

The Plattsmouth Journal.

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PLATTSMOUTH, NEBRASKA, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1914.

NO. 56.

THE INQUEST OVER THE REMAINS OF MRS. STULL BURNED TO DEATH

In the Disastrous Fire That Occurred On Lower Main Street, Which Called for An Investigation by a Coroner's Jury.

A NUMBER OF WITNESSES CALLED TO TESTIFY

Mrs. Monroe, Daughter of the Burned Lady, Was Sick in Bed and the Jury Failed to Get Any Evidence From That Direction

From Tuesday's Daily.

The coroner's inquest to establish the facts in regard to the death of Mrs. Frederick Stull in the fire in the Monroe building here on Christmas day, was held this morning at the equity court room in the court house. The hearing attracted a great deal of attention and the court room where the hearing was held was crowded with those interested in trying to learn the truth of the matter. The inquest was presided over by Coroner Clements of Elmwood. The jury had viewed the body at the undertaking rooms on Saturday evening and the hearing today was opened with the calling of witnesses.

William R. Egenberger was the first witness called for the inquest. He had gone up the front stairs of the building where the fire was, a few minutes after he learned of it, but the smoke was so dense that he could not see and came down into the store, where Mrs. Monroe was, and asked her where her mother was, and she had replied, "Oh, my God," and sat down on a chair crying. He had gone up the back way and kicked open a window and attempted to get in, but the smoke was too thick for him to see much. The fire seemed to be in the room in the center of the building. He was in the Spies cigar store when Wes Bookmeyer came in and told them of the fire.

Frank Gobelman was then called, but did not know any of the details of the fire. He and his wife were at the Val Burkle home when Bobbie Burkle had come up and said that the Monroe store was on fire, and he had then walked up to the place, but did not enter the building at all.

Max Pries, one of the firemen who assisted in the work at the fire, was then called to the stand and recited the facts as far as he knew them. He had gotten to the scene of the fire a few minutes after the alarm had sounded and assisted in bringing down the hook and ladder wagon to the scene. He did not remember who had helped set up the ladder, but saw Lawrence Stull had come up and said his mother was in the front room of the burning building. Lawrence had gone up the ladder into the room and he followed him. Could hear him moving around on the floor and calling his mother. The witness had, in moving through the room searching for the body found toward the center of the room and had called to Lawrence, who grabbed the body and clasped it. Witness had then gotten out on ladder and told Stull to hand the body of his mother out to him, which he did, and the witness had then passed it down the ladder to William Hinrichsen and it had then been taken to the tailor shop of James Sochor. He stated there was over two feet of water in the room at the time they were searching for the body, and as they lifted it up what seemed to be feathers from a pillow were quite thick on the water. Later an old pillow had been picked up near the body.

James Blaha, one of the firemen at the fire, was then placed on the stand and stated that he was at home on the day of the fire and saw Jess Green and wife run past the house toward Main street, and going out he saw a large crowd standing near the Donat corner, and putting on his cap and sweater had ran to the corner, where he saw the smoke and ran down to the burning building. He had got hold of the hose and was acting as nozzle man at the front of the building. He had heard some boy say that his grandmother was in the burning

building. Most of the fire seemed to be in the front room. The fire was under good headway when he came up. Pries and Lawrence Stull had gone up after the body of Mrs. Stull. He had seen Mrs. Monroe at the Wolf home, near his own, but she had not said anything to him at all. He had also assisted the firemen in pulling the hose over the roof in the back of the building.

Val Burkle, who resides in the apartments over the Egenberger coal office, testified that he was at his home when his son, Bobbie, had come over from the Goos hotel, where he was playing, and told him that the Monroe store was burning, and he at once ran up there and into the store, where he met Mrs. Monroe, who said: "For God's sake go up" and get mother; she's up stairs." He had gone up into the hall, but the smoke was too dense to see anything very clearly, and after that Stull had come up on the back roof and entered through a window, but was told that he could not get through on account of the smoke, and he had said, "Don't keep me from my mother." He had not seen Mrs. Monroe after that. Could not tell just where the fire was or what kind of smoke it seemed to be.

William Hinrichsen, who arrived on the scene some five or six minutes after the alarm was sounded, went up stairs, but the smoke was very dense; most of the fire seemed to be on the floor leading south and east of the hall, but later he noticed it climbing toward the ceiling, as it showed through the transoms from the front room. The door leading into the hall at the top of the front stairs was locked and he had tried to secure an entrance into the room, but the door could not be opened. He had tried to kick it in and later attempted to beat the panel in with the nozzle of the hose. He had not seen Mrs. Monroe and did not learn until later that Mrs. Stull was in the burning building. He had received the body of Mrs. Stull from Max Pries when it was brought from the building.

Mrs. Emma Egenberger was called to the stand to relate as far as she could the incidents of the fire in the building. She stated that she was in the L. B. Egenberger apartments and that the Christmas tree of Stewart Egenberger, the younger brother of her husband, had gotten afire, but had been put out and she had then gone out into the hall, where the smoke seemed much greater than it should from the little Christmas tree blazing up. She had gone back into the Egenberger apartments and told them there was a fire somewhere in the building and had then gone out into the rear hall, where there was much smoke. Had seen Mrs. Monroe, who said, "For God's sake, there's fire," but did not see her afterwards. In reply to the question of Attorney Gering, Mrs. Egenberger stated she had opened the door leading into the hall of Mrs. Monroe's apartments, but could not see the place where the fire was raging.

R. W. Clement stated on the stand that the first he saw of the fire was on coming down Third street a few minutes after the alarm sounded, when he noticed a small blaze on the Monroe building. He had gone up the back stairway and the fire seemed to be about the center of the building and was just starting to break out on the roof. He had gotten into the room in the rear of the building and saw two beds unoccupied, but there was no chance to go farther toward the

front of the building. He had told one of the firemen to bring some of the hose around to the rear of the building, but in a few minutes saw them playing the water on the front of the building. He had then gone down stairs and saw Mrs. Monroe sitting on a chair crying; she said she had come down to get dinner and told of her mother having tried to set fire to the house several times, and she had placed the hanging lamp in the room out of her reach. She stated her mother had said she wanted to die. Lawrence Stull had come in and asked where his mother was and Mrs. Monroe had told him she had put her to sleep. He did not hear anything further between the brother and sister.

Louis Egenberger, jr., told of the starting of the fire as far as he knew of it. He stated that he was lying down on a couch in the living room of the home when his sister, Helen, came in and told him that the Christmas tree in the front room was afire, and he had gone in there and assisted in putting the fire out and throwing the tree out into the hall, where the rest of the blaze was extinguished. A quilt which had been used to smother the blaze on the Christmas tree was then blazing up and he had thrown it out of the back door into the snow. He had then noticed the smoke getting very thick and he heard Mrs. Monroe exclaim, "My God, it's in mother's room." This was in Mrs. Monroe's hall. He had not seen her, however, but had recognized her voice. He had met Mrs. Gibson carrying down some dishes at the rear of the building. He had come back and told the family to get ready and get out and had then gone out the back way, while the others came out through the other entrance. He had then started to look for his father, who was not at home at the time of the fire. He had saw some small boy fall in the Monroe building while getting away, but did not know who it was.

The witness stated that the fire was a good way toward the center of the building, apparently. He had never been in only the two front rooms of the Monroe apartments, when Mr. Monroe died. He had also seen Mrs. Monroe after the fire started sitting on a box or trunk in the rear of the store.

The principal witness of the morning was Lloyd Stull, the little twelve-year-old lad who has been making his home with Mrs. Monroe, and the bright little boy was clear with his answers and showed a keen grasp of the questions asked him. He stated, in response to the queries of County Attorney Cole, that he had lived with Mrs. Monroe for the past year and was in the third grade at the public school. On Christmas he was in the store at the rear of the building. He had swept out and cleaned up the breakfast dishes. They had had lunch on Christmas day about 12 o'clock, but had not had dinner. Mrs. Stull, the aged lady burned to death, was not able to come down stairs and the witness had taken her breakfast and dinner up stairs and she had eaten them. He had taken the dishes down stairs and later came back up to see if there was anything wanted by the old lady, and when he asked if she wanted a drink of water she had said she would like one, and he had gotten it for her, and then went back down stairs again. She was sitting in a chair near the window at the time he was there. Mrs. Monroe asked him if her mother was ready to lie down for a nap. He stated the room occupied by Mrs. Stull was just north of that of Mrs. Monroe. He had used the back stairs in going up and down. Mrs. Monroe had told him to get busy and wash up the dishes so that they could all go up stairs and visit with Grandma Stull. She had gone up stairs to change her clothes to help scrub and clean up for Saturday, and later came back down stairs. She was working around the stove where a chicken was roasting, when Mayor Sattler came in the store and said that the building was on fire, but she did not seem to understand at first, and asked Mr. Sattler the second time as to the fire. The witness and Mrs. Monroe had ran up the back stairs to the scene of the fire, where the smoke was quite thick. Mrs. Monroe had attempted to get into her mother's room, but the blaze and smoke drove her back, she had said, as the blaze was toward the folding doors connecting her room with that of Mrs. Stull. He stated also that Mrs. Monroe told him there was a man there who had pushed her back and told her not to

go into the room, as the blaze was too fierce for her to get through. The boy did not see or hear the man, but only what Mrs. Monroe had told him of the matter. After this they had gotten a trunk that was in the room of Mrs. Monroe and he had assisted in carrying the trunk down the back stairs and a greater part of the distance he had carried it alone. When asked as to the locked door leading into the hall he stated that it was because Mrs. Stull was afraid that some children or someone might come in the room, but later, when questioned, he stated that it was kept locked because it was feared that the old lady might get out in the hall and fall down stairs, and they had the key hanging from a nail near the door in the room of Mrs. Monroe. Mrs. Stull was a very heavy sleeper. The fire in the building seemed to be in the partition near the double doors connecting the rooms of Mrs. Stull and Mrs. Monroe. There were two doors from the room of Mrs. Stull into that where the locked door was, and the one into the room of Mrs. Monroe, which was the only means of getting into the room where the aged lady stayed. He had seen nothing of the man claimed by Mrs. Monroe to have talked to her. He had saw Henry Egenberger in the hallway, but had not heard him say anything, although Mrs. Monroe had told him that she had asked him to kick in the door leading to the room of Mrs. Stull. He also stated that Mrs. Monroe had said she did not care about losing everything if she could get her mother out. This testimony was the most interesting of any offered and attracted much attention from everyone.

Henry Egenberger, in his testimony, denied that Mrs. Monroe had said anything about kicking down the door to him and as to her mother being in the room.

Lawrence Stull, the son of the lady burned to death, denied the facts as to his having made an entrance into the room, and in company with Max Pries, searched for her body. He did not arrive until the fire was well under way, and attempted first to get in through the rear, and then later came up through the window in the front of the building.

The condition of Mrs. Monroe was such that she was unable to appear at the inquest and the coroner's jury, accompanied by the County Attorney, sheriff and Attorney Gering, made a trip to the Perkins House, where the lady is staying, and attempted to get her testimony, but nothing of any interest could be secured, as she broke down and cried the greater part of the time the jury was in the room. They were then taken to the scene of the fire to view the different places described by the witnesses in the case.

At the close of the testimony the mystery seems as deep as ever and there seems to be some link missing to complete the story as to what really caused the fire.

The jury this afternoon at 2:45 returned a verdict finding that Mrs. Stull came to her death as the result of burns received in the burning building, and the cause of the fire unknown. The jury was composed of J. C. Peterson, Hans Seivers, N. K. Peoples, J. H. Thrasher, J. W. Peters and C. R. Frans.

A VERY INTERESTING CASE IN THE DISTRICT COURT NOW ON TRIAL

From Wednesday's Daily.

This morning district court convened to take up some matters of the November term that are as yet undisposed of, and the first case called was that of the matter of the estate of William O'Brien, which is brought up from the county court. This involves the settlement of the estate of this aged gentleman, who was for many years a farmer south of this city, and later on, becoming blind, made his home here with his niece, Mrs. William Morley, to whom he left his property in a will at his death, but the settlement has been contested by his widow and two sons, who reside in Missouri, having moved from this county several years ago. The case promises to involve some very interesting points of law.

1915 Calendar Pads at the Journal office.

Secures a Fine Machine.

From Wednesday's Daily.

Claude Shoemaker of this city has just invested in a fine machine that will furnish popcorn and fresh roasted peanuts to all who desire these toothsome delicacies, and they will be fresh all the time. The machine has been placed in the east window of the Dunbar pool hall and a convenient opening made in the window where the passers-by can secure their popcorn and peanuts without trouble and find that these delicacies are all that they desire.

JAP YOUNG FEELS VERY THANKFUL TO FARMERS ON HIS RURAL ROUTE

From Tuesday's Daily.

Plattsmouth, December 28, 1914.

Mail carriers can talk about getting presents from their patrons on their routes, but you have got to get up before daylight if you beat carrier on route No. 1 out of Mynard. During Christmas week we have received quite a number of presents, nearly all fresh meat, just what we need and have got to have, and for which we feel very thankful. We are confident that we will get more, for farmers on my route are well-to-do and always see that their carrier never goes hungry. Those that have remembered us during Christmas time are: Mr. and Mrs. Albert Wetenkamp, Mr. and Mrs. Jake Krager, Mr. and Mrs. Grover Will, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Howard, Mr. Charles Mutz and Mr. Fritz Lutz. Mr. Jake Hild gave us a nice present, something very unusual for patrons to give, and we are so proud of it that we are not going to tell just what it is, but let you guess. It is all ready to use, and we can carry it in our pocket very handily. Mr. Albert Wetenkamp this year, in addition to his annual present, gave us a two-bushel sack of oats for our horse, which costs us a whole lot of money during a year. We feed our team every day at Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hild's, and it is a hard matter for us to get away from Fred's without the carrier being fed, too. Many thanks, patrons, and a Happy New Year. J. M. Young.

THE MISSOURI PACIFIC HAD ANOTHER WRECK NEAR AUBURN SUNDAY

From Tuesday's Daily.

In speaking of the Missouri Pacific wreck near Auburn Sunday the Nebraska City News says: "There was another wreck on the Missouri Pacific yesterday about noon some three miles this side of Auburn, and with its good luck no one was killed. The train from this city was a little late and was trying to make up lost time. When the engineer on the passenger was approaching the 'Y' where the Crete branch reaches the main track he saw a freight train standing on the switch and it looked to him as if the main track was clear. He was going at the rate of about 30 miles and when he approached the freight train he saw that he would strike the cars. He reversed his engine, applied the emergency brake and then he, the fireman and one of the baggage men jumped. There were seven freight cars ruined, two being coal cars. The engineer was rendered unconscious and it is thought he may have fractured his skull. He was taken to Kansas City for treatment. The fireman was bruised slightly. Those who saw the wreck say that a refrigerator car was picked up and dumped into a furniture car, seemingly without much injury."

Glenn Pocock of Ord, Neb., a nephew of Fred Patterson of this city, and who has been here visiting at the home of his uncle, departed this morning for his home.

Herman Kleitsch, the enterprising Weeping Water miller, was in the city yesterday and remained over night visiting with friends and looking after some matters of business, and this morning was a passenger for Omaha, where he will spend the day before returning home.

MEETING OF THE HEADS OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

The Mayor of Plattsmouth Was Present and Took a Prominent Part in Deliberations of the Meeting.

From Wednesday's Daily.

At the meeting of the heads of municipal governments, which met yesterday in Lincoln in response to the call of Governor Morehead to take some steps toward concerted relief work for the Belgians, there was a large representation from the different towns and villages and plans for city and county organizations to aid in the work were outlined. Mayor John P. Sattler was present from Plattsmouth to represent this city and attracted considerable attention at the meeting. The State Journal, in speaking of the meeting, says:

After Governor Morehead had called the meeting to order and stated the object of the meeting and had suggested the election of a chairman, Mayor Allen G. Fisher asked if any of the delegates present were of Belgian extraction. No one answered.

Near the close of the meeting Mayor J. P. Sattler of Plattsmouth arose.

"I am a German," he said.

"So am I," said Chairman John E. Miller of Lincoln.

"I know it is too late to ask why we aid only Belgians," said Mayor Sattler, "because nothing else was mentioned in the call issued by the governor. I will try my best to form a county organization and do what I can. If all states do as Nebraska is doing there may be too much for the people of Belgium. People of other countries may be as bad off and need help just as much. Perhaps if we have anything left we can give to other countries."

Mr. Gaston of Broken Bow explained that many did not understand that Belgium is the only country provisions and food can be shipped to without fear of seizure by nations that are at war. Germany and England have both agreed not to seize food sent to Belgium. As to an over-odometer, he said it was stated that with all of the donations now in sight in the United States it has been reported that the people of Belgium will be out of food in February, if no more is sent. Money can be sent to the Red Cross for hospital supplies.

At the close of the meeting Mr. Dolan of Western made a short address commending the object of the state organization and deploring hatred between nations that had been engendered by the war in Europe. He illustrated by telling of a wounded Belgian soldier who said he hoped to get well and rejoin the army and live to see the imperial palace of Germany in flames.

"I do not care to indulge in war talk," said Mayor Sattler of Plattsmouth, "because President Wilson has said we should not do that. The Germans will be all right in the end."

CORN STALK DISEASE A MENACE TO THE COUNTRY

From Wednesday's Daily.

The corn stalk disease is caused by horses and cattle eating diseased corn stalks and especially diseased corn. In the chemical analysis of the diseased stalks and corn, nothing has been found so far that would cause poisoning if eaten by horses or cattle. Some ears of corn are affected with smut, some with fungus and some with "worm dust," as it is called. From experiments that have been made none of these substances eaten separately will cause poisoning. When the diseased stalks are eaten in sufficient quantities they undergo a process of fermentation in the stomach, eliminating a poisonous gas, and if enough of this gas should be formed and become absorbed into the system it acts on the nerves, causing paralysis of the hind legs, and affects the nerves of respiration, causing death. This peculiar disease is found in some parts of the country and not in others and all the corn fields in the same locality are not affected. The reason of this is not known. The symptoms of this disease are weakness, staggering and partial or complete loss of the hind legs, and the disease advances the animals become unable to stand, it falls and struggles or has convulsions, and soon dies. The only preventive is not to feed the diseased corn to horses or cattle and to keep them out of the corn stalk fields until late in the winter. Diseased food of any kind is unsafe and should never be fed to horses. In the early stage of the disease the best treatment is to give two ounces aromatic spirits of ammonia and two ounces sweet spirits of nitro at a dose in a pint of cold water and repeat every half hour until five doses have been given. This stimulant seems to counteract the action of the poison and should be tried.

AMONG THE NEW YEAR FESTIVITIES IS THE ELKS' BIG ANNUAL BALL

From Wednesday's Daily.

Among the New Year's festivities planned in this city is the annual grand ball given by the members of the Elks' lodge for the members of the order and their families. The affair will be entirely informal and the members are anticipating a most pleasant time on this occasion. The ball will be given in the handsome ball room of the Elks' club and the best of music has been secured for the occasion. The events of this kind in the past have proven most delightful and there is no doubt but that the members of No. 739 will have one of the most pleasant social times in their history at the 1915 ball.

Farm Loans at Lowest Rates. T. H. POLLOCK. 12-14-14

Her From Louisville.

From Wednesday's Daily.

Henry Suss, Herman Panikow, Rev. Hartman and Henry Stohman, from Louisville, were in the city a few hours today looking after some business matters. They came down in the Schuyler this morning, returning this afternoon. While here Mr. Suss paid the Journal office a brief call, renewing his paper for another year.

DR. O. SANDIN LECTURES BEFORE THE YOUNG MEN'S BIBLE CLASS LAST NIGHT

From Wednesday's Daily.

The meeting at the Young Men's Bible class rooms last Monday evening proved one of the most entertaining that has been held for some time and the lecture given by Dr. O. Sandin, the veterinarian, on the "Anatomy of the Horse and Cow," was very instructive. The lecture was illustrated with charts showing the different parts of these animals, and the doctor made a very clear address along the different parts of the anatomy of both the cow and horse, which was most interesting to his hearers. In addition to the splendid lecture the young men had the pleasure of enjoying a pleasant informal musical program in which each of the members took a part, and the evening was one filled with much pleasantness to all in attendance.

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M'CONAHIE POST, NO. 45, G. A. R. ELECT OFFICERS FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

From Tuesday's Daily.

At the regular meeting of McConahie Post No. 45, G. A. R., held on Saturday evening, December 26th, the following officers were elected to act for the ensuing year:

Commander—W. H. Freese.
Senior Vice—Adam Kurtz.
Junior Vice—A. Jacks.
Adjutant—R. B. Windham.
Quartermaster—G. W. Glenn.
Chaplain—J. H. Thrasher.
Officer of the Day—William Porter.
Guard—John Renner.
Installing officer—J. W. Johnson.