

The True Story of the Rock Creek, Nebraska Territory Tragedy.

The Killing of David C. McCanles, James Woods and James Gordon,  
July 12th, 1861.

This story is by William Monroe McCanles, an eye witness who was standing by.

*David C. McCanles*  
*July 12th 1861*  
My father, David C. McCanles, left North Carolina in March, 1859, his destination being Pike's Peak. This was during the gold excitement in Colorado. He came to Leavenworth, Kansas, and outfitted for a trip across the plains. He got as far as Rock Creek, Nebraska Territory, and having met several parties returning from Pike's Peak with such discouraging stories about the gold prospects there, he stopped at Rock Creek and bought of Newton Glenn the only Ranch on the creek at that time. This was on the west side of the creek, and was the overland mail and stage station on the Oregon trail at that time. During the summer of 1859 my father built a Ranch house on the east side of the creek, dug a well and found plenty of water. There was no water to be had at the west ranche, excepting the creek water. Also, during this summer, he built a toll bridge across the creek, which was quite an undertaking, for it was the first bridge along the line and a great help to travelers on the Overland Trail. He built the house on the east side to house his brother, J. L. McCanles, who had concluded to come west, and in the latter part of August of that year, his brother and family, <sup>with</sup> my father's family, his nephew, James Woods, and Billie Hughes, an orphan boy, left North Carolina for Nebraska Territory. We came by rail road, steam boat and ox teams, and

on the 10th of September 1859.

the Little Blue River near the mouth of Rock Creek.

Father then built a barn and a bunk house on the east side and rented that station to Russell, Majors and Waddell, who operated the overland Stage and Pony Express to California, and they took charge and furnished their own station keeper and stock tenders.

Early in the spring of 1861 father sold the west ranch to a couple of Germans, Hagenstein & Wolfe. The summer of 1860 was a very dry year and my uncle became somewhat dissatisfied with conditions, so he picked up and moved down towards Nebraska City, and took up land in Johnson County, Nebraska. <sup>Now,</sup> after father sold the west ranch he moved to the ranch on the Blue. We had a good lot of cattle and horses and a lot of work oxen. We kept several hired men and were doing a regular ranch business. We furnished the hay for both of the ranches on Rock Creek. The Stage Company had at this time a man named H. Wellman and his wife as station keeper and Dock Brink as stock tender.

¶ Early in the spring of 1861 the Stage Company sent James B. Hickok to the Rock Creek Station as assistant stock tender. Jim claimed to be a South Carolinian and father and he became quite cronies, both being from the south. The Wellmans and father were not quite so friendly. They were too slow with their payments. About the first days of July, 1861, Wellman and I went to Brownville, after a load of supplies for the station and some for father. We were gone about ten days, as it was 100 miles to Brownville, on the Missouri river. We got home about 4 o'clock July 12th. ¶ There was a little ranch upon the road south east of the Station kept by Jack Ney. When we got to the Station I saw some horses hitched up at Nye's and I thought I recognized them as some of ours, so I ran up to Nye's and found father, Woods and Gordon there. Father seemed glad to see me, and wanted to know if Wellman

U.S.S. RIGEL,

San Diego, California,

20 November 1938.

The Secretary,

Nebraska State Historical Society,

Lincoln, Nebraska.

My Dear Sir:-

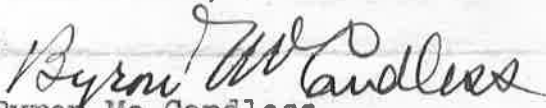
I have photostat copies of the documents in the Case of the Territory of Nebraska against Wm B. Hickok, J. W. Brink and Horace Wellman tried by Justice of the Peace Coulter at Beatrice on July 15-16 and 18th 1861 . I seem to be missing an endorsement on the BILL of COSTS. I have one such that reads "Laid over for a rehearing Oct 7 1861" and " Nov 30 laid over. But there is a heavy writing that shows through the paper on the copy of the Bill of Costs that seems to be additional. I would like to get a photostat copy of the whole reverse side of that Bill of Costs of Costs. Also Arthur Chapman in his The Pony Express- speaks of a sworn statement of my Uncle Monroe Mc Canles made in 1925 about the Rock Creek tragedy. I would like to have a photostat copy of that complete statement.

Negatives will be satisfactory and please let me know how much to cover all expenses. I will remit at once.

With many thanks,

I am,

Sincerely Yours,

  
Byron Mc Candless,  
Captain, U.S. Navy.

P.S. Where could I obtain the records regarding the transfer of the property on which Rock Creek Station was located I understand that it was in Section Twenty Six. Township Two, North; Range Three East. Connelley says my Grandfather purchased it from Newton Glenn. I would like to get photostat copies on any land records that will show the various ownerships of the properties on the east and west side of Rock Creek and at the place where Grandfather had a ranch at the mouth of Rock Creek into Little Blue and also a Hay ranch that he had to supply hay for the Ponies, stage horses, oxen etc. Ownership up to and shortly after the tragedy of July 12 1861. Jefferson County was then Jones County I believe.



November 29, 1938

Captain Byron Mc Candless  
U.S.S. Rigel  
San Diego, California

My Dear Sir:

Replying to your letter of November 20th, regarding photo-  
stats of the following:

1. Reverse side of "Bill of Costs", Nebraska Territory  
against Wm. B. Hickok.
2. Sworn statement by Monroe Mc Candless.
3. Land records of the various plats where Rock Creek  
Station and the Mc Candless ranch were located.

Our answer is:

1. We can produce a photostat for fifty cents.
2. You probably refer to statement on pp. 113-116 of  
Volume X - No. 2, Nebraska History Magazine, that  
contains the complete story of the Rock Creek Tragedy.  
If you wish, we will deliver a copy postpaid for \$2.00.
3. We have the original U. S. land records here that show  
the Rock Creek Station plats Sec. 26, T. 2N - R 3E. W $\frac{1}{2}$   
of N.E. $\frac{1}{4}$  & S.E. $\frac{1}{4}$  of N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$  & N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$  of S.E. $\frac{1}{4}$  were home-  
steated by Allen Ervin August 2, 1860, Certificate #2184.  
The Mc Candless ranch plats Sec. 3, T. 1N - R 3E. S $\frac{1}{2}$  of  
S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$  & S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$  of S.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ . Sec. 10 N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$  of N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$  home-  
steated by James Mc Candless Certificate #2185, August  
2, 1860. Sec. 4, E. $\frac{1}{2}$  of S. $\frac{1}{4}$  by William Mc Candless,  
May 20, 1872, in red ink and March 11, 1879 in black ink.  
It is possible to obtain photographs of these pages for  
about \$3.00.

Regarding photographs of the records of transfer and ownership  
up to the present date, may we suggest as the least expensive plan

Captain Byron Mc Candless - 2

would be to get in touch with some abstractor in Fairbury, Jefferson County, and commission him to make abstracts of the land up to date for you.

However, your letter states "I would like to get photostat copies on any land records that will show various ownerships of the properties." This would entail the photographing of the many deeds, transfers, etc., at the County Court House, and it is impossible to state just what the expense for this would amount to.

Sincerely yours,

Topographical Engineer

aef/eh

January 30, 1923

BYRON MCCANDLESS  
U. S. S. RIGEL, DESTROYER BASE  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

3 December 1938.

The Neb. State Hist. Soc.,  
State Capitol,  
Lincoln, Neb.

My Dear Mr Fuller:-

Please accept my thanks for  
your very kind and prompt answer to my enquiries.

I am enclosing U.S. Postal Money order for  
\$5.50 in payment for the various items suggested  
in your letter;-

1. Reverse side of "Bill of Costs" Nebraska  
Territory against Wm. B. Hickok. A photostat copy.

2. Your Vol X No. 2 Nebraska History Magazine  
with sworn statement of my Uncle Monroe Mc Canles.

3. The land records pages showing the area of  
the Rock Creek Stations, the Mc Candless ranch at  
the junction of Rock Creek and the Little Blue;  
and the Hay ranch down about 1 1/3 miles from the  
mouth of the Rock Creek, and on the left bank of  
the Little Blue. My Father has sent me a sketch  
of these properties copy of which I am enclosing.

Would you please let me have the land officer's  
records that relate to these three properties. I  
will then do as you suggest and have an abstractor  
in Fairbury get the material for a later date.

My father writes that the farm at the mouth of  
Rock Creek on the Little Blue was the first one  
in Jones County, and owned by my Grandfather D.C.  
Mc Candless. Apparently the Hay ranch was taken  
up by his brother James Leroy Mc Candless. I am

trying to find out about who owned these vario

properties before and at the time my Grandfather was shot at Rock Creek Station July 12 1861. And I would like also to find out what happened to the properties just after the tragedy. Did the Stage Company acquire possession of them. Holladay seems to have cut Rock Creek Station out by his Oketo cut off when he by-passes Marysville. The Hay ranch is quite a figure in the tragedy I believe. Holmes the father of Mrs Wellman was working on the Hay Ranch for my Grandfather and he started off a team and wagon and some utensils and my grandfather got him the other side of Marysville and brought him back.

After the Rock Creek affair my grandmother and her children went to live with James Leroy Mc Candless who had a ranch on Yankee Creek a few miles from Tecumseh in Johnson County. I wonder if the land office record show any claim of that nature there. The family staid there for about a year and then returned to the Rock Creek properties. I mention this to show you just what I am interested in. I will gladly cover charges for an additional work that this may entail.

Please thank the Supt. Mr. Sheldon for his courtesey

With many thanks to you, Sir,

I am,

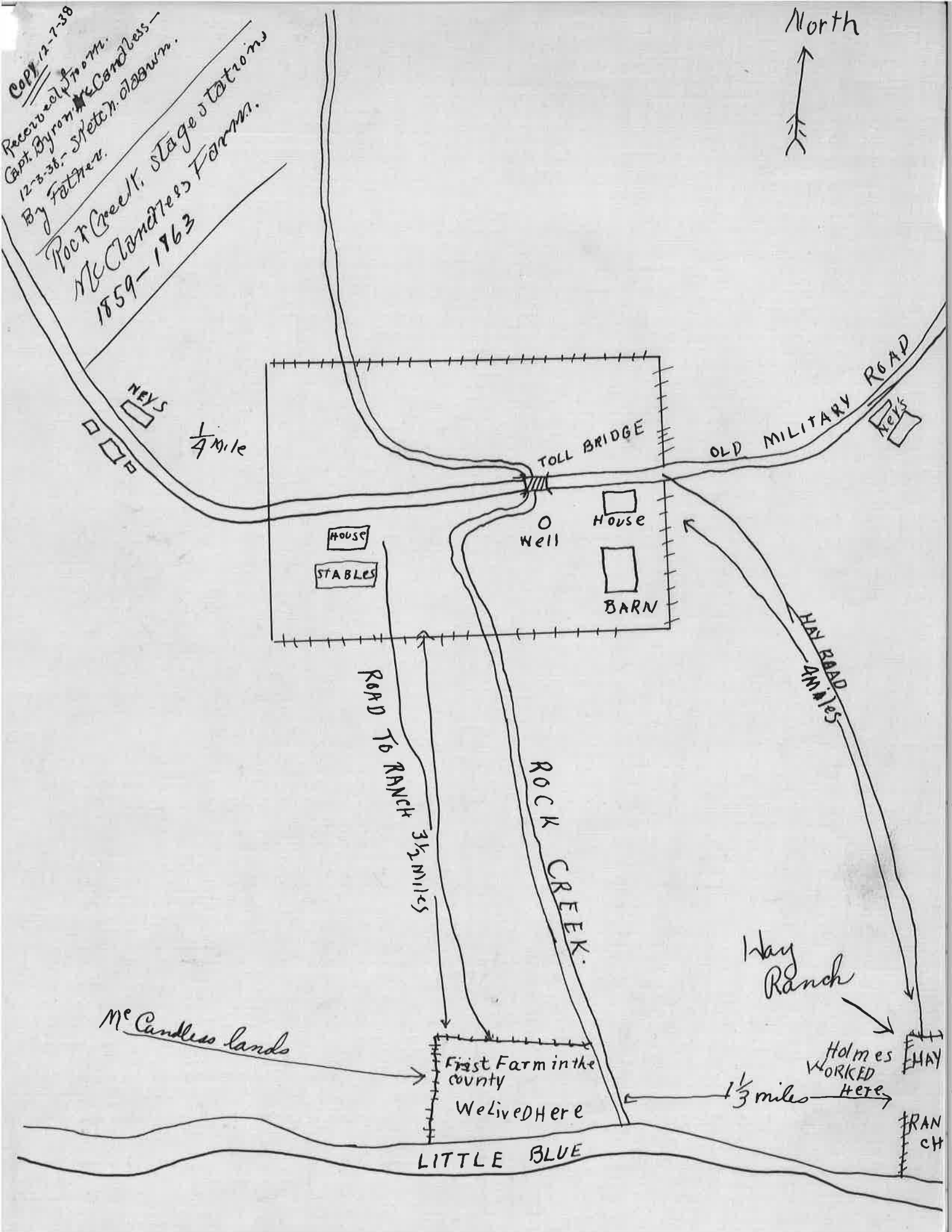
Sincerely Yours,

*Byron Mc Candless*  
Byron Mc Candless

Captain, U.S. Navy.



Copy 12-7-38  
Received from  
Capt. Byron McCandless -  
12-8-38 - Sketch drawn  
By Father.  
Rock Creek stage station  
McCandless Farm.  
1859-1963



December 12, 1938.

Captain Byron McCandless,  
U. S. S. Rigel,  
San Diego, California.

My Dear Sir:

Replying to your letter of December 3rd enclosing U. S. Postal Money Order for \$5.50 in payment for photographs and negative of

Reverse side of bill of costs of the Hickok trial;

Land records of Rock Creek stage station land plats, McCandless Farm land plats;

Copy of Vol. X, No. 2, Nebraska History Magazine.

These will be mailed to you under separate cover.

Regarding the ranch on Yankee Creek, Johnson County, the land records do not disclose the name of James Leroy McCandless, most likely he bought up a preemption claim. The exact location of the ranch would be required, to determine it, in that case. The abstractor would be able to locate it for you.

Under separate cover (mailing tube) we are sending a tracing taken from the Federal land plat records; it is self-explanatory and will aid you to locate correctly the land you are interested in. Please accept this with my compliments.

Yours truly,

NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

By

A. E. Fuller, Topographical  
Engineer

AEF:RSW

U.S.S. RIGEL,  
Destroyer Base,  
San Diego, California,  
25 December 1938.

My Dear Mr Sheldon:-

I wish to thank you for the the material about the Rock Creek affair. I did not find the photostat copy of the endorsement to the Bill of Costs. However, with the Vol X of the Neb. History Magazine before me I can trace the missing endorsement to be-

TO THE Honorable  
County Court  
Gage County  
Nebraska  
Territory.

Do you have photographic copies of the action of the County Court:-  
the Allowance of Bill of Costs, and the Commissioners' Record No 1  
as printed on page 112 of Vol X ?

My father writes me that -"Later on when Jones County was divided up and Jefferson County formed, they organized a district court, with O.P. Mason presiding. When he was instructing the grand jury in its duties, he told them about the 'Terrible slaughter of the Mc Canles', and told them that if the assassins could still be found it wasn't too late to bring them to justice". Do you suppose I could find anything on record as to these instructions and any action of that grand jury. Alexander Majors in his SEVENTY YEARS ON THE FRONTIER page 77 writes- "In Nebraska City I found a very intelligent, enterprising, and clever people, among whom were --- O.P. MASON, and a great many others of integrity and enterprise. I never did business more pleasantly than with the gentlemen whom I met during my residence of nine years there." I wonder if that O.P. MASON be the same one that my father tells about instructing that first Grand Jury in Jefferson County?

I would like to get a copy of Chas Dawson's PIONEER TALES OF THE OREGON TRAIL which you say relates mostly to Jefferson County. I was born in Endicott, Jefferson County, and would like to know something about my birth place. Likewise I gather that Vol XX of the Collections of the < Nebraska State Hist. Soc. provides a contemporaneous, continuous history of the Nebraska Region from 1808 to 1862. How may I obtain copies of these?

Also how may I obtain photostat negatives of the Brownville Advertiser of July 25 1861 with the account of the Rock Creek affair and also of the Nebraska City News with the same account.

Wishing You and Yours a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

I am , Sincerely Yours,

*Byron M. Candless*  
Byron Mc Candless,  
Captain, U.S. NAVY.

*Brownville Advertiser,*

*July 25, '61*

*Nebr. C. News (we have July 13, 20 '61 ;)*

Lincoln, Nebraska  
January 4, 1939.

Captain Byron McCandless,  
U. S. S. Rigel, Destroyer Base,  
San Diego, California.

My Dear Captain McCandless:

Replying to your letter of December 25, 1938.  
We regret that a photo of the reverse side of the Bill  
of Costs was not included. Please find one that we  
made extra here enclosed under the front cover of Vol. XX  
will you please check the negatives and see if that was  
omitted. We have no records of the hearing of the County  
Court on the allowance of Bill of Costs or Commissions Re-  
cord No. 1 Page 112 Vol. X.

Judge O. P. Mason served three terms in the Terri-  
torial Council 1858 to 1867 was then appointed Supreme  
Court Judge. We doubt if record other than quotation from  
speeches exist. However, it may be possible to pick up the  
statement you mention by getting in touch with the County  
Clerk of Otoe County.

Enclosed you will find typed copy from the Brown-  
ville Advertiser we thought you would like to know what it  
contained before going to the expense of Photostating the  
page. We have no copy of the Nebraska City News of that  
date. The copies we have were searched up to January 1862  
with no results. Charles Dawson's "Pioneer Tales of the  
Oregon Trail" is out of print and hard to find, however,  
we will endeavor to procure a copy for you. Volume XX  
Nebraska State Historical Publication will be shipped you  
parcel post on approval it it is not just what you want  
you may return it.

Yours truly,

ACF/vb

Topographical Engineer  
Vol. XX Shipped on approval 1-5-39.  
Photo - of Bill of Costs  
A.C.F.

U. S. S. RIGEL AND DESTROYER BASE  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

13 January 1939.

My Dear Mr. Fuller:-

I want to thank you for your kindness in sending me the Vol XX on approval. I do want to keep it. So please let me know how much to send to cover the cost.

I checked the negatives and found that they related only to the land records. There was no negative of the endorsement to Bill of Costs. Many thanks for the positive of that endorsement,

A copy of Dawson's Pioneer Tales of the Oregon Trail, would be greatly appreciated, if one should be found for sale.

The extracts from the Brownville Advertiser were most interesting. I would like to have negatives of the whole issue of July 25 1861. I can enlarge the negative films as I need them.

Also it occurs to me that as my Uncle Monroe went to Brownville with Wellman and it was upon their arrival back at ROCK CREEK on 12th July that the shooting took place, it may happen there may be some mention in the Brownville Advertiser of some circumstance connected with their visit-which would have to be a few days previous to the 12th of July 1861. I do not know whether the Advertiser was a daily or not. But if there be any items of interest in the pages previous to the one of July 25th I would like to have negatives of those pages.

I cannot express to you my appreciation for all the many things you have so kindly done for me in this research.

With warmest regards,  
Sincerely Yours,

*Byron Mc Candless*  
Byron Mc Candless,  
Capt. U.S. Navy.



U. S. S. RIGEL AND DESTROYER BASE  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

16 January 1939.

My Dear Mr. Fuller:-

Since I sent off the letter requesting the photo negatives of the BROWNVILLE ADVERTISER for 25 July 1861. I have been thinking it would be fine to have a full set for the month of July. That would mean negatives for the 4th, 11th, and 18th in addition to those of the 25th. How much would it cost me to get that many negatives?

My father wrote me that his father had obtained permission for the charging of tolls on the bridge he constructed over Rock Creek this from the legislative assembly. I guess that would have been from the sixth territorial assembly which convened December 5 1859.

I would like to get a photo negative of that act giving the permission to charge tolls over the Rock Creek bridge.

Also I am beginning to get the lay out on the Judge Mason instructions to a grand jury to consider the "slaughter of the Mc Canles"- that it was not too late to get action. I think it must have been when he became the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. As far as I can make out the three justices of the Supreme Court held the district courts. So that this court must have been between 1867 when Mason became Chief Justice and 1873 when he ceased to be Chief. Would the Brownville Advertiser or any other paper have any notices of the meeting of these courts. They seem to be authorized for the weeks in March, and one in April.

With many thanks for all your trouble, I am  
Sincerely Yours,

*Byron Mc Candless*  
Byron Mc Candless  
Captain, U.S.Navy.

*(Research by  
H. Robinson)*

February 8, 1939.

Mr. Byron W. McCandless,  
Captain U. S. S. Rigel and  
Destroyer Base,  
San Diego, California.

Dear Mr. McCandless:

Mr. Fuller has asked me to assist  
him in answering your letter of January 16th.-

I have examined the session laws of  
the territorial legislature for 1859 and 1860  
but found no reference in these documents per-  
mitting David C. McCandless to operate a toll  
bridge over Rock Creek. We have ample proof  
that the bridge was there and tolls were col-  
lected. This might have been done without any  
specific authority from the legislature.

Judge Mason's instructions to a  
grand jury to consider the "slaughter of the  
McCanles," if still extant would doubtless be  
in the files of the Clerk of the District Court  
at Fairbury. Mason was Judge of the First Dis-  
trict from 1867 to 1873.

I am sorry I cannot be of more help  
on these questions.

I presume you are familiar with William E. Connelley's writings on this subject in Vol. XVII of the Kansas Collections and in his "Life of Wild Bill". He has constituted himself a sort of counsel for the defense of Hickok and has devoted a great deal of time and research on the subject.

There are a number of letters, pro and con, in our files for 1927 and 1928, provoked by the publication of the Hanson article. These files are indexed for reference and may be of interest to you.

If we can be of further service, please let us know.

H. S. Robinson,  
Research Assistant.

HSR/vb

February 8, 1939.

Mr. Byron McCandless,  
Captain U. S. Navy,  
U. S. S. Rigel-Destroyer Base,  
San Diego, California.

My dear Captain:

We regret it was not possible  
to complete your order of January 16, 1939.  
At an early date, due to the fact our research  
department is overloaded with work.

However, we are mailing you  
under separate cover, fourteen 5x7 negatives  
of the Brownville Advertiser, also the find-  
ings of the research department as of your or-  
der of January 16.

May I invite you to join the His-  
torical Society, the fee is three dollars a year  
and entitles you to four quarterly issues of the  
Nebraska History Magazine without extra cost.

Yours truly,

A. E. Fuller  
Topographical Eng.

AEF/vb

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA February 8, 1939

M. Mr. Byron McCandless, Captain U. S. Navy,

San Diego, California.

IN ACCOUNT WITH

## Nebraska State Historical Society

ADDISON E. SHELDON, Sec'y and Supt.

CAPITOL BUILDING

Annual Dues 19

14-5x7- negatives \$7 00

1-copy Volume XX. 3 00

\$10. 00

Paid Feb. 16, 1939.



2-16-39

A. C. Fuller.  
Topo. Eng. State Historical Society  
Lincoln Neb.

U. S. S. RIGEL,  
San Diego, Calif.  
14 Feb. 1939.

My dear Friend: -

Many thanks for all of your trouble. I also received a letter from Mr. Robinson, Research Assistant, for which I am also most grateful. The film negatives came later.

I immediately sent off an air mail letter to the Clerk of the District Court at Fairbury covering that first grand jury and Judge O. P. Mason's instructions. I enclose U. S. postal money order for \$13.00 - #16 for the bill for photo negatives and Vol XX of the Proceedings. I would greatly appreciate the privilege of being a member of the Historical Society. #3 is sent additional to above to cover membership fee in case I be accepted.

I was born in Endicott, Nebraska, 5 Sept 1881 on that McCauley hay ranch you so kindly sketched for me.

I hate to bother you further. In that map of Rock Creek & McCauley farm you state "Taken from Federal Records & Survey of 1857". It shows the Oregon trail crossing Rock Creek considerably above the U <sup>nk</sup> kink in the Creek. That would be as of 1857.




The bridge apparently was built in 1860. My father writes: The road to the bridge wasn't much of a road. It was made by wagons going to the bridge. The ford was just a few hundred yards above the bridge and



the bridge wasn't very much off the main road. The banks of the creek were between 20' and 30' high and were of sandstone. The bridge was made of squared logs mostly cottonwood. It was about 30' above the floor of the creek. The bridge itself was 20' wide. <sup>about</sup> The house and stable on the East side were built about the same time as the bridge. They were built out of logs. The main house was built out of squared off logs but the lean to and the stable were built out of round logs. I believe James L. worked on the bridge but the most house and barn were built before we went out there. The hired men built the house and barn on the east side and dug the well. They used the sand stone they took out of the well to wall the well up after they had it dug. The stage company took over the west side of Rock Creek but there wasn't enough room there so when they got the barn built on the east side and the well dug they moved everything over to the east side.

The school house was built on the Little Blue Ranch in about 1860. It was built out of cottonwood logs and clapboards that they made. The men that Father <sup>had</sup> <sup>went</sup> working on the farm at that time built it. I went to school in it until we moved to Yankee Creek. Jonah Brown was the school master. He started to teach us soon after the school house was built and continued until Father was murdered. When he thought that he would be called upon to testify at the trial he ran away.

Now is there any contour map that would enable me to show the ford as of 1857 survey and the place where the bridge was constructed in 1860. The  somewhat off the main road.



Also my father writes "we moved to Yankee Creek  
as soon after the tragedy as we could gather all the  
moveable belongings together. Where we were on Yankee  
Creek was just about 6 miles south of Tecumseh.  
We stayed on Yankee Creek a little over a year. We  
had a house all to ourselves and had to take care of  
mother and the younger children. We moved back  
to the Little Blue just as soon as we could.

Is there available a survey or map of 1857  
showing the relative location of Yankee Creek?  
Also is there a map showing the road  
or trail between Rock Creek in Jones County,  
to Beatrice in Gage County, to Tecumseh  
in Johnston County, and to Brownville in  
Nemaha County. This would cover the  
trip of Wellman & Uncle Monroe from Rock  
Creek to Brownville and back. Also the  
route of the messenger my grandmother sent to  
James Leroy McCauls her brother in law on  
Yankee Creek in Johnston County. Also it  
would show where they went for a year's  
residence on Yankee Creek before returning to  
the Little Blue.

Also is there any map showing the trail  
beyond Marysville in Kansas? While Wellman  
and Monroe McCauls were away at Brownville  
Joseph Holmes, father of Mrs Wellman, undertook  
to decamp from the Hay Ranch with oxen, wagon



and farm implements. He had gone beyond  
Marionville <sup>where</sup> my grandfather overtook him  
and brought him back. Maybe he didn't treat  
him gently. That was the trouble with  
Mrs. Wellman when Wellman & Monroe returned  
on that 12th of July - the day of the tragedy.  
Now this all seems to be quite an order. But  
I would like to cover it all and will gladly  
pay some research expert for the data.  
I don't want to chisel. I want to get all  
the facts down. My father has a wonderful  
memory is 87 years old - so would like  
to nail down all data possible before he  
passes on. Monroe has been gone some  
years and the younger boys have gone too.

I appreciate very much your great courtesy  
I will write soon to Mr. Robinson. In  
the meantime please let him know  
how much I appreciate his courtesy too.

I have to stop now. Am going to broadcast  
over KFSD - National Defense Week - nation  
wide hook up - on this Destroyer Base and  
also decommissioned destroyers. Wish you  
were listening.

Sincerely yours  
Byron W. Wendless.  
Captain, U.S. Navy.



NEBRASKA STATE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A. E. Fuller,  
Topographic Engineer,  
State Historical Society.

U. S. S. Rigel,  
San Diego, Calif.,  
14th Feb. 1939.

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house and barn were built before we went out there,  
the hired men built the house and barn on the east side  
and dug the well they used the sand stone they took out  
of the well to wall the well up after they had it dug,  
the stage company took over the west side of Rock Creek  
but there wasn't enough room there so when they got the  
barn built on the east side and the well dug they mov-  
ed everything over to the east side".



The school house was built on the little Blue Ranch in about 1860. It was built out of cottonwood logs and clapboards that they made the men that father had working on the farm at that time built it. I went to school in it until we moved to Yankee Creek. Jonah Brown was the school master. He started to teach us soon after the school house was built and continued until father was murdered. "When he thought that he would be called upon to testify at the trial he ran away."

Now is there any contour map that would enable me to show the ford as of 1857 survey and the place where the bridge was constructed in 1860- the (bridge) somewhat off the main road.

Also my father writes "we moved to Yankee Creek as soon after the tragedy as we could gather all the moveable belongings together. Where we were on Yankee Creek was just about 6 miles south of Tecumseh. We stayed on Yankee Creek a little over a year. We had a house all to ourselves and had to take care of mother and the younger children. We moved back to the little Blue just as soon as we could.

Is there available a survey or map of 1857 showing the relative location of Yankee Creek? Also is there a map showing the road or trail between Rock Creek in Jones County, to Beatrice in Gage County, to Tecumseh in Johnston County, and to Brownville in Nemaha county, this would cover the trip of Wellman and Uncle Monroe from Rock Creek to Brownville and back. Also the route of the messenger my grandmother sent to James Leroy McCanles her brother-in-law on Yankee Creek in Johnston county. Also it would show where they went for a years residence on Yankee Creek before returning to the little Blue.

Also is there any map showing the trail beyond Marysville in Kansas? While Wellman and Monroe McCanles were away at Brownville Joseph Hohnes, father of Mrs. Wellman, undertook to decamp from the Hay Ranch with over wagons and farm implements. He had gone beyond Marysville where my Grandfather overtook him and brought him back. Maybe he didn't treat him gently, that was the trouble with Mrs. Wellman when Wellman and Monroe returned on that 12th day of July- the day of the tragedy.

Now this all seems to be quite an order. But I would like to cover it all and will gladly pay some research expert for the data. I dont want to chisel. I want to get all the facts down. My father has a wonderful memory is 87 years old - so would like to mail down all data possible before he passes on. Monroe has been gone some years and the younger boys have gone too.

I appreciate very much your great curtesy. I will write seen to Mr. Robinson. In the meantime please let him know how much I appreciate his courtesy too.

Have to stop now am going to broadcast over KFSD-National Defense Week- nation wide hook-up-on this Destroyer Base and its decommissioned destroyers. Wish you were listening.

Sincerely yours,

Byron McCandless  
Captain U. S. Navy.