

The Plattsmouth Journal.

Nebraska State Historical Society

X

VOL. NO. XXXVIII

PLATTSMOUTH, NEBRASKA, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1922.

NO. 63

MATTHEW GERING DIES AT LINCOLN

DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF NEBRASKA BAR ASSOCIATION CALLED BY DEATH.

From Thursday's Daily.
This morning at 10 o'clock one of the most distinguished members of

chosen as the candidate of his party for attorney general of the state and with his eloquence was one of the chief orators of the party on the stump, but with the entire state ticket, was defeated. He continued his interest in politics and was for years one of the leaders in the campaigns that marked the years of brilliancy on the stump when the oratorical giants such as W. J. Bryan, John M. Thurston, J. Sterling Morton and others were found in the ranks of the public men of the state. Matthew Gering was a candidate for the nomination of congressman in this district on the democratic ticket in 1898, but in the confusion of the political parties in the dis-

ELKS CELEBRATE ANNIVERSARY TODAY

FIFTY-FOURTH BIRTHDAY FINDS GREAT ADVANCEMENT IN PATRIOTIC ORDER.

From Thursday's Daily.
The dawn of today—February 16, 1922—marked an anniversary of keen interest to nearly 1,000,000 American men.

Fifty-four years ago—on February 16, 1868—a little group of fourteen men sat in a stuffy room in New York City. Twice they voted on a matter they had been debating for weeks. On the second ballot, the now almost-forgotten fraternal order of the "Jolly Corks" was disbanded. And the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks was born.

The first membership report in the archives of the Elks is dated December 27, 1868. New York Lodge No. 1, the Mother Lodge of the order, was then its only lodge. There were 76 members on the rolls.

The fifty-fourth anniversary of the Order's birth shows a membership of more than 318,000 Elks in more than 1,600 lodges that dot the United States of America. At Anchorage, Alaska, the farthest north Elk lodge stands amid almost polar ice and snow. Elk lodges rise at Brownsville, Texas, and Key West, Florida—farthest southern points of the continental United States. Our Central Zone has its lodge at Balboa Heights. Our island possessions are started with Elk lodges at Manila in the Philippines; at Honolulu and Hilo in Hawaii; at Guam and at San Juan in Porto Rico. And the Elks of America are working to initiate their 100th member by July, 1922, when the Grand Lodge meets at Atlantic City.

The founder of this organization that is today America's greatest fraternal order? He was a strolling English actor! He had never lived to know how well he and his little group of brother-actors had builded.

His body rests today in Mount Hope cemetery, Boston, Massachusetts, beneath a great granite boulder bearing a bronze plate with the inscription:

"Charles Algernon Sidney Vivian. Founder of the Order of Elks. Died March 20, 1890. Aged 34 years. A lover of his kind, who founded a great Order and in so doing wrought much good."

Vivian, who was the presiding "Jolly Cork" at the momentous meeting in 1868 when the fourteen men voted to organize under the name of "Elks," died in Leadville, Colorado, after a life of theatrical vicissitudes that ranged from touring in affluence at the head of his own company, to being stranded penniless in Denver. There in Leadville his body rested, his grave marked only by a weathered pine board on which an inscription was scratched with some sharp instrument, until on April 23, 1883, Boston Lodge No. 10, B. P. O. Elks exhumed the body, took it to Chicago, and buried it there with splendid ceremonial.

Only in Elksdom's archives and the memories of the few surviving "old-timers" is the history of the Jolly Corks held intact. And only one charter member of Elksdom still survives. He is "Joe" Norcross, of New York.

The "Jolly Corks," actor-folk all, met in those days of the '60's in cafes and bar-rooms of New York's theatrical district. The "cork trick" was their initiation ceremony. A group of Corks would bring in a candidate, who was assessed fifty cents. This was taken by Charles Vivian and entered in a pocket memorandum book. Each "Jolly Cork" produced a champagne cork from his pocket.

The bar-keeper supplied the candidate with a new cork. The men lined up in front of the now-extinct American bar. Each man placed his cork in front of him on the bar. To the candidate it was explained that at the signal "Three" of the "One - two - three!" called by the ruling Cork, the last man to lift his cork from the bar was "stuck for the drinks."

The signal would be called. The Jolly Corks, all initiates, would simply cup their hands over their corks and leave the corks on the bar. The candidate, with a swift swoop, always would be the first man to lift his cork. He would also be the last man to lift his cork. For he would be the only man to lift his cork. He bought the drinks.

One other law the Corks obeyed. Any Jolly Cork, meeting another Jolly Cork, was at liberty to challenge his brother by producing his own cork from his pocket. If the challenged man could not also produce a cork, he must pay for the drinks. The champagne cork became the insignia of the Order.

Stuart Robson, noted American actor of that period, was a Jolly Cork and the target of a deep-laid plot. It was at Robson's wedding. As the actor entered the church, he found the aisle solidly lined with a double rank of Jolly Corks. At the altar awaited the minister. As Robson started down the aisle, with the future Mrs. Robson on his arm, every Jolly Cork, with the precision of an

army officer drawing sword and saluting, held aloft a new and shining champagne cork in salute.

Stuart Robson was ready. Instantly he reached into the tailpocket of his dress-coat, produced a champagne cork equally new and shining, and marched down the aisle, his bride on his left arm. His cork held aloft in his right hand, he does not tell us how he bought those drinks. But it wasn't Stuart Robson!

New York's "Excise Laws" rigorously enforced in 1867 and 1868, closed all places of public entertainment on Sunday. The Jolly Corks installed a piano, a keg of beer and a box of sandwiches in the attic of "Mother" Geisman's boarding house in the theatrical district and met there, with music, songs, stories and mock-trials at which fines were imposed for various whimsical offenses.

To provide the fund for next week's beer and sandwiches, their festive-songs, they then turned to the noise, "Mother" Geisman drove them out.

Then they "hired a hall" and formed their fraternal order. It was nearly named the "Buffaloes," after the "Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes" of England, to which Vivian, the ruling Cork, belonged. The vote stood seven to seven, deadlocked on "Buffaloes" and "Elks."

Only a handful recall the name of W. L. Dowron of New York today. Yet it is to him that the "Elks" owe their name. On the second ballot he switched his vote from "Buffalo" to "Elk." Vivian, in the chair, though an ardent advocate of "Buffaloes," ratified the majority of one, and the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks was born.

One other circumstance, little known, was the committee charged with selecting a name to meet at Broadway and Ann street, in New York. Some were tardy. Others becoming weary of waiting strolled in to Barnum's Museum on that corner and were working to initiate their animal collection.

"Beavers" was suggested, but discarded as animals of few inviting traits, coarse, brutal and morose. "Beavers" were brought up as examples of industry, but cast aside as English actors! His committee was voted down as too cunning and crafty. A large mouse head attracted attention, but was at last turned down. Then an Elk's head, with graceful, spreading antlers, met with generous approval and divided honors with "Elks," which was adopted.

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month lodge No. 739, B. P. O. Elks. The building has not only been a home for the members of the Elks lodge, but a community center as well and many of the pleasant gatherings of the city have been held there by the people of the community.

For the past twenty years, each Christmas the Elks have made their Christmas remembrances a great feature and in their generousness remembered their less fortunate citizens.

The Elks order in the world war was one of the most earnest workers in the cause of their country both in activities at home and in the camps and in the thousands of members who donned the uniform of the army or navy and faced death on the battle-field. Two of the local members, Matt Jirousek and Henry Hirz, Jr., offered up their lives for their country, while the flag has such an important part in the Elks lodge and upon the principles of which the order is founded.

Here in Plattsmouth there are now 300 members of the order and they are moving onward and onward with their cardinal virtues as a beacon light to guide themselves better through their membership and to add to the community life by the advancement of the order of Elks in Plattsmouth.

John Becker, one of the oldest residents of this portion of Cass county, was found dead by the members of the family when they were engaged in the preparation of the morning meal. Mr. Becker had arisen and came down stairs as usual and his body was apparently found very suddenly. His advanced years and unfeeling condition of health had made his condition the cause of a great deal of worry to the members of the family circle.

Mr. Becker was born November 3, 1840, in Germany and resided there until seventeen years of age when he came to America, the trip from Havre, France, to New York, requiring forty-two days on the ocean. The young man then made his way to Illinois, where a large number of his family lived and located and he settled November 25, 1857, near Pekin, Illinois, where he was engaged as a farm hand for some seven years. He was married there to Miss Harriet E. Fuller, May 12, 1864, and in 1878 the family moved west to Cass county, here they located on a farm near Plattsmouth and here by diligent labor Mr. Becker acquired a splendid financial standing and was able to hand to his children a heritage that will enable them to enjoy financial independence.

The wife was called by her final illness on August 25, 1916, and Mr. Becker was married a second time to Mrs. Katherine Barnes, who survives the death of the husband. The children who are called upon to mourn the death of their beloved parent are as follows: William A. Becker, H. E. Becker, P. T. Becker, Mrs. Charles Peacock, Mrs. Frank A. Cloidt of this city and Mrs. Geo. A. Kaffenberger of Lincoln.

Mr. Becker since removing from the farm to this city has been active in the financial circles of the city and was at the time of his death, president of the Plattsmouth State bank, and has also been interested in the Cass County Farmers Mutual Insurance company and a number of other home financial concerns. Socially, Mr. Becker was a member of the Masonic fraternity, being a member of Plattsmouth lodge No. 6, A. F. & A. M.

The community loses a valued citizen in the death of Mr. Becker and his family will have the deepest sympathy of the old friends in the loss that has come to darken the household.

Funeral services will be held at 1:30 Sunday afternoon from the Presbyterian church and the interment had at Oak Hill cemetery beside that of the wife.

RETURNERS FROM SAD MISSION
Mrs. Fred Kunsman of this city has returned home from Brooks, Ia., where she was called last Saturday morning by the death of a sister, Mrs. Isaac Harlow, who passed away in that city Friday evening at the age of sixty years. The funeral services were held on Sunday and the body laid to rest there. Mrs. Kunsman will have the deep sympathy of the many friends here in her bereavement.

HAS HAND HURT
From Thursday's Daily.
This afternoon Harold Renner, one of the students in the manual training department of the high school, met with a very painful accident while at his work in the school. The left hand was quite badly lacerated by a chisel with which he was working and it required the services of a surgeon to dress the wound.

CELEBRATE FIFTY YEARS OF WEDLOCK

MR. AND MRS. FREDERICK OHM OF THIS CITY ENJOY THE EVENT YESTERDAY.

From Friday's Daily.
The golden wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Ohm of this city was observed here yesterday when this estimable couple surrounded by their children and grandchildren celebrated the event in a most fitting manner.

For the past fifty days the members of the family have been arriving for the delightful gathering at the home fireside and to share with their parents the happiness that the golden wedding day has brought. The members of the family were entertained yesterday at the home with a big family dinner and at which the parents were congratulated by their children and grandchildren.

Last evening the T. J. Sokol hall was the scene of a reception to the happy couple and which was attended by a large crowd numbering one hundred of the old time friends and associates of this estimable couple and among the guests were a number from out of the city who enjoyed the event immensely. The hall was very prettily decorated, this feature of the occasion being looked after by Otto and Gertrude Pinney. The streamers were hung in the shape of a network over the floor of the hall and interspersed with wedding bells.

At 8:30 last evening when the guests were assembled, the aged couple once more pledged their love that had endured for the half century of their wedded life, the Rev. H. G. McClusky, pastor of the First Presbyterian church, pronouncing the words that marked the solemnization of the marriage. Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Warga, Sr., were the attendants at the wedding, Mrs. Warga being a sister of the "bride."

The aged couple were united in their native land, Germany, a half century ago, but the greater part of their wedded life has been spent in this country, they coming here some forty years ago and locating in Plattsmouth where they have since resided and where their children have grown to manhood and womanhood. It was one of the happiest moments of the observance to Mr. and Mrs. Ohm that they were able to have with them their children who gathered from their home over the country for the week of pleasure with the aged father and mother.

After the wedding last evening the time was spent in showering the bride and groom with well wishes and also in dancing at which young and old alike enjoyed themselves to the utmost to the music of the orchestra that had been secured for the occasion, consisting of Tom Gradoville, saxophone; Frank Marshall, drummer; Miss Minnie Klinger, piano; Anton Bajcek, xylophone.

The guests were treated to a very dainty and enjoyable luncheon at an appropriate hour and which was enjoyed to the utmost by all of the Jolly party. It was a late hour when the guests departing wished Mr. and Mrs. Ohm many more such happy anniversaries.

Mr. Ohm was in the employ of the Burlington shops for thirty-five

years, retiring four years ago from active work, and has since with the good wife been enjoying their declining years in this city.

Those from out of the city to attend the pleasant event last evening were: Mr. and Mrs. Lou Boye, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Watchler, Richard Stoehr, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Copenharre, Albert Harsh and friend, Fred Jess, George Kruelner, Jess Blackwell and wife, Mary Ann Blackwell, Donald Bert Blackwell, all of Omaha, E. K. Ohm and wife, E. J. Ohm, Frank Burr, all of Chicago, Frank Ohm and wife, Charles Ohm, Edward Ohm, Mrs. William Van Meter, of Omaha, Mrs. A. F. Ploetz, of Derby, Iowa.

One daughter, Mrs. K. Nilsson of Havelock was prevented by sickness in her family from attending the event.

BRIDE AND JUDGE BEESEON CHEATED
Both Left in Lurch by Omaha Swain Who Fails to Keep Date with Waiting Bride-to-Be.

From Thursday's Daily.
Some have waited in vain at the church. Just the other day a girl waited in vain for her bridegroom at a store.

But, Anna Lavelette, 239 Benton avenue, Council Bluffs, waited in vain for her promised husband on a cold, windy Omaha street corner—Tenth and Farnam streets.

A policeman, passing by several times, noticed her "holding down the fort" and questioned her. She told him her story.

Her hands, blue with cold, still clenched the two grips which held what was to have been her trousseau.

Left With \$90
She told the police officer that the man who promised to take her to Plattsmouth and marry her was William Masters and that when he left her "just for a few minutes," he had \$90 of her money.

"Night before last," she said, "he whispered in my ear that he loved me and said he wanted to marry me. He said that he could not live without me and that we would go to Plattsmouth to be married."

"He said he did not have any money and asked me if I could get some until he received a check he expected. I sold some furniture for \$90 and turned the money over to him."

"When we got off the street car at Tenth and Farnam streets, he asked me to wait while he went to the ticket office to buy the tickets."

Still Loves Him
She would have still been waiting if the policeman had not questioned her, she said.

"I am losing faith in men," she said. "I married my first husband when I was 17. Our life was not a happy one and I thought I would be able to begin living over again when I married Will. But it didn't come out that way."

And, as she left the police station, she whispered: "I might decide still to marry him if you find him and if he will promise to do the right thing. I love him."—Omaha Bee.

If you have anything to sell, or want to buy, don't overlook a want-ad in the Daily Journal



MATTHEW GERING

the Nebraska bar was removed by death when Matthew Gering of this city died after a period of illness covering several months and during which time he has been gradually failing until the end came to bring him rest from his long suffering.

For the past six weeks Mr. Gering has been at hospitals in Omaha and Lincoln, to receive treatment in the hopes that it might give him a surcease from his suffering but without success and he gradually sunk into a decline from which death relieved him.

Mr. Gering has been one of the brilliant figures in the history of the legal profession in Nebraska in the past thirty-five years and also actively identified with the political life of this country and state. He was a native of Bavaria, Germany, where he was born sixty-one years ago and throughout his life cherished the memories of his boyhood days beneath the shadows of the Alpine hills and along the banks of the river Isar, where so many happy days have been spent. The father, Paul Gering, with his family later came to America and located in the northern portion of Iowa where they resided until 1887 when the family came to Plattsmouth and have since resided here. Matthew received his education at the University of Georgetown at Washington, D. C., and also received the degree of L. L. M. at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

Mr. Gering on returning to Nebraska to take up the practice of his profession became identified with the democratic party and in 1883 was elected county attorney of Cass county. In the year 1892 he was

district Mr. Gering was deprived of the honor.

When the political campaign of 1900 was dawning Mr. Gering became a member of the republican party and has since been identified with the councils of that party.

Matthew Gering was a man of more than usual attractiveness of personality and with his brilliancy of mind made a most delightful companion and his presence enriched a large circle of friends not only in this city but over the state where he was widely known.

One of the leaders of the legal profession he was a member of the American Bar association and frequently attended their conventions and enjoyed to the utmost the meetings of the great lawyers from all over the nation.

Mr. Gering held the deepest love and reverence for the father and mother who had so tenderly reared him and the death of the mother marked the beginning of the breakdown of this talented citizen that has led to his passing over the river of life. The love of the son was often shown in the addresses and writings of Mr. Gering and his tribute to the mother in his recent volume of addresses was one of the most beautiful that has ever been penned.

He leaves to mourn his death three sisters and one brother, Misses Ann and Barbara Gering and Mrs. Henry Herold of this city, and Henry R. Gering of Omaha.

Mr. Gering was a member of the Elks lodge of this city in which he has been very active.

LADIES AUXILIARY MEETS

From Thursday's Daily.
The ladies auxiliary of the Presbyterian church met yesterday afternoon at the parlors of the church where they were entertained by Mesdames Henry Nolting, E. H. Becker and L. J. Meisinger. The room was arranged in keeping with the valentine season and made a very pretty setting for the pleasant event. The ladies were treated to two very delightful musical numbers by a quartet of young girls composed of Catherine Schneider, Violet Begley, Eleanor McCarthy and Helen Clements, which added much to the delights of the occasion.

Another of the matters of importance to be taken up was that of the election of officers for the year and the following were chosen: Mrs. C. E. Hartford, president; Mrs. W. H. Mann, second vice president; Mrs. Geo. L. Farley, secretary; Mrs. J. F. Wolff, treasurer.

At the conclusion of the afternoon dainty refreshments were served that added to the pleasures of the occasion.

YOUNG PEOPLE WED

A very quiet wedding occurred in this city on February 12th when Miss Catherine Zaiser of Mondamin, Iowa, was united in marriage to Mr. Urvin L. Barnard of this city. The groom is well known here where he has made his home for the past few years and his many friends will be pleased to learn of his new found happiness.

PLAN A FINE ENTERTAINMENT AT PUBLIC LIBRARY

Church School Service League of St. Luke's Church to Give Three Day Run of Playlet.

From Thursday's Daily.
The little folks belonging to the service league of the St. Luke's church school are preparing to give a most delightful little entertainment at the auditorium of the public library on next Tuesday afternoon at the story hour for the school children, to which only the little folks will be admitted, and on Wednesday evening the playlet will be given for the members of the church parish and the general public and for which an admission of 25c will be charged. The children will then present the entertainment at the Masonic Home for the benefit of the old people there.

This little play is one that has many pleasing musical numbers as well as fancy dances an clever dialogues and stunts by the exceptionally pleasing cast and all of the characters of childish fiction will be found in the play. The title of the play is, "The Doll Shop" and it will be one of the best of the children plays that has been given in this city.

STRENGTH SERVICE

WASHINGTON—Soldier, Patriot and Builder!

Names that have won greatest fame in history have usually been those of men who unselfishly gave themselves to advance or defend national integrity or honor.

Washington's service to this, our own republic will NEVER be forgotten. In remembering each year his birthday, we pay homage to a truly great American; he laid the very cornerstone of our national existence.

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THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK
THE BANK WHERE YOU FEEL AT HOME
PLATTSMOUTH NEBRASKA

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