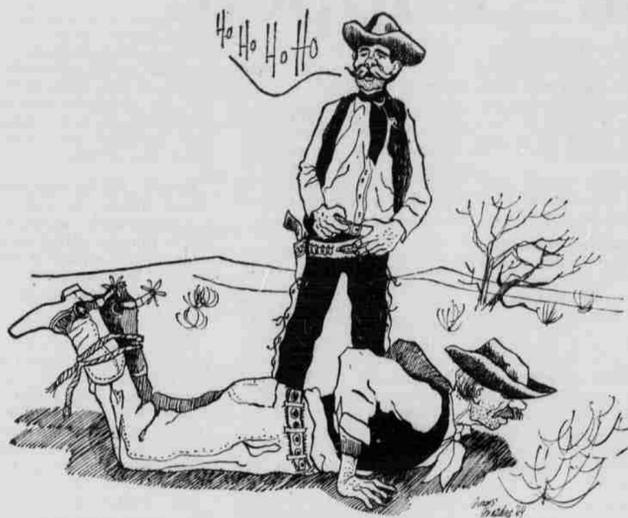


Book Describes Early Fun

Cowboy's Pranks Rough, Tough



EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first in a series of four stories written by students in the Depth Reporting Class of the School of Journalism. This series represents an experiment at using the information in a new book to write a news story.

By Jim Risser

A cowboy, with a long growth of whiskers acquired during a summer of riding the range, lay down in the shade of a wagon to take a nap one afternoon in the 1890's.

One of his comrades, taking some warm pie dough from the chuckwagon, plastered it gently over the sleeping cowboy's face. As the dough cooled, the victim began to suffocate. When he awakened and jumped up, fighting for air, he cracked his head on the bottom

of the wagon. To the cowboy's friends, it was all a great joke.

The prank was typical of the peculiar brand of humor of the early Nebraska cowboy.

His jokes matched his life on the Western frontier — rough and often cruel. The practical joke relieved the strain of hot summer days when he would put in up to 18 hours roping, herding, and branding cattle.

As he camped for the night somewhere in western Nebraska, during a long cattle drive to Montana, there was little to do but tie a sleeping friend's feet together, awaken him with a shouted warning of a stampede, and watch him sprawl in the dirt.

Hiding another cowboy's sleeping bag was guaranteed to cause a big disturbance and laughs for everyone — at

least, for those who weren't hurt in the fight that often followed.

In his book, PINNACLE JAKE, A. B. Snyder recounts the rough and humorous episodes of his experiences on the western plains. The book, published by the University of Nebraska Press, contains the author's reminiscences as he told them to his daughter after retiring to the gentler life of North Platte.

With many of the cowboys' tricks ending with cuts, bruises and bumps on the head for the victim, today's Nebraskan might find it a little hard to see just what was so funny about this frontier humor.

Pinnacle Jake (Snyder's nickname) describes one episode when the cook for Jake's outfit noticed that the men waiting around the fire for dinner had gone to sleep. He sneaked over with some rope, tying their feet to a large log. When he yelled, "Dinner," the sleepy cowboys jumped up and ran for the chuckwagon.

"Charlie'd left me eight or ten feet of slack rope and I sure went down hard when I hit the end of it," Jake says. "When we were all down," Charlie said, innocently, "Oh boys, you'll have to wait a little. Dinner ain't quite ready yet."

Sometimes the jokes backfired on the perpetrator, to the great delight of the whole outfit. Pinnacle Jake tells of one old cook called Gray Jack who had grown tired of cowboys who left their bedrolls unmade in the morning, forcing the cook to roll them up and toss them in the chuckwagon.

One morning, Gray Jack saw an unrolled bed, and decking he would teach the offender a lesson, rolled up the bed, tied it to the axle of the chuckwagon, and dragged it all the way to the next camp. When it was time to turn in that night, Gray Jack discovered that he had been the forgetful cowboy that morning, and the shredded and dirty bedroll was his.

The frontier cowboys didn't confine their practical jokes to their friends. A stranger was always fair game, and the

outfit would band together to bedevil the unfortunate visitor.

A wandering hobo was likely to be subjected to a mock trial, with either himself or one of the outfit's cowboys as the defendant.

With a hobo in camp for dinner one evening, the men pretended that Pinnacle Jake was a captured horse thief. Within a matter of minutes, they had tried him, returned a verdict of guilty, and sentenced him to hang. The bewildered hobo, apparently shocked at the barbaric justice of his hosts, fled down the nearby railroad tracks as fast as he could go.

Dudes from the East were always good for a laugh. Pinnacle Jake tells of two Easterners who butted in on an argument between two cowboys in the old town of Belle Fourche, South Dakota, with its high wooden sidewalks.

When one dude jokingly protested the lack of Wild West shooting, one of the arguing cowboys, who had spent the early part of the evening drinking, said, "You're goin' to hear some now."

With bullets popping into the boardwalk at their feet, "the fellows lost no time taking to their heels down that walk," Pinnacle Jake writes. The end of the old wooden sidewalk was four or five feet above the ground.

"The Easterners' heels were cracking on the boards, pretty lively, for a short time, but they quit all of a sudden when they came to the end of the walk in the dark," Jake says.

Not all of the cowboys' humor was rough though. Pinnacle Jake once started a rumor around the camp that a big gray horse which had been assigned to one of the men was the hardest pitching horse in the outfit.

When the man who was assigned the horse heard the rumor, he offered Jake, who had a reputation as a broncbuster, a pound of tobacco if he would take some of the fight out of the horse. Jake held out for two pounds of tobacco, and when the butt of the joke accepted, Jake climbed on the gentle animal, rode him

twice around the corral, and came back to claim his tobacco.

Occasionally, one of the jokes would result in damage to the outfit's equipment and upset the owner more than a little.

Wiley DeLashman, the prize practical joker of Jake's outfit, started a grudge race between two chuckwagon drivers by telling each that the other had said he could outrun any chuckwagon driver around. With feelings running high and the speed building up, neither driver would give up.

One wagon hit a deep rut, jerking the wheels out from under it and breaking an axle. The whole roundup had to wait two or three days until a new wagon arrived.

Some of the cowboys' jokes involved cruelty to animals which today would bring the humane society and the SPCA running. Catching a rabbit and tying a piece of rag to its tail was considered great fun. The frightened animal would turn complete flips in the air, trying to shake the rag loose.

Practical jokes involving a chase sometimes ended with a horse or two injured. One cowboy who had stolen a melon from a settler's field was told that the man coming over the distant hill was the sheriff looking for him. In the mad dash to get away, the cowboy blindly rode his horse into a hole, and cowboy and horse sailed through the air.

The men convinced the frightened cowboy that it was all a joke and brought him back to camp. "The little roan horse was all stove up, though, and so lame that we had to leave him behind," Jake writes.

The cowboys are gone now and the Wild West has been tamed. The frontier humor of yesterday seems cruel and rough today, but perhaps it was appropriate then. And as Pinnacle Jake said later in a letter to another ex-cowboy, "It's a good thing some of the old timers are writing about what really happened then, and how we worked and lived in those days."

The difference between a moral man and a man of honor is that the latter regrets a discretifiable act, even when it has worked and he has not been caught.

Henry Louis Mencken

Summer Nebraskan

Thou speakest wiser than thou art ware of.

Shakespeare

Tuesday, June 23, 1964

Summer Nebraskan

No. 2

Parents, Freshman Visit NU

A new summer program to acquaint entering freshmen and their parents with the University began yesterday.

The first group of students and their parents met in the Nebraska Union. There was a one-day program for parents and a half day program for freshmen. Other groups of freshmen and their parents have been invited to attend similar sessions during the summer.

According to Curtis Siemers, coordinator of student activities, there were about 55 students and 65 parents in this first group.

Students in this program are residing in Piper hall. The parents may also stay in Piper Hall if there is room, Siemers said, or at the Nebraska Center on Ag campus.

"Through this program, we hope to make the University experience as valuable as possible," said Dr. G. Robert Ross, vice chancellor for student affairs.

New students who take part will be able to complete their physical reviews and also their advising sessions. Each new student will be given a maximum of individual attention so that all questions about academic work and student life can be fully and personally answered before the fall term, Dean Ross said. When fall comes, they will be ready to pay fees and begin classes with few preliminaries.

Parents and new students will have many opportunities to visit with University staff members, junior students and June graduates who will assist with the program.

Union Presents Guitarist, Films

The Union will present Juan Serrano, a Flamenco guitarist, tomorrow evening in the ballroom.

Serrano, who is considered one of the foremost Flamenco guitarists in the world was taught to play by his father. At nine he gave his first concert which was received so well that he started traveling with a dance company.

Serrano comes from Cordova, Spain where there is a clock in the town square which strikes the hour by playing recordings of his music.

Serrano has been in the United States since 1961. He has appeared on the "Today" TV show and at different coffee houses in Greenwich Village.

This second in the Summer Artist Series will begin at 8:00.

"Potemkin", a Cinema Classic, will be shown in Love Library Thursday. This movie was made in 1925 and is one of the greatest Russian films ever made.

The "Mouse That Roared" an amusing film starring Peter Sellers will be presented by the Union in Love Library next Monday.

Teachers College Up 265

Enrollment May Top 5,500; Registration Runs 25% Higher

Summer Sessions enrollment should top 5,500 students if registration during last Saturday and yesterday continued at the rate of the first four days.

This record breaking figure would

mean that in the last ten years the summer enrollment has doubled. In 1954 the enrollment was 2,680 students.

Registration for the first four days ran 25 per cent above last summers with a total of 4,425 enrolled which already

better last summer's 4,300 completed enrollment.

According to Floyd W. Hoover, registrar, the enrollment at the end of four days last year was 3,209.

Total enrollment figures include not only regular undergraduates and graduates but also those registered for institutes, workshops, thesis research, and the post sessions.

With the figure for last Saturday and yesterday yet to be compiled, mark gains are shown in Teachers College for both undergraduates and advance professionals.

For the first four days undergraduate enrollment for Teachers College was 958 which better by 265 students the enrollment during the first four days last year; the advance professional enrollment was up 248 students to 743.

According to Hoover's figures, the Graduate College also showed a significant gain with over 40 per cent more students registered at the end of the fourth day this year (1,096) than at the end of the fourth day last year (769).

Arts and Science enrollment was up 196 to 680 for the first four days.

Engineering College showed a gain of 60 students to 294, and Business Administration gained 39 students for 278.

Frank Sorenson, director of Summer Sessions said that the teaching staff this year (including full professors to assistants) has been increased to 432 which would be a 5 per cent increase over the 412 instructors of the last Summer Sessions.

Sorenson said that the expenditures for the 1963 Summer Session was \$422,824.51. The predicted expenditure for this summer is \$467,624.40 or an increase of \$44,799.89. Sorenson said that this was largely instructional cost and did not include operational cost of facilities.

Sorenson also noted that practically every state was represented in the enrollment. In 1963 there was 109 students from foreign countries and United States dependences enrolled in the Summer Sessions.

Hoover said that while he did not expect the record enrollment this summer he was not surprised.

He explained the enrollment increase as being due to the "interest factor" which lumps together the social and economic changes which are bringing about an unprecedented interest in education beyond high school.

Hoover compared the present college enrollment situation to the high school enrollment situation right after World War I when for the first time the adolescent was released from remunerative work, and students who previously would have dropped out of school after the eighth grade started going on to high school.

A repetition of this moving upward is occurring now but on the college level, Hoover said, as now people from all walks of life can afford to send their children to college.

Collect Call To Australia



LET'S CALL HOME—June Fleming (left) is watched by her traveling and teaching partner Irene Davidovs. Miss Fleming is preparing to call her sister in Australia. Both Miss Fleming and Miss Davidovs are from Australia.

Travel By Bus

Australians Teaching Here

By Barbara Troublhorn

Two young Australian school teachers are spending their summer in Lincoln teaching at the University Lab school in Bancroft Hall.

Irene Davidovs and June Fleming left their homes in Melbourne about four months ago with plans to travel across the United States and then teach in Canada for a year.

They have traveled across the country by bus making stops at the homes of people whom they had met on their boat.

When they stopped in Lincoln in March they visited Dr. Frank Sorenson, director of the University's Summer School, who had also been on their boat. He invited them to teach in Lincoln for the summer.

Miss Davidovs is teaching a class of fifth-graders on "Australia, the Sunburnt Country" and Miss Fleming is teaching a pre-kindergarten class.

Both plan to teach in Grand Junction, Colorado, next fall. After teaching there a year, they plan to travel to Europe and teach for another year or two.

There is nothing unusual about young Australians leaving their homes to work in Europe or the United States, according to Miss Davidovs. In fact, she said, so many are leaving that they have found it necessary to establish quotas.

What has been the most difficult thing for the two to get used to? The food. In Australia pancakes are considered a dessert, and a salad is considered a whole meal, said Miss Fleming.

Be Sure To Read

'Let Us Be Leaders'

Chancellor Clifford M. Hardin takes a look at the future of the University. In his address at the Alumni Round-up Hardin said "Let us move forward rapidly enough to be leaders in whatever we attempt."

Hardin wonders "... if we can rekindle that spirit of pride and burning zeal we seemed to have possessed a half century ago."

He says that "... it is possible to make progress but so slowly that we can get trampled from behind."

You'll find this article on Page 4.

Can Pornography Be Stopped?

Two journalism students as a part of their depth reporting study describe an "expensive come-on game in Nebraska." They report that "approximately 200 Lincolinites have received and reported the receipt of letters from Canada offering pornography and that "Although laws regulating pornography are often made stiffer, it's getting harder all the time to successfully prosecute the distributors."

A fairly recent addition to the federal code has been aiding the prosecutors: In addition to the person sending the material or receiving it, the person who sends for the material can now be prosecuted.

Be sure to read this timely report on Page 2.

Works of All-Staters

Journalism students in All-State classes compete in a writing and photography contest. Be sure to read "Nebraskaland" and "Human Talent" and learn just what Nebraska's teenagers think of their state and summer experience.

Also see the results when All-State Students take to cameras.

See Page 3.