Bypaths of Kansas History

BURIAL OF A CHIEF’S SON

From the White Cloud Kansas Chief, October 21, 1858.

A son of To-he, an Iowa chief, died a few days since, and was buried with the highest honors of the tribe. He was placed in a standing (or sitting) posture, on the surface of the ground, upon the top of a high hill, with his face to the setting sun, and bow and arrows, a war-club and a pipe were deposited near him. A pony, which was said to be the fleetest in the tribe, was then shot and laid beside the boy; and thus prepared to journey to the happy hunting grounds, a mound of earth was raised over the whole. A white flag was then raised over the mound, and the usual charms placed around, to keep away evil spirits. The young chief was but ten or twelve years of age.

KEEPING THE SABBATH IN 1859

From a manuscript volume, “Record of Members of the Congregational Church, Topeka,” preserved in the archives of the First Congregational Church.

The annual meeting of the church was held May 21st, 1859, the pastor being in the chair. . . . A communication from Brother C L Terrill, giving his reasons for traveling on the Sabbath while teaming, was read, and final action upon it deferred to a future meeting. . . .

Minutes of a meeting of the Free Congregational Church of Topeka, held July 16th, 1859, according to public notice. . . . The reading of a communication from Brother C L Terrill received May 21st was followed by a verbal statement of the facts, from him. After consideration of the subject the following was unanimously adopted.

Resolved That this church having heard from Brother C L Terrill his reasons for traveling on the Sabbath upon the two occasions mentioned by him, considers them insufficient, that he violated the law of God by so traveling, and should make an acknowledgment of the wrong as public as the offence. . . .

Pursuant to a call of the trustees, a meeting of the church or society was held Nov 6th 1860, in the evening at the school house; E C Tefft presiding.

Bro. C L Terrills request for a letter of dismissal and recommendation, was presented, and it being objected to on account of his being under censure for violation of the Sabbath, the clerk was instructed to correspond with him in relation to the matter.

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GETTING OUT THE VOTE

From the Weekly Herald, Leavenworth, December 10, 1859.

Dr. H——— tells a good story at the expense of our worthy ex-city marshal. While the latter was endeavoring to rescue the team which broke through the ice on election day, he broke through himself, and came very near drowning. As the ice was giving way, and he about going down, he exclaimed, at the top of his voice, "I have not voted—I have not voted!" Of course he was rescued, as candidates could be found within the hearing of every man's voice.

INDIAN BALL

From the Leavenworth Daily Times, April 27, 1862.

The Burlington Register notices a game of ball played by the refugee Indians at Leroy on Sunday, April 15th. It is a new game, and might be adopted for novelty by the ball-players of civilization. Two frames, each about twelve feet high and three feet wide, were erected, about 150 yards apart. These belonged to the two parties engaged in the play, each party composed of eighty Indians and each possessing a frame. The trick of the game was to cast balls through those frames. If the party of one frame succeeded in thrusting a ball through or hitting the frame of the other party, it resulted in counting one for the party so succeeding. Twenty was the number played for. But one ball was in circulation at a time, and it was started from the center by umpires, the ball being thrown upward. Both parties mixed promiscuously, and upon the ascension of the ball from the umpires, a general scramble was made for it by all. Each Indian had two bars or scoops, about two and a half feet in length, with which to throw the ball. It was not allowable to touch the ball with the hands. The Indians wore nothing but breech clouts; all of their persons, except the little portion covered with breech clouts, were stripped bare to the skin.

BASIC ENGLISH

From the Marysville Enterprise, August 11, 1866.

The following is a true copy of a "notis" that is posted up on a post in the prairie somewhere in this county:

ey Due hear Buy for Bid eney person of cutting eney grass on my plase if thay Due thay will loose thar labor and i want them to Bee veary earfull and not cum over the line. July the 30 1866.
HEADED FOR KANSAS

From The Weekly Free Press, Atchison, November 10, 1866.

The St. Joe Herald says yesterday morning a party of emigrants passed through that city en route to Kansas and created some excitement, owing to the very novel conveyance made use of. In a "dog cart," leisurely reclining upon a mattress, were an old woman and a young girl, both enjoying the luxury of a pipe; the old man and his youthful son being hard at work giving the necessary locomotion to the vehicle.

FORECASTING THE WEATHER

From the White Cloud Kansas Chief, June 20, 1867.

We are reminded of the fact that the weather is very hot, by seeing the Indians sauntering about snugly enveloped in heavy blankets and military overcoats. In winter, they will go half naked.

IN THE WRONG PEF

From the Marysville Enterprise, February 15, 1868.

At Topeka there is a marked saloon, with a beautiful gilt sign, marked "Senate." It is in a fine brick block just adjoining the rickety old rookery where the senate of the state convenes to make laws for the people. As becometh all religious and properly organized legislative bodies, the senate opens each morning with prayer, the resident clergyman of the city of Topeka officiating. The other morning, Rev. Mr. H [A. J. Hesson?], who is a new comer, was called upon to officiate. Observing the sign, he went into the "Senate," but seeing sundry bottles and billiard tables, concluded that was hardly the place for the assembled wisdom of the state to convene. The reverend gentleman explains the joke by saying, in a quiet way, that he thought he would be as apt to find as many senators there as anywhere.—State Journal.

AN INDIAN HEARS OF THE FIRST SIN

From the Emporia News, January 28, 1870.

A gentleman from the Southwest, who called upon us the other day, is responsible for the following story: One of Grant's Quaker Indian agents was down in the neighborhood of Fort Gibson on a missionary tour, and called together a number of the red men to give them some religious instruction. The Friend talked of the exceeding sinfulness of human nature, and the "fruit of that forbidden tree which brought death into the world and all our woe," and as he warmed with his subject and his voice rose and fell in the pathetic undulations of his Quaker song, an aged chief was observed to be giving very marked attention to the preacher, until, through the interpreter, he learned
how the woman was persuaded by the serpent to eat the forbidden fruit, and
for which she was driven from the Garden. His countenance changed, and
with a look of unmistakable contempt, he replied, "Ugh! that was just like a
white woman; if she had been a squaw, she would have picked up a stick and
killed that snake."

UNCOMFORTABLE PLATES? TRY THIS!

From The Kansas Daily Commonwealth, Topeka, May 1, 1870.

A gentle savage near Fort Scott recently traded two mules for a set of
false teeth, and proudly wore them, necklace fashion, around his neck.

MAYBE HE DIDN'T LIKE THE HAT

From the Ellsworth Reporter, December 5, 1872.

Curley Marshall, a desperado of considerable note, recently departed this
life peacefully in his bed at his home in Wichita. He used to live in this city
and killed at least one man here. Last summer he made Newton his head-
quarters. One day a stranger came into a saloon wearing a "stove pipe" hat.
The wearing of such a hat was sufficient provocation for Curley Marshall to
shoot him, which he did without hesitation.

THE WAGES OF HORSE THIEVING WAS DEATH

From the Junction City Union, August 30, 1873.

Mr. L. C. Palmer, of this city, returned on Tuesday of last week from one
of the longest, dryest and dustiest chases after horse thieves that has occurred
in his own history, or that of anybody else.

On the night of Sunday, the 16th inst., three horses were stolen from the
stable of Mr. McNamee, living seven miles from this city, on Lyons creek.
Two of the horses were a span once belonging to Mr. Forbes, of this city, and
remarkable for large size, weighing about 3,300 pounds; the third animal was
a riding mare belonging to a daughter of Mr. McNamee's. The Houston
brothers, two sons of Mr. McNamee, Mr. McClelland, of Woodbine, and a
Mexican in the employ of Mr. Mansfield, took the trail on Sunday morning,
while the elder McNamee came to town and telegraphed to points south and
west.

On Monday night Mr. Palmer started from Junction, armed with a warrant
from Justice Gordon, and went out twenty-five miles up Lyons creek, where
he waited for day-light, to resume his journey. At Marion Centre on Wednes-
day morning, Mr. Palmer found that the thieves with the three horses had
been seen near town on Sunday morning, and had tried to trade the stock.
He also learned that Sheriff Howe, of Marion county, had gone on in pursuit.
He also heard that the Hustons and their party were still on the trail in ad-
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after the thieves. At Marion Centre Mr. P. exchanged his horse and buggy for a saddle horse, and pushed on to Peabody, where he again changed horses. At Towanda, Butler county, his next stopping place, he found the Marion Centre party had changed horses. The people all along the road had noticed the big horses and suspected the riders, but had not arrested them.

Mr. Palmer rode on to Augusta, changing horses again, went on to Winfield, where he found he was beginning to gain on the thieves. He learned at Winfield that the Marion Centre party had gone on to the state line, and had there given up the chase and returned through Winfield.

The next stopping place was Arkansas City, a short distance from the state line. Here he learned that the thieves had passed through, and had broken into some houses, from which the owners were absent, and stolen provisions. They had also stolen two saddles, which must have been a relief, as two of them had ridden bareback all the way from Lyons Creek. Mr. Palmer also heard here that the Davis [Geary] county boys had come down the river from Wichita, had taken four men with them and gone south. Two of the men, the Arkansas City men said, were old scouts, who would certainly take the thieves in. It was Thursday morning and Palmer was bothered. He waited three hours in Arkansas City, then took a fresh horse and started east on the state line. Twelve miles east he found that the thieves had crossed and gone toward Gibson. Determined to cut them off, he kept east along the line in the territory, traveling forty miles without seeing a house. Just before reaching Elgin he met a bare-footed man who said he had come from the Osage agency, and that seven miles south of Elgin he had met three negroes with the horses. In the meantime the Davis county party had gone to the Kaw reserve in the territory, had heard of the thieves, but acting on the advice of the scouts, had returned to Arkansas City, thus throwing them behind Palmer. They then got six men and went east on his trail.

The affair was now getting interesting. Palmer was closing in on his game. At Elgin Mr. Palmer secured the aid of Deputy United States Marshal Joe Vannoy, Charley Case, Dr. Miller and another gentleman, and struck out on the agency road. At midnight the party halted on the prairie. On Friday morning they found the thieves had doubled on their track and taken the Coffeyville road to the old Osage agency, and then gone south. They were, when the pursuers reached the old agency, but two hours ahead, but were going their best. Taking the Fort Gibson road, the pursuing party went 35 miles to the home of the Delaware, Sarcozie. The Indian informed them that half an hour before the thieves had passed, and taken a blind trail to the left. The thing was getting red hot. Sarcozie gave Vannoy a fresh pony, mounted one himself and joined the pursuers. Seven miles more, and they came upon the thieves, who had dismounted, unsaddled their horses, and were resting. It was at the edge of the timber, and the thieves did not take the alarm until the pursuers were within two hundred yards. They then jumped up and ran on foot in different directions. Sarcozie went to the horses. Palmer gave chase to one and called him to halt. He kept on running. Palmer's first inducement to stop him cut the vest on top of his shoulder. The second argument cut a finger off his right hand. The thief then fell as if dead, and Palmer turned back to the rest of the party. He found one of the thieves a prisoner. Another had been chased up a ravine in the prairie. It is not certainly known
what became of him, but there is great reason to hope that he will steal no more horses. Attention was then directed to Palmer’s supposed dead man, but it was found that he had gone off. He was surrounded in a corn-field and ordered to come out. He at first declined on the ground that he was dead, but finally came out. The party, with the two prisoners and the recaptured horses, started for Elgin.

The thieves were all mulattoes, and young men. The two captured were well dressed and intelligent, and appeared quite unconcerned about their fate.

On arriving at Elgin, the Davis county and Arkansas City party was met. Palmer got handcuffs for his prisoners and left them in a livery stable, in custody, while he took a sleep. At about midnight a party demanded the prisoners. Resistance under the circumstances would have been manifestly improper.

A short distance from the town, in an open place in the timber, the enterprising citizens of Elgin have started a graveyard. It is designed for horse thieves and the like, and the first grave made there was that of a horse thief who killed one of the best citizens of that region. To this dismal place at midnight the two horse thieves were taken. They had not denied their guilt, for to do so would have been useless; but said a man named Cox had told them where to find McNamie’s horses, and had said that if they could get the horses to Fort Gibson, he would give them a good price for them. They asked time to say their prayers, which was granted them, and then were hung on a tree; and were hanging there when the Davis county party left the next morning.

Mr. Palmer came with the party about thirty miles, and then left them, as they were obliged to travel slowly on account of the jaded condition of the big horses.

He arrived home on Tuesday, having been gone a week, and traveled in that time, as he figures it, about 600 miles.

We have been thus minute in describing this affair because we think all parties deserve credit for their perseverance in the matter, and set a good example. If a similar course were pursued in western Missouri, it would break up the gang of marauders which infest that country, robbing railroad trains and banks, and committing all sorts of depredations.

A WOLF HUNT IN 1876

From The Nationalist, Manhattan, March 31, 1876.

The following letter was written by an officer on the staff of Gen. [George] Meade, while stationed in the Indian territory, to his four little children. We are sure our young readers will thank us for producing it for their especial benefit.—[Ed.]

Fort Sill, I. T., March 7, 75 [1875?].

My dear children—Till, Meade, Joe and the baby—I doubt whether the baby can understand this—how are you all? Your papa does want to see you very much. Till must read this letter.—She ought to read it very well since she wrote her papa such a nice letter.

Soon after I got here I went on a wolf hunt—there are not many trees around here, but round hills and valleys, and a horse can run everywhere.
First rode the hunter, Mr. Jones, the man who talks to the Indians and tells us what they say, and them what we want to have told. After the hunter’s horse’s heels trotted half a dozen or a dozen greyhounds and the hunter had a horn something like those horns you get at Pentenrieder’s for a quarter, on which he tooted whenever the dogs strayed too far away, and they came instantly back. We had not gone far before we saw a wolf sneaking away as if he did not want us to see him, but it was too late. One of the dogs saw him, and with a bark the whole pack was after him. The riders gave a cheer, and your father amongst them galloped after the dogs like the wind. First went poor wolf running for dear life and never uttering a sound—but ever and anon casting an anxious glance behind to see how far his pursuers were behind him—then came the cruel hounds straining every nerve, and so earnest that they did not have time to bark but only gave an occasional yelp—all well together—then came the riders, scattered for half a mile—some riding in the front at the top of their speed so as to be in at the death, or present when the wolf was caught and killed—others, who did not want to go so fast, or whose horses were not so fast, were strung along behindhand. Among the first riders, at the head of the column, were two boys, one ten and the other nine, only a year older than Till. They were mounted on small Indian ponies—had little horns to blow and enjoyed themselves more than anybody else. They also had knives to cut off the wolf’s tail if they got there first. The first wolf chased ran along until it got to a stream running between banks as high as our house and very steep, and jumped right into the water ker-chunk, and all the dogs jumped right in after him and before he could swim across, the dogs caught him. We all got down from our horses and looked. Such a fuss and row as was kicked up in that water you never did see. Bark, snap—barking and snapping with the teeth were all the sounds you could hear. The water was churned by the struggle and splashing into a foam, and the foam turned red from the blood which flowed from the bites the dogs gave the wolf. Nor did the dogs escape without scars. They all were bitten on the nose and about the eyes by wolfie in his dying struggles. At last one of the hunters, a lieutenant, reached down, took hold of the wolf by the hind leg and pulled him out of the water, and held him up, he was quite dead, and his head hung down. His tail was cut off and kept as a trophy of the hunt—your mother will tell you what trophy means. They take the tail so as to brag of killing the wolf. The next wolf we caught was in the open prairie. We saw the dogs biting at him and wolfie snapping at the dogs. He has long jaws filled with shining white teeth and big grey eyes, just like the wolf who put on Little Red Riding Hood’s grandmother’s cap, and ate up Little Red Riding Hood, as you children have read of, so I didn’t feel as sorry for the wolf as I might have done, seeing him alone surrounded by so many enemies. Just as soon as the first man got up he pulled out his hunting knife and cut off the wolf’s tail while the dogs were fighting him. Wolves are smart, and this wolf very soon made out he was dead. Gen. [John W.?] Davidson, who was the chief man in rank, then came up, and he was a kind man, and said—take off the dogs, you’ve got the poor wolf’s tail, he is only pretending to be dead, now you have his tail, let us go away and let us watch him. We had to beat and kick the dogs to make them go away and follow Mr. Jones, who tooted his horn for them. All the rest of us then rode off a little way and got behind a hill and watched the
wolf to see where he was going and what he was going to do. For some time the wolf laid right still and did not move. Soon he raised his head, looked around quickly and laid it right down again as if he were dead again. Then he raised it when he found he was not bothered and looked longer—and then seeing all the bad dogs away he got up a little and walked away a little—very weak and tired—laid down and rested a little bit, got up again and staggered off sadly into the world without any tail. We caught another wolf and turned him off without a tail. I'll bring you children home one of these tails to let you see what they look like.

Then we rode home all very tired, the dogs all scarred from nose to tail with bites from the wolves. Mr. Jones, the hunter, said they would not be able to hunt again for a week.

Sometimes they catch a wolf whose tail has been cut off before.

After we left off hunting, we rode home through some of the Indian camps. The first camp we came to we saw a little Indian boy creeping through the grass trying to shoot a bird that he was creeping on, with a little bow and arrow he had. This little boy was hardly any bigger than Joe. His was a small bow and his arrows had no iron head, but were made of sharp wood. I'll bring home some of the arrows to let you see. The little Indian boys are very expert in killing little birds, with these little bows and arrows. When they are big men they have to make their living by killing big game, with their bows and arrows, so they are taught how to commence shooting with little arrows when they are young, just like you children are taught how to read and write in small children's books when you are young so that you may make your own living when you grow big and strong, and be able to read big books, and write real letters and do big sums. We rode through their camps which were made of big tents or lodges, or tepees as they call them, made of buffalo robes sewed together and stretched over poles.

The men—warriors—were glad to see us, but the children hollered and one little fellow pretended to shoot arrows at us, and made fun of us, and spit at us, as if he did not like us, although he was laughing. As he was not as big as Meade we only laughed at him. Perhaps if he lives and all his people are not killed before, he may be a big Indian like those you children have seen, and kill a great many white men.

I saw an Indian war dance here, but I'll tell you that some other time when I write, or when I come home, which I hope will be soon.

It will be nice weather when I come home, and I expect to walk with you.

Your mother says you have all been very good, and therefore I will bring you all something, but you must not expect too much, and you must not want to see your dear father just because he is to bring you something, but also because you love him and want to see him.

Good bye Till, Meade and sweet little Jo. 

Your Father.

Still Fashionable in Places

From the Junction City Union, July 22, 1876.

To cut a child's hair with neatness and dispatch, just turn over its head a bowl, and with a pair of sharp scissors clip close to the edge all around. This is very economical, and appears to be quite fashionable in many places.
ADD TO THE DIFFICULTIES OF RAILROADING

From the Parsons Eclipse, November 15, 1877.

Five car loads of cattle of train No. 6 was ditched on Friday evening, and unloading the stock a masculine bovine made it lively for the boys for a few minutes. After running all hands under the cars, he tried to throw the engine from the track, but failing in this he started off on the run. The last seen of him he was going over the hills at a lively rate with head and tail erect.

A CYCLONE INCIDENT OF 1879

From the Junction City Union, June 14, 1879.

A Salina gentleman tells a singular incident connected with the cyclone of the 30th. He was coming down Solomon valley in the public hack. They had passed Delphos a mile or so. There were three passengers beside the driver. One of the passengers was a good story teller, was engaged in the relation of some incident which attracted the attention of all the others, and they had turned their faces towards him on the back seat. Suddenly a strong gust of wind struck the hack, and the hats of all the company were carried off on the prairie. The hack was stopped and the whole party, including the driver, started in pursuit of their hats. Our narrator was the first to recover his, some two hundred yards from where the hack had been left. On turning round he was surprised not to see the hack. The whirlwind was plainly to be seen on its course. His attention was attracted to an object moving in a circle, as every thing was moving, but descending to the earth. He watched it till it struck the ground, then hastened to it to ascertain what it was. It was the hack and horses. The two horses and the hack had been picked up by the cyclone, carried up towards the clouds and then dropped again within a hundred yards from where they had been sucked up by the demon of the air. Both horses were killed, and the hack broken to pieces.

OF INTEREST TO VICTORY GARDEN SPADEs

From the Logan Enterprise, September 23, 1880.

We understand that a colored man in Graham county, has, during the summer, spaded a four-foot hedge row around his farm of 160 acres, and we are told that another colored man in the same vicinity has a cow with which he broke and improved twelve acres of prairie and cultivated eight acres of corn.