrimination have always been advocated by the populist party and was especially urged in the Kansas City platform when Mr. Bryan was nominated. Government ownership has at all times been looked upon as something to be accomplished, if at all, in the distant future and as a dernier resort. Publicity, lack of discrimination and just regulation are the things most desired. The people are insisting upon these and there seems to be a disposition upon the part of public officials to accede to their wishes. Thus are populist theories being vindicated."

"The present financial situation proves the soundness of another populist principle, that of the quantitative theory of money. The country has been doing too much business for the amount of money at command. The volume of credit money has been excessive in proportion to the real money and sufficient of the latter could not be secured when it was needed. Some plan should be devised for increasing the volume of money, but what that plan should be I do not pretend to say."

"In such times as these confidence is of the utmost importance, therefore provision should be made for insuring depositors in the banks against loss. If the people are sure that they can get their money they will not want it and if they are content to leave their money in the banks no serious interference with business can occur. I believe also that postal savings banks would be a good thing and would tend to keep money out of safety deposit vaults and other hiding places."

Judge Holcomb states that he has eschewed politics since going to Washington for the reason that he has felt that his physical condition would not allow him to do more than attend to his business. He has, however, kept in touch with the times, and as his health has materially improved, he may be heard from in public life at some future time.

Department Discontinued.

Matt Leuck, who some time since was transferred to Edgemont, where he was assigned a position with the Burlington, returned last evening, as the place was discontinued on account of the stringency of the money market, and will go to work at his accustomed position in the shops at this point.

They Spent a Merry Evening

Elmer Taylor and wife at their pleasant home on North Seventh street last Saturday evening gave a delightful evening party in honor of the gentleman's sister, Miss Celia Taylor, a milliner apprentice at Fanger's department store. The evening was spent in games, music and refreshments.