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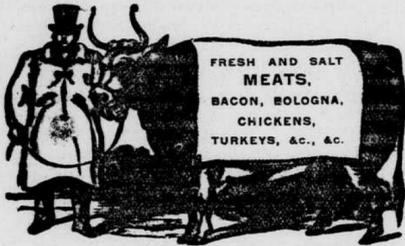
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# THE McCOOK TRIBUNE?

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### THE SONG OF SHIPS.

The sky made a whip of the winds and lashed the sea into foam.  
And the keen blowing gales tore the flags on the sails of the ships that were plunging home;  
Of the ships that were tossing home on the black and billowy deep,  
But who shall reach to the wrecks, the wrecks, where the ships and their captains sleep?  
Oh, wrecks by the black seas tossed,  
In the desolate ocean nights!  
Lost, lost in the darkness! Lost  
In sight o' the harbor lights!

The sky made a veil o' the clouds and a scourge o' the lightning red,  
And the blasts bowed the masts of the ship that fared where love and the sea gulls led;  
Of the ships that were faring home with love for the waiting breast,  
But where is the love that can reach to the wrecks where the ships and their captains rest?

Oh, ships of our love, wave tossed,  
In the fathomless ocean nights!  
Lost, lost in the blackness! Lost  
In sight o' the harbor lights!

There was once a ship of my soul that tossed o'er a stormy sea,  
And this was my prayer, when the nights gloomed drear: "Send my soul's ship safe to me!"

Send my soul's ship safely home from billows and blackened skies!"  
But where is the soul that can reach to the depth, the depths where my soul's ship lies?

Oh, ship of my soul, storm tossed,  
In the far and the fearful nights!  
Lost, lost in the blackness! Lost  
In sight o' the harbor lights!

—Frank L. Stanton in Atlanta Constitution.

### THE TABLES TURNED

"A darn dude!" snorted Joe Dalzey contemptuously.

That was the general verdict from all the boys when Phil Ames made his appearance among them at Middleton's ranch.

Della Middleton had returned home from the city, and Phil had come with her to the ranch, where her father welcomed him as the son of one of his friends and companions of other days. It was soon whispered also that Phil was a suitor for Della's hand, and that alone was sufficient for him to be watched closely and criticised by the cowboys, who, every one of them, were ready to swear by and to do anything in their power to please the queen of the ranch, Miss Della Middleton.

Phil Ames, at a first glance, looked rather effeminate, but upon closer observation he proved to be quite otherwise. There was not a surplus ounce of flesh about him anywhere, and his frame was well knit and strong. Moreover, Phil was a pleasant, easy going fellow whom nothing seemed to disturb, and whose temper was the sunniest in the world.

Therefore a couple of weeks at the ranch was sufficient for Phil to gain the good will of everybody around the place. Even Joe Dalzey, the most critical among them all, had to admit that he was not half so bad as he looked and might improve into a right good fellow if he staid at the ranch long enough.

In the rough play among the cowboys Phil held his own easily and often turned their rude jokes so that they lost their sting, or fastened the laugh on him who had expected to see Phil made ridiculous.

Joe Dalzey considered himself the leader among the boys on the ranch, and they seldom ventured to differ with him in his opinions, which he never failed to express with all the decision and emphasis he could master.

One evening after Phil had been at the ranch nearly a month Mr. Middleton came into the house where he and Della were together.

"I have to send a squad of the boys over to Bald prairie tomorrow, and I don't know where in thunder I'm going to find a cook to go with them," he said.

"What is the matter with Edmunds, papa?" asked Della.

"He is down with the chills, and that puts him out of the question. There is Andrews, too, gone off to town and won't be back for a week," said Mr. Middleton.

"Can't you get one of the others to cook?" asked Della.

"Why, there isn't one of them can make a biscuit that wouldn't choke a dog."

"Suppose you send Dinah and myself with them? We could manage, I reckon," said Della, laughing.

"But what would become of us who have to stay at home?"

"Do your own cooking or starve," laughed Della.

"I'm afraid it would be the latter most of the time," said Mr. Middleton. "No, I've cooked for a camping outfit before now, and if the worst comes to the worst I can do it again, only I can hardly spare the time."

"I'll go and cook for them, Mr. Middleton," said Phil. "I suppose it is only coffee, bacon, biscuits and a batch of cornbread occasionally."

"You cook!" exclaimed Mr. Middleton. "Why, my boy, they'd mob you at the first meal."

"Why do you think so?"

"Your cookery would drive them to it. They would have to do it in self defense, you know—kill you or starve to death themselves."

"They would have to do neither, I assure you," protested Phil, laughing. "I am a better cook than you think. I hope you have not forgotten that I staid in the mountains of Colorado nearly the whole of last year? I did the most of the cooking for the three of us there, and, if I say it myself, there was no one ever turned up his nose at what I placed on the table."

For awhile there was a lively discussion about Phil going as cook with the cowboys, but he finally gained the consent from both Mr. Middleton and Della, and it was decided that he could go, provided he would not blame them if anything went wrong. The next day therefore he drove away in the wagon containing the raw materials on which he was to display his art as a first class cook for a cowboy camp.

"If Phil comes out on top in this es-

capade," laughed Mr. Middleton, looking at Della, "I shall have no objection to him as a son-in-law."

"He'll do it, papa," said Della, blushing prettily.

The cowboys had struck camp and pitched their tents at the first branding pen.

They had eaten the first supper Phil had cooked for them, and they had enjoyed it, praising it in unequivocal terms.

One of the boys had occasion to go to the wagon for something after supper and saw something white, neatly folded, lying to one side. He picked it up to see what it was and found it to be a white shirt with a highly glossed front.

"A boiled shirt!" he exclaimed. For a moment he hesitated, then he rolled the shirt up carefully and took it to where his companions were sitting or lounging around their tent.

There was a whispered consultation. "Some of you kindle a fire," said Dalzey. "I'll get the branding irons. A couple of you fellows had better go over to where Phil is busy and keep him there as long as you can."

The fire was kindled. The branding irons were put into the fire, and when they were sufficiently heated the boys went to work and "run" every brand they knew upon the white shirt spread out upon the ground before them.

There were numbers and letters and combinations of both. There were the "rail fence," the "bull's head," the "antlers" and the "jug." There were circles and semicircles, bars and double bars, with all their variations, and lines straight and crooked in every possible position and curve.

Altogether it was an artistic piece of work, covering every inch from hem to neckband and outward to both ends of the sleeves.

The next morning when Phil got up before daylight to prepare breakfast he found the shirt spread out, fastened to the hind end of the wagon.

He looked it over carefully and smiled. "I forgot to put it back in the valise yesterday evening," he mused to himself as he was hurrying with his work.

"I was somewhat surprised when I found it among the other clothes, but in the hurry of packing it must have slipped in somehow accidentally."

During the time he was cooking breakfast he chuckled to himself frequently, and once or twice laughed out loud as he thought of the plan he was forming to pay the boys back in the same coin they had given him.

From day to day pieces were cut from the branded shirt, which Phil had left hanging to the end of the wagon where he had found it. The boys watched the pieces disappear, until on the evening before they were ready to break up camp and return home there was nothing left of it but the seams and wristbands.

"What's become of your boiled shirt, Phil?" one of them asked.

Phil looked around and viewed the remains of it.

"It looks like somebody has been eating it," he said laughingly. "At any rate, there are only the tough parts of it left."

"That was all they could get out of him just then. They returned to the ranch the next day, and the boys, with one voice, praised Phil's cooking very highly to Mr. Middleton.

"Bestest cook we ever had," cried Dalzey.

"And he takes a joke like a man," put in another.

Then they told Mr. Middleton and Della, who had just joined them, how they had treated Phil's white shirt, and how he had apparently enjoyed the joke as much as any of them.

"Let us have a look at it," cried Della, laughing and clapping her hands. Phil went to the wagon and held up before them what remained of the shirt.

"But what became of the rest of it?" Della asked.

"I fed it to the boys," replied Phil, laughing now. "They thought they didn't like boiled shirt, but I noticed that they devoured a good piece of it every day. Every morning I cut off a good slice, chopped it up fine, fried it, browned it, scorched it and ground it up and put it into everything I set before them. You have their own words for it that they liked my cookery—boiled shirt a la Phil Ames."

For a moment there were some lowering brows, but when Dalzey stepped forward and gave his hand to Phil the clouds vanished.

"Phil," he said, "you're a brick! Hope you will stay at the ranch always, and when the day comes, darn my picture if I don't wear a boiled shirt and dance at the wedding."

Della and Phil looked at each other and blushed, and Mr. Middleton laughed heartily.—John P. Sjolander.

**Snow in Switzerland.**  
Some of the mountain railroads in Switzerland find it advantageous to open long before the snow melts on their upper parts, and to do this an enormous amount of snow has to be shoveled away. One May, when the road from Gilon, on Lake Geneva, up to Rocher de Naye was opened, the cars ran for some distance between walls of solid compressed snow 12 to 20 feet high.

When the work began, one of the upper stations had disappeared, and it was supposed that it had been swept away by the winter storms. A rounded elevation was recognized as the site of a water tank, and from this the position of the station was determined, and excavations were begun. After digging down six feet the shovelers struck not the foundation, but the roof of the station, which was in its place intact.

**The Origin of Tariff.**  
Tariff was originally the name of a Moorish chief, who, having a port in Spain, near Gibraltar, was accustomed to levy toll on passing vessels. His toll became a regularly understood thing, and the amount was added to the price of the goods.

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Noble is distinctly in the holiday trade. Call and see his handsome and elegant assortment of china, queensware, glassware, etc. Nothing like it for richness and variety and reasonableness in cost in McCook.

The burning question with housewives of all lands, all creeds, and all ages is: "Which is the best Cooking Stove?" S. M. Cochran & Co. answer this question today by proclaiming the "CHARTER OAK STOVES" to be the best in every conceivable shape.

**KNIPPLE is official headquarters for S. Claus, this year.**

Vases, pretty and useful and ornamental at Noble's. And a thousand other things to please the old and the young. Don't close your holiday purchases until you have seen his stock of presents.

Noble carries a large and complete stock of the best brands of canned goods of all kinds.

Perfumes and Toilet Articles at Chenery's City Drug Store.

**We don't sell packing house lard, but our own make.**  
F. S. WILCOX.

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If you want a well put down in fine shape see Frank Nichols. He guarantees his work. Leave orders at S. M. Cochran & Co.'s.

**Come in early and often and see the fine line of meats at the B. & M. Meat Market.**

IN QUEENSWARE Noble carries the largest assortment and the richest designs of the season. His prices are reasonable.

Make Noble your family grocer and many other blessings will fall to your lot, besides having the best groceries on your table that the market affords.

**Try the Cream Pork Sausage at the B. & M. Meat Market.**

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F. S. WILCOX.

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Dainty and fashionable water sets at Noble's. Buy a set.