

1619 E Street
Lincoln, Nebr. 68508
Wed. 7 pm, April 13, 1966

Dear Art & Everette:

I make no promises, but I think I've come up with something rather interesting -- at least it is an entertaining coincidence -- if nothing more.

Tonite after work, I chanced to pick up Charles Martin's A Sketch of Sam Bass The Bandit. Frankly, I've got no further than the second page (or page 4, as the book is numbered).

I was immediately struck by the fact that Bass's mother's maiden name was Elizabeth Sheeks, for the name is a rather rare one, but an old one in Hitchcock County. Martin's book, according to the introduction, was published in 1880.

Further down the first page, Martin writes of Sam's brothers and sisters, among them being one Denton Bass. On the next page, we learn that the father, Daniel Bass, died February 20, 1864, when the Daniel Bass estate passed into the hands of his brother-in-law, Daniel ~~Bass~~^{Sheeks}, and that Sam, at least, made his home with Daniel Sheeks.

The name of the children struck another bell, but with the uncle taking over, I immediately went to my files.

The Hitchcock County pioneer, of course, was one Denton P. (Dent) Sheeks. Mrs. Bass was Elizabeth Sheeks. A son was Denton Bass. Is it possible that in Denton P. Sheeks, we might have a cousin of Sam Bass? Is it possible that Denton P. Sheeks might not be Denton Bass, going by his mother's maiden name?

My files, unfortunately, contain little information on Denton P. Sheeks. I do find that on June 23, 1880, he was appointed Hitchcock County road supervisor of Dist. 7, or Twp 4, Ranges 33, 34, & 35, in the NW part of Hitchcock County. This means that I will find him in the 1880 Hitchcock County census, as it was taken that same month. I will check tomorrow.

The Civil War Veterans census, 1890, simply says he was a U.S. soldier and that his post office address was Beverly. However, each year the Co. Clerks had to list the veterans in the county, and, in the list for 1895 (TRENTON REGISTER, Fri., July 5, 1895), it says that D.P. Sheeks was a private in Co. F, 8th Iowa Cavalry, and his address was Palisade.


I am writing the Palisade cemetery association tonite to see if Sheeks is buried in Palisade, hoping to find some information in an obituary as to his early life. Hopefully, tomorrow, the census will give some information, but, if he were Denton Bass, trying to escape notoriety, it might be that he would lie as to his birthplace, etc. If really Denton Sheeks, it might say that he was born in Indiana. That will tell.

In his book, Martin rather gives the implication that only one Bass son, George (who was killed), served in the war, but that might be my reading something into the book.

I think it deserves looking into, as Martin keeps insisting upon the other Bass children being model citizens, etc., etc.

Gard's book on Bass is supposed to be the best. I don't think we have it. If either of you do, would you run a check for anything in it which might connect with this information. I'll check some tomorrow.

I hope this will catch your fancies, at least a little. pdr



Stockville, Neb

Sept. 14, 1966

Dear Art:

I am enclosing a letter to you that I received from Judge Van Pelt. I saw the record of things in our telephone conversation with you to-day there will be no time to read a letter on the 25th.

I think too, that I'd better talk to Mrs Purcell about driving thru his lot to the Crown dug out.

also to Marion Johnson and The Women Society. I am not sure who owns the black cattle that range right up to the little cemetery but will make it a point to find out and ask permission.

It would be a little embarrassing to get run off by a woman or a black bull either.

It might be well for me to take a look at the whole route a few days ahead.

If you can make a guess at the size of the proposed Cavanaugh let me know a day or so ahead.

I will write to Bob yet to-vite and tell him of our intentions. I have received a letter from him since the enclosure indicating that his cases in such a late way take a little longer than he anticipated at first so he may still be here by the 25th.

I think the greatest help I can be to you all is to act as an advance man. I'm quite sure you are qualified as the official guide.

You will notice that Judge Van Pelt named Norman McClary about judging his father by to-days standards and so Norman must have come across something he had later to reveal

to the public. For which I don't blame him,
also it accounts for a lot of history that never
comes to light.

in fact I felt like a criminal when I first
told that Paddy Miles was Herbert Palmer.
or rather was a son of Kempsey Palmer.

You were first to tell me it was Herbert.
But we grew up with the knowledge Paddy
had killed a man in the South and changed his
name to Miles. Now I don't know whether or
not he did it or shielded someone who did.
There never was any stigma attached to it.

I just wonder if Dorothy Dimonds would like
to join the expedition, because Bert Dimonds, Sr.
her uncle by marriage at least worked on the old
Barry Ranch for years.

But I'll leave that up to you. I will have
my hands full up here.

If the road to the old place is too rough we may
have to give it up. I'll take a look.

You'll probably keep me informed too.

It seems like we better plan on a picnic lunch
except coffee may be a problem. The Curtis park
is a nice place to stop at noon and then hit
for food we'll pick up from there.

We could go north from Stockville up by Pauls,
and Humon's and on up to Evans' old place and
the cemetery, across the bridge to Carver's.

Then to Curtis, or around the other way.

Bill

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : **State Historical Society**
Mr. Donald F. Danker

DATE: **Sept. 6, 1966.**

FROM : **Judge Van Pelt**

SUBJECT: **Frontier County history**

We think we are on the track of some very interesting early Frontier County information. It is not unlikely that McClary's diaries were kept as a result of his knowledge of Mrs. Ballantine having kept a diary. I think it advisable that you let me continue the contacts with McClary, whom I knew as a small boy at Stockville, although I am not insistent upon it, especially if you would be in the Courtenay, British Columbia area and wanted to talk with him. I do not think it advisable to have a lot of people writing him. Mr. Shelley and I have talked about this and I will see him either next week or the week after.

*Bill: will be in No. 1 letter the week of R M P
Sept 12-19. Will come down to Soils the 1st day these times.*

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

DISTRICT OF NEBRASKA

ROBERT VAN PELT
DISTRICT JUDGE
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA 68501

September 6, 1966.

Mr. Norman H. McClary,
Box 520
Courtenay, British Columbia

Dear Mr. McClary:

I am pleased to receive your letter of the 27th. Frankly, I had thought by my mention of Mrs. Ballantine that perhaps you did not know your father had been married before and that I had in some manner offended you. When you have been able to compile your father's diaries from 1887 to 1915 I trust that you and your family will decide to deposit them with the Nebraska State Historical Society. If you do not I hope we can work out some arrangement with you to have a chance to inspect them. You could either send them to me or send them direct to the Historical Society whose address I can furnish you.

Your father's diaries from the time after he went to British Columbia on, would be welcome here in the State Historical Society but I recognize that you should consider leaving those to a similar organization in British Columbia.

I think I told you earlier that Mrs. Ballantine's diaries for a few years in the 1870's were found.

Mrs. Ballantine was a most interesting woman. She was the widow of an early state senator from southwest Nebraska and, as I recall, she had two children. These may be the two to whom your father was referring in your conversation with him. I had never heard of any earlier marriage of your father than to Mrs. Ballantine and knew of no marriage between the time of her death and his marriage to your mother. Coulter Ballantine, a son, died within the past few years. I have forgotten whether the daughter is still alive.

I am going out to North Platte next week and the following week. North Platte is not too far from Lewellen, to which place your father moved from Stockville. I intend to go down

to Stockville to see Wm. Shelley among others. He is very much interested in Frontier County history. His father was the first settler in the area. Your father was one of the next settlers I believe.

I will write you more in detail as to further information I can obtain as to your father after I have talked with Mr. Shelley and two or three men living in the Stockville area who are older than I, who knew him.

May I make only one suggestion as you evaluate your father or any others of his era. Do not attempt to judge them by today's standards. They were living under different circumstances than you and I now live and values were different.

I am sorry to note the sentence of your letter about Bryan's going to pieces. When you see him will you give him my kind personal regards. I remember him very well because we started to school together. I have mentioned in an earlier letter that I remember his tearing the palm of his hand badly on a corner post at the school house, and asked him if he still carried the scar because I would expect that he does.

Very truly yours,

Mr. Shelley
Stuckville, 69042
nebr.

Sept. 1966



Same

P.M.
1966
69042

Van Pelt letter

Mr. Arthur Camody
Greentown
Nebraska

Nellie Snyder Yost
1505 WEST D STREET
NORTH PLATTE, NEBRASKA 69101

532-6268

June 1, 1967

Dear Mr. Carmody:

Your letter came yesterday afternoon, and I drove down to Grand Island early this morning, so will answer it while Harry is napping.

Your visit to Summit Springs sounds so very interesting. So I dug out this copy of Major Walker's story and brought it along to send to you. The original typed copy I made, as well as the hand written story Major Walker left with his daughter, are in Lincoln. Marvin is to photostat the latter.

If this copy will be of any help to you and Col. Sparke, you are welcome to it. I do not know if it will be published in the Quarterly or not. I think it would be fine if they would use it.

Yes, I received a letter from Marvin yesterday, too, telling me of Don's plans, and of the fate of our budget. I will see our Senator this coming weekend and will do what I can. I have already talked to him about it. He seemed agreeable then, but will make sure.

I am almost helpless without my typewriter, as you can see by this scuffling, so will stop now, and get this in the mail. I hope the one helps a little.

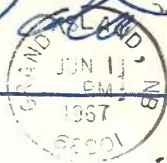
Sincerely

Nellie

Nellie Snyder Yost

1505 WEST D STREET
TH PLATTE, NEBRASKA 69101

Summit Page Club



Mr. Arthur Carmody
Box 217 Trenton
Nebr.

RAY G. SPARKS & ASSOCIATES
Insurance Consultants

1414 COMMERCE TOWER

P. O. BOX 13246

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64199

TELEPHONE
VI 2-8100

June 15, 1967

Mr. Arthur Carmody
Trenton
Nebraska 69044

Dear Art:

Usually I am quick to express my appreciation for others' kindnesses, however, I must this time admit being all too slow. Returned home to the necessity of preparing for an Internal Revenue examination. This is an annual affair, expected and prepared for as far as possible, but never fully, as they are unpredictable in what they are going to examine in detail from one year to the other. Thus, always do we find it necessary to prepare at the last moment for the unexpected. To ask for a delay casts a certain amount of question and usually results in additional examination. This as a matter of explanation of my poor manners.

Was, of course, delighted to receive the Nebraska volume on "Massacre Canyon", as well as the photographs, Madigan's letter, and your own good letter. Thank you so very much for your thoughtful kindness.

Have probed Beougher for the B. O. D. schedule, he does not have. I believe I told you I had it westbound, what I need is eastbound, September 1868. This to establish the approximate time Donovan and Pliley arrived at Ft. Wallace, to put an end to that controversy. Please keep it in mind; if enough of us keep looking we most certainly will find it. I shall write Mrs. Heffner.

We enjoyed meeting the Philips and visiting with them, for which we have you to thank. We learned that someone in Salina has Raynesford's Manuscript, rather vague, as to just why, while someone else has the large boards on which he drew the route in detail. Most of his books seem to have been loaned and never returned - which is the usual.

I expressed my desire, to the best of my ability, to see Mr. Raynesford's Manuscript in print and an opportunity to photograph those large board maps, before they too disappear or are damaged. I have no idea, of course, of how they may have regarded my efforts. In fact, in all honesty, they have no way of knowing whether I was another fast talker or one sincerely interested in preserving this most important contribution to history, other than your recommendation and its weight. I shall write them in another effort to offer what I can. While we talked of many things, it was touch and go on too many subjects to learn more of their place than a brief explanation. Another time may afford me this pleasure.

You have raised a very interesting point regarding the Summit Springs fight by the manuscript of Major Walker's account. Here are some of the questions raised. Bvt. Major Leicester Walker, Capt. Co. H, 5 Cav., was, at the battle of Summit Springs, assigned to the left in the attack. Captain Walker, while endeavoring to turn the enemy's right flank, encountered an ugly side ravine, which delayed his progress and permitted a number of the enemy to escape. Mrs. Alderdice was killed by a squaw and Mrs. Weichell was wounded by a warrior at the moment the village was captured. (The material above regarding Major Walker was extracted from "Across the Continent with the Fifth Cavalry" "PRICE".)

If Tall Bull's lodge was where it is now marked, and the two women were killed and wounded, where it is now marked, Major Walker could not have seen this action. If, on the other hand, Tall Bull's lodge was over by these gulches, he could have seen it. If the latter is true then she was buried on the side hill there instead of where we looked.

Certainly I have every desire, indeed anxious, to read his manuscript. Getting it typed with copies is easy, or I will photocopy or photograph, whichever seems best to serve all our purposes. The grave might or might not stand out from the air. Perhaps we can give it a try, as well as the Solomon, one of these days.

Susanna Alderdice may still be there, as you say, in a deep grave. But where? Remember, we explored around the gulches, dug several places, with no results. She was wrapped in a fine buffalo robe, her grave lined with a new lodge skin, then she was further wrapped in a new lodge skin. Where we dug May 28th seemed to me the most likely place after considerable thought and perhaps six different trips and efforts. The gravel said to me it had been dug up some time ago.

In the holes there was no formations or veins, then too, I am assured that was a human bone fragment we found. Whose? How? Why? These Indians had lost everything they had. They were prone to dig up white bodies and dismember them as they did at Beecher Island. If they dug her up, they got two lodge skins and one robe. But if they did, they would hardly have refilled the hole! Perhaps we were only on the edge, it had to be a hell of a big hole, perhaps she was higher up, the gravel having washed down further than we assumed. Who knows? You certainly have my blessing if you wish to search for her. My desire was to see her grave marked. Also, I should think that of all that buffalo hide, some would remain and she might be well preserved - if the Indians did not get her.

Under separate cover I am sending you Book #76 - of 250 autographed copies - "Painted Ladies of the Cowtown Frontier by Joseph W. Snell of the Kansas State Historical Society. Also Book #76 of 250 autographed copies - "Billy the Kid - The Trail of a Kansas Legend" by W. E. Koop (pronounced Cope). I do hope you will enjoy having them. There is a reprint of "Across the Continent with the Fifth Cavalry" by Price, the selling price is \$17.50 but will have it secured and sent to you at our cost plus handling, if you desire. There isn't much profit in such books; it is for this reason that we do not stock them but will be glad to order anything you personally want on this basis. Our guess is that you would save about three dollars. I am informed that "Andreas History of Kansas" is almost impossible to find and when found sells for \$75.00 to \$150.00 dependent on how good a buy can be made and the physical condition of the volume. We are including it in our next list of books wanted which goes out to practically all dealers each month. We might be lucky - but do not hold your breath.

In your reading of the Summit Springs affair, may I suggest you include "The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill" by Don Russell. He does a good job with it but has the two women captured on the Solomon. Also Roenigk's "Pioneer History of Kansas". I assume you must have read Clarence Reckmeyer's "The Battle of Summit Springs", The Colorado Magazine, Vol. VI, No. 6, November 1929. It seems to me that I sent you a copy of my "Tall Bull's Captives". If not and you are interested, you could no doubt borrow it from Ed Beougher. I have given all of my copies away except my annotated copy. Can not buy even one copy. I have Carr's report and journal of March. It offers but little or nothing of place or time of burial. Although the officers board does mention that she was tomahawked and, it is remarked, she was buried deep.

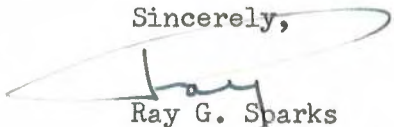
Susanna Ziegler Daily Alderdice was truly one of our outstanding pioneer mothers. A quiet, sensitive, kindly girl of twenty-eight, who had witnessed the murder of her four children (as she never knew Willis Daily survived) and suffered the unspeakable indignations of Indian captivity, only to be brutally murdered a moment before rescue. Perhaps a merciful God ordained that she not be forced to continue a life of living horror, which may have deranged her as it did Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Kine and Mrs. Bacon; if it had not already occurred. Who knows? She deserves to have her grave marked - the grave to become a shrine where perhaps it would be a constant reminder of part of the price that was paid for the freedom we enjoy today - and regard so lightly.

You perhaps are aware that her brother, Eli Ziegler, was the youngest member of the Forsyth Scouts, both he and her husband, Thomas Alderdice, were in the Battle of Beecher Island.

It has been pleasant visiting with you. Please express my appreciation to your friends, whom I would like to know better, also please pass my best regards to them. I can still taste that wonderful cake Mrs. Carmody served. It had the flavor of the cake my grandmother gave me when, as a boy, my chores were finished and I was desperately hungry.

With best personal regards to all.

Sincerely,



Ray G. Sparks

P.S. The enclosed clipping is an extra that you might like to read.

The Kansas City Posse of the Westerners has some copies of "Tall Bull's Captives" but as it has become a collector's item they will not sell except to one who buys a complete set of all their publications, which runs into money. They will not even sell me one copy. I offer this explanation as I do not want to leave the impression with you that I would not secure one for you under any normal circumstances.

RGS/lm
Enc.

June 15, 1967

Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Philip
RFD
Hays, Kansas

Dear Philip's:

I called before we left, the next morning, to secure a more definite address - no answer - nevertheless I have the opinion the above address will suffice.

Please forgive my display of bad manners in not writing previously - my excuse - lame as it may be, is that I arrived home to find that I had but a short time to prepare for an Internal Revenue examination. This is an annual affair, for which we attempt to prepare, but it is impossible to always guess just what portion of our tax is to be examined. This was true this year, necessitating pulling a multitude of records and preparing them in proper order for presentation. You have doubtless experienced this yourself. It amounts to nothing more than the annoyance of preparing, but it does seem that they would skip a year now and again, when after many years they have never found a violation. So much for that.

We enjoyed beyond description the wonderful evening we spent with you. Our only regret is that it isn't possible to do so frequently. There were so many more interesting subjects to discuss, one being to learn more of your interesting history in that location - three and four generations in one vicinity is rare enough in the United States, but in Kansas, I should think it to be most unusual. Perhaps another time will afford a better opportunity.

Under separate cover I am sending a couple of items which I hope you will enjoy having. Doug - these series on aircraft are just reaching the market in sufficient supply to obtain. My partiality for the P-47 can perhaps be understood when you know that this was the airplane I served with in Europe from early 1943 until August 1945, in the 8th Air Force, the 9th Air Force and the 1st Tactical Air Force (Provisional).

Mrs. Philip - I do hope that I did not leave the impression with you that I disliked Custer. My true feeling being that he was probably the best cavalry commander we ever had. Impetuous - yes - and perhaps a bit irresponsible - yet one must weigh the adulation he received at a very early age, which would have taken a very superior solidity to have handled any better than he. Patton is regarded as our greatest tank commander and a great general - but on the other side there was much to be desired - also, he was just as ruthless, in fact more so, in the time and place, than Custer.

I have raked my poor brain for something I could send you on Custer, that you might not have and yet could possibly find a place for. I have hesitated, due to the impression I feared might have been left with you, but finally convinced myself that this was something you were not likely to have and furthermore you would accept my explanation. Seldom does one see a record of his Court Martial and without it ones information is not complete.

The love affair between George and Elizabeth was a deeply sincere one, known throughout the United States at the time. I assume you are acquainted with the capture of a Union supply train by the Confederates, in which they found a packet of letters from Elizabeth to George. Apparently they were unusually frank and amorous for those times. They were being passed about when a Confederate General, whose regard for privacy and gentlemanly conduct were of the highest traditions, learned of it. He promptly had the letters gathered up, admonished his officers for their conduct, had the letters delivered under flag and apologies to the Union lines.

Desertion was at such a point that some companies had 50% and more on desertion at the times mentioned here. I wonder what any of us would have done, under this circumstance, if men

attempted to go-over-the-hill, right in our face, in the middle of the day. In any event he was needed so badly for the winter campaign of 1868, his sentence was remitted and he returned to duty at Fort Hays - all of this you know. I do hope it adds something to your library, which you will regard as of value, for the information it contains.

The elapse of time has given me opportunity to do some serious thinking regarding Howard Raynesford's Herculean effort to document the B. O. D. while it was yet possible to do so. For his great effort to fall by the wayside would be a double tragedy of immense proportions. First, his great effort goes unrecognized, his great hopes for it shattered, the time and dedicated effort wasted. Secondly, history and historians of today and the future will have lost a research and recording that can never be equaled, in fact, the obstacle of the research, which he overcame, through years of dedication, may prove too formidable for another to even attempt it - ever.

I have no way of knowing whether I was able to dearly convey my position regarding this. Let me try again, after a considerable amount of serious reflection and contemplation. I have no ax to grind. I have no business getting myself too involved in this matter - I am spread too thin now but in spite of this, I would like to, at least, point it in the right direction.

I will do the following. If you will send me the manuscript, I will read it and tell you what I think it needs, if anything. It may need editing and by that I do not mean, deletion or addition of material, what I do mean is that the English and phrasing and arranging could possibly be improved. Note - I say possibly - for I nor no one else would know, until they read it, and as I am also human, perhaps I would be wrong.

If you have someone else who can and will do this, then for heaven sake let him do it. I want no part of the possible correcting - there are people who can be employed for that. Also some publisher might have sense enough to see the value of it and would edit it. I must add, that it may be repetitious, or at times too wordy without necessary point, if so, it would have to be edited further than I have indicated. I simply can not do more than the above and make some inquiries of some publishers. These things I will do - as I believe this should be in print for the records of all time.

I will do one other thing, that you should be quick to avail yourself of, if you will forgive my saying so, in those short words, and my immodesty in what I propose. Secure and send to me those original sketches on the heavy cardboard, of the route, at your earliest possible convenience, so that I may have them photographed in color in our own laboratory, which is the finest in the Middle West, if not the United States. We do not serve the public, only the professional photographers. We turn out ten to thirty thousand photographs daily, ninety-eight percent in color. We have every modern piece of equipment obtainable. Did you ever see a camera twenty feet long - we have one - come see it and many other such things that will astound you.

While I have said, we do not serve the public - I have no doubt this can be done - as they are inclined to cooperate with me... on important historical material. This, by all means should be done, before they are lost, soiled, chipped, broken, even bent, or otherwise damaged. This will preserve them for as long as the films last, for regardless of what later happens to the originals, we have the films to fall back on, to secure prints of any size within reason.

If you see the logic of my proposal, then please follow these instructions carefully. Pack them carefully, with soft sheets over the painted surfaces, do not let the painted surfaces rub. Pack them in a sturdy box in such a way that they can not move about. The package should be strong to prevent damage of any kind. Ship them to me, Col. Ray G. Sparks (the Colonel impresses the help) Vice-President, Studio Sales and Service, Inc. 2449 Charlotte, Kansas City, Missouri 64108. Insure them. Write me a day or two before you ship them so I can see that they receive special handling. After they are photographed, we will return them to you.

What is all of this going to cost you? Not a damned cent except the packing and shipping expense. There must be a catch here somewhere - the catch, my friend, is that I am a damned fool - if you haven't guessed long before this.

If you would prefer, to drop the whole matter, then by all means do so, without hesitation or reluctance. I will not be offended. I have offered to do what I can for you, and a dedicated man, whom I never saw in my life. I can do no more.

Any time you or Mrs. Philip are in Kansas City, please give us a call, so that we can have you out where perhaps we can return your hospitality.

If or when you write me, please use 5830 Cherokee Drive, Shawnee Mission, Kansas 66205. For at times, I do not get to the Commerce Tower Office over once each week.

Sincerely,

Ray G. Sparks

RGS/bc

CC. - To ARTHUR CARMODY

So
you may have a witness
to what I propose.



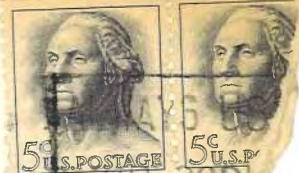
RAY G. SPARKS & ASSOCIATES

Insurance Consultants

1414 COMMERCE TOWER

P. O. BOX 13246

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64199



ZIP CODE

Mr. Arthur Carmody
Trenton
Nebraska 69044

21 JUNE 67

Dear Art:

I forgot to send the enclosed in my last letter.

Your letter here with the "Walker" story. The only way to reproduce is type - which will be done shortly.

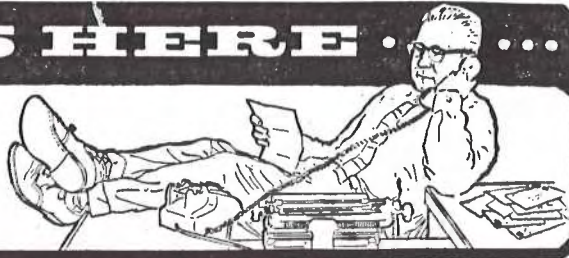
Your 5th Cav. by Price - has been ordered.

Best

Ray

IT SAYS HERE

By
Bill Moore



Chief Tall Bull's Violent Story His Special Research.

IT would appear that Col. Ray G. Sparks, insurance man and student of the Indian wars, has all but wrapped up 40 years of research on Chief Tall Bull, a black-hearted, murderous Cheyenne who scoured the plains of Western Kansas and Eastern Colorado in the late 1860s.

The former Air Force colonel, now retired from the military, has just returned from his latest foray to the historical hunting grounds 15 miles southeast of Sterling, Colo., where Tall Bull and 51 of his warriors were slain July 11, 1869, by a troop of United States cavalry which had Buffalo Bill Cody up front as chief scout.

This time Colonel Sparks worked with a borrowed United States Army mine detector for flushing out metal objects buried beneath the surface of the battleground. And for handling the digging chores he took two young men of stout backs, his stepson, Tom Ferguson, and R. E. McGlothlin, both of Lee's Summit.

The mine detector was a most efficient tool. The colonel and his assistants turned up perhaps 500 pieces of bric-a-brac from the site of the encampment where Tall Bull and his cohorts made their last stand.

I had a look at a few of these rusted items, displayed by Colonel Sparks a few nights ago at the dinner meeting of the Kansas City posse of The Westerners at the Bell-erive hotel.

Among them were pieces of biscuit stoves, an iron pot, an iron skillet, heavy wire handles from wooden chests, a mule shoe, a railroad spike, a bracelet made of telegraph wire, and square nails.

The small iron pot had a bullet hole in the bottom

(Colonel Sparks believes an Indian may have been attempting to shield his face with it when he was shot) and the skillet was gouged through in eight places by an implement which may have been a small pickax.

* * * * *

The cavalry attack on Tall Bull's camp was made in an effort to rescue two white women captives, 28-year-old Mrs. Susanna Alderdice and 20-year-old Mrs. Maria Weichell.

In the melee Susanna Alderdice was wounded fatally by a tomahawk wielded by Tall Bull's squaw. She later was buried on the spot. Mrs. Weichell, although ill and mutilated, survived. She was taken to an Army hospital at Ft. Sedgwick, Colo., where she recovered. She lived for many years after her rescue.

* * * * *

These women were seized from near their homes in Lincoln County, Kansas, and this is the circumstance which led Colonel Sparks to conduct years of exhaustive inquiry into the kidnaping and the eventual denouement of the grim incident.

He was reared in Lincoln County and his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. William Richard Sparks and Mr. and Mrs. George O. Bridges, were close friends of the Alderdice and Weichell families.

He grew up immersed in the stories (and legends) which surrounded the depredations of Tall Chief and his band . . . particularly as they related to the seizure of the women.

He sifted through everything he heard, catalogued facts he could verify, discarded reports he could not authenticate, and finally, in later years, completed what might be called an exhaustive dossier on the marauding Indian leader. In

compiling this, of course, he made several trips to the site of the final battle.

Colonel Sparks last spring wrote the history of Tall Bull and an account of the tragic kidnaping which was printed as a "Trail Guide," the quarterly publication of The Westerners.

In 1929, Capt. Luther North, who commanded a detachment of friendly Pawnees who rode with the U. S. cavalry against Tall Bull and his Cheyenne "dog soldiers," returned to the battle site and pointed to the spot where he believed Tall Chief's tepee had stood. Captain North was then an aged man (he is now dead), and Colonel Sparks believed he might possibly be confused as to locations.

In any case a small wooden marker, bearing a brass plate, was erected at the spot where the tepee was supposed to have stood.

* * * * *

On his latest trip to the site, Colonel Sparks located the bric-a-brac about a mile from the marker. He and the others spent three days inspecting and digging.

In commenting on the items displayed at the meeting of The Westerners, he answered questions as to how the Indians happened to have them in their possession.

Biscuit stoves were standard equipment for pioneers wagon trains and were prized items of loot after such a train had been attacked and the occupants slain. Colonel Sparks uncovered pieces from literally dozen of these stoves, most of which he gave to the farmer who now owns the land on which the battle took place, T. A. Smart.

Also commonly seized as loot from wagon trains were cooking pots, wooden buckets and chests, and skillets. (Fragments of the wooden buckets were found, but they were in such a stage of deterioration that no effort was made to keep them.)

Tall Chief and his band were notorious for the theft of mules and horses. This accounts for the mule shoe, the colonel believes. The bracelet obviously was devised from a link of telegraph wire which had been cut. And the railroad spike could be traced to an incident when the Tall Bull band tore up a section of Kansas Pacific tracks near Fossil station (now Russell) May 28, 1869.

* * * * *

That might wind up a melancholy episode of the Kansas and Colorado plains, except that Colonel Sparks would like to find and mark the spot of Susanna Alderdice's grave. He thinks he may have found it. But this is a point on which he cannot be sure.

* * * * *

Colonel Sparks, now 61, has his office at 1012 Baltimore and lives on a Platte County farm northwest of the Mid-Continent International airport.

CONNECTICUT GENERAL

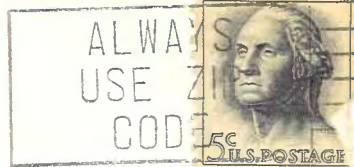
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28 June 1967

Salutations!

Just happened to think hadn't written to thank you for your research on Centennial Winchester. Was going to write to have you buy it, but son-in-law's family bought him one somewhere else. Maybe I'm paying him too much.

Did want to alert you on one matter. Harold Cowan, a fine fellow who is editor of magazine (Sunday) World-Herald called me up the other day and asked if I had any tips whereby he might sneak away from Omaha and write a few feature yarns. I told him, among other things, that you were about the best prevaricator down Trenton way and thought you might help him out. He'll probably be contacting you. Your friend Sutton, his Sharps rifles and Billy the Kid's rifle, etc., as well as your expeditions with a shovel, raiding and robbing graves, et cetera, as well as the attractive widow down at Benkelman who lives in a "soddie" were leads I mentioned, along with your prowess in buffalo hunting.

By the way, or buy the beer, did I ever tell you I shot a buffalo out in the Wildcat range some 30 years ago?

I also mentioned that Buffalo Bill might have scalped Yellow Hand, but you took away more intimate parts in your Indian battles.

Incidentally I own American Horse's porcupine embroidered vest. Whether he was wearing it when he killed Col. Fetterman, I do not know. All kidding aside, it's quite a vest. As we get older, and I'm one year older today, but still not 60 and able to collect army retirement pay, you appreciate this type of Indian stuff.

Am busy as hell right now, can't seem to get caught up. Prexy Osborne called me yesterday and said he was going into Lincoln and wanted a quick printing estimate on Mattes' book. Didn't remember how many or figures mentioned at director meet in North Platte...Neither did I. I don't suppose the Nicoll pictorial history is the society history, but if it isn't we've been took.

Adieu, kind friend, adieu

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Marvin", is written at the bottom right of the page.

**WESTERN NEBRASKA'S
BIGGEST CELEBRATION**
Warren C Wood



JULY 13 - 14, 1967

WILLIAM ZALMAN, Chairman
MRS. JERRY McDONALD, Secretary

Warren Wood



June 29

NEB.
CEN.

1855 -

Senator Arthur Carmody
Trenton, Nebraska

17 July 67

Dear Art:

I'm sorry to have delayed answering your last two letters but I am spread too thin to do so, as I would like to. If there is a delay in my writing - just know I'm up to my eyeballs in something.

Apparently you have received all your books now and I hope they will be an addition that will be informative and a pleasure, in your library. I join with you in hoping that Mrs. Philips read "Painted Ladies", and while no gentleman would send such a book to a lady, I console myself with the knowledge that she is a big girl now, with awareness of the birds and bees.

Dr. Frost sounds like an interesting person. I can hope that I will be fortunate enough to know him at some future time. While I am at it I must confess that I have never, to my knowledge, been down the Custer trail, or been to the scene of the Redder massacre; been to any of his camp sites. I have never read George Bente's account of this. What is it in? Now have I ever been to Duke Alex's camp site or sites. My education has thus been sadly neglected.

(July 17, 1967)

I have had a very nice letter from the Philips' and also have received the Raynesford manuscript. There is no schedule of any kind in his manuscript but I shall follow your advice and attempt to see his material, if it is in the College at Hays. However, there is some material which may prove to offer you a clue concerning the naming of the Russell Springs Stage Stations. I say "clue" for certainly there is nothing conclusive about it.

I note -

Speaking first of the "Old Route" and advantage of a short route " Apparently the first man to recognize the advantages was W. H. Russell of the famous transporting firm of Mayors, Russell and Waddell, who in the winter of 1858 conceived the idea of a line of daily coaches on this route between the Missouri River and Denver. His partners did not share in his enthusiasm and would not go in with him on the proposition, but did advance him 90-day credit to stock and equip it himself, and the first stagecoach over this new shorter route reached Denver on May 17, 1859. But the project did prove to be premature and at the end of the ninety days his partners took over, foreclosed if you like, and transferred the equipment to their regular line up on the Platte. " This was, as you know, the Heavenworth & Pike's Peak Express, co. The above Smoky Hill Route, I have always believed

I doubt if this offers anything - but you may have something that ties with this. Research requires consideration of every detail.

* 3 further clarification of this - It has always been my understanding that Jones went into the venture with Russell in 1858, and the Smoky Hill Route, which runs between as the Heavenworth and Pike's Peak Express Co. So this one over? Do you can see the way an after thought occurred by another reading of your letter.

3 (July 17, 1967)

By your question, regarding who's
schedule -
BOD - Holladay - Wells Fargo?

Which you have just so beautifully illustrated. This isn't the first time I have continued to stumble over important facts - or failed to see the forest for the bushes - and probably won't be the last. For 20 years I fell over who Foreyth left in the Hospital at Ft. Wallace. Read right over it a hundred times - then one day when I was using my brain instead of my eyes - there it was, and I'd been looking for it for 20 years, when I had it all the time.

Of course, I knew Butterfield had sold out to Holladay, Holladay to Wells Fargo but I was so hypnotized by BOD that it just never occurred to me that Butterfield had nothing to do with it in 1868 until you pointed it out in your letter. I thank you very much for bringing me back to reality.

My schedule is from the Junction City Weekly Union, of July 4, 1868, therefore pure gold - but - unfortunately - west bound. This schedule shows distance between Pond Creek and Cheyenne (which has to be Cheyenne Wells) as 40 miles, departure Pond Creek 7:15 PM - arrival Cheyenne 1:45 A.M. - which to my calculation is 6:30 hrs. Now this was at night remember. Phley says they were awakened at 6 AM and had no trouble arranging passage to Wallace, so lets assume they left from 3 miles east of Cheyenne Wells at 6:30 - 7:00 AM and being all daylight, should have been faster, lets be generous

4 (July 1, 1967)

and say they made it in 6 hrs. If so they should have been at Pond Creek at 12:30 to 1:00 P.M., let's assume the stage took them to Pond Creek where they either made ^{other} arrangements or the stage took them on to Ft. Wallace, about the same, time wise, as Pond Creek was a "Home Station", where 45 minutes was spent, on the west bound schedule, let us allow 15 minutes to get there, ^{at Wallace} thus a total of one more hour, thus they should have arrived at Ft Wallace approximately 1:30 to 2:00 P.M. as a historian would you buy that? Would Lutton buy it? If not, please let me have your ideas. Please let me have honest opinions & convictions. I do not believe that a schedule would do much better - the stage could have been late. My only doubt, is the difference between night time and day time speed - what do you know? or what is your convictions? Just occurred to me that it is, I believe, down hill from Cheyenne Wells to Pond Creek. I must arrive at a time, by reasonable conclusion, then stick to it. It isn't really going to make too much difference, except as to the likely time of Donovan's and parties, departure; for Bankhead and the relief had left at 4:00 A.M. that morning, but I must settle for some approximately correct time.

The Philips did not send the maps of sites that Paynerford made. I wrote beseeching them to do so - so that we may photograph them and in that way preserve for future historians.

5 (July 17, 1969)

For my part, I wish to hell I did
have more - would-if I weren't bound by
so damned many activities that at least seem
to demand my time.

If the airplane were small enough, ~~you~~ one
could land it almost anywhere out in your country.
A great deal of exploring, fruitful too, to be done
with a small airplane. A great deal is revealed
from the air that is not visible on the ground. I don't
own one but may rent one, just to try it for
size, on that sort of thing.

My life is not too interesting at the
moment - too much business grief, and the
market don't do what I plan for it. Book business
is good, growing interest in aviation material,
Mrs. G. is getting it in from all over the World but
it doesn't even last long enough to gather any dust,
let alone for me to read it - if I had the time.

If not before, I must go to Wyoming for
the week following Labor Day. If possible, will stop
by, if I drive, probably be 10th or 11th of Sept. on
the way back. Could I have another piece of cake,
please? ^{maybe two?}

Sincerely

Jay

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Mr. Arthur Carmody.

P. O. Box 217

Jrenton,

nebr.

69044

September 29, 1967

Mr. Paul D. Riley
Research Associate
Nebraska State Historical Society
1500 "R" Street
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

Dear Paul:

It was a pleasant surprise to arrive home yesterday evening and find your letter waiting for me. I have been following your progress for quite some time and Art Carmody tells me you are doing a great job in your chosen profession.

Thanks to Art, I began showing a keen interest in Western Americana immediately after the close of World War II, and as the years go by, it is becoming even more fascinating. Our home is getting so full of books and space is a problem, so I have only been buying real select items in recent years.

Thanks for informing me about the Hitchcock County Historical Society, and through the Hitchcock County Newspaper, I have been able to keep abreast of things. Your article in the December, 1966, issue was excellent and I am hoping you will continue to do some research work in the Southwestern Nebraska area.

For several years, I gave talks to service clubs and high schools on "The Old West" and it was a tremendously rewarding experience. It finally got to the place that I was having to appear at nights over a hundred miles from home, so I gave it up. With the Centennial of the Battle of the Big Horn just around the corner, I am thinking about assuming a few speaking engagements on a rather restricted basis.

I will be in Lincoln on October 16 and until noon on the 17th, but due to a tight agenda at the Home Office, I will not have an opportunity to visit with you this trip. I will be staying at the Quality Court across the street from our home office.

Sept. 29, 1967

As you probably know, I have been with the Bankers Life Nebraska for the past twenty and one-half years here in Fresno. I make at least one or two trips a year to Lincoln, so I am sure we will be able to get together for a little visit at a future date.

A couple of years ago, I drew up a new will and made arrangements for my library to be sent, shipping charges prepaid, to the Nebraska Historical Society. Your Director, Marvin F. Kivett, has a letter in his files to that effect.

Paul, it has been great to have you correspond with me, and I will be looking forward to seeing you in Lincoln in the future.

Sincerely yours,

DeLynn G. Holston

DGH:ec

cc: Arthur Carmody ✓
Maude Chatel

COPY



BANKERS LIFE NEBRASKA

DeLYNN G. HOLSTON
General Agent
502 Guarantee Savings Building
Fresno, California



Mr. Arthur Carmody
Trenton, Nebraska

WAYLAND W. MAGEE
CONSULTING GEOLOGIST
BENNINGTON, NEBRASKA U.S.A.
BENNINGTON 2551

Oct. 7th 1967.

Dear Art; -

Saturday in rain x
Sure it was hard to miss
seeing + hearing my friends at
the Annual Meeting - but
one can't do it all and I am
loaded down with Birthdays
gifts and notes (my 87th, as I
was born in 1881 in Chicago
on the west side)

The Vandals burned up the
old Jake or Jack Morrow a
Place a few years ago - I have
some pictures of the Cottage
but Col. Bratts house all
went up in the fire, Nellie
Yost is welcome any time x

The Wyoming Soc, have the
Story but it is a Nebraska story
and I should be pleased to
have it saved for I know it
is a True story x

2-Act

(Oct. 7th, 1965)

WAYLAND W. MAGEE
CONSULTING GEOLOGIST
BENNINGTON, NEBRASKA U.S.A.
BENNINGTON 2551

Thanks for the print of
Marge Wright, the Abstractor.
The sign should draw some
trade.

I work all I can in the
care of this place but do
not get much done -

Come in any time. - We
have about 100 head on feed
all the time - Lots of Hay
and Silo full - Corn
will run over 100 Bu & the
Frost can not get us now.

Every one as well as can
be expected these days.

Best regards to you &
yours -

Faithfully,

Old Man Magee

WAYLAND W. MAGEE
CONSULTING GEOLOGIST
BENNINGTON
NEBRASKA 68007, U.S.A.



Hon. Arthur Carmody,
Trenton,
Nebr.,
6044

5830 Cherokee Dr.
Shawnee Mission, Ks.

66205

8 May 68

Dear Art:

California & Arizona trip fell through - may go later but doubt it.

In reply to your questions in yours of May 1.

Jem Curry was very definitely in the fight at Beecher Island and to the best of my information joined the Forsyth Scouts at Days. In fact he stayed on with the scouts through October - November & December of 1868 - this is a matter of record. However, I have no records of him after Dec 68 - nor, in fact, any official records of any of them after that date.

Waldo Koop has a book in preparation on Jem Curry - has spent several years in research - it should be about ready.

Thomas Alderdice of the Forsyth Scouts was the husband of Susanna Alderdice, killed at Summit Springs. Eli Ziegler, the youngest member of the Scouts, was her brother.

May 8, 1968

What's difficult about about the site of the Sumner fight in 1857? The bodies of Cad^{de} and Lynch were turned up when they excavated for the new school, some years back, at Morland. The bodies were taken to the cemetery at Hill City. Or so I have been told. Perhaps you know something that I do not, concerning the location of this fight? There is little so uncertain as reported facts of locations in which there was a doubt by the participants.

Would have enjoyed the trip to Jack Morrow but I'll defer to you the role of guide to females. I usually say the wrong thing, or lose my conversation with what is at times considered as profanity - even though it is emphasis.

Sincerely



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Mr. Arthur Carmody.

Trenton,

Nebraska.

69044.

FROM THE DESK OF -
RAY G. SPARKS
TELEPHONE JEFFERSON 1-6600
3531 BROADWAY
KANSAS CITY 11, MISSOURI

Thursday mte
29 aug 1968

art -

Thanks for your letters - maps and white material - glad to know you fellows can make it.

Plan to arrive at Sterling Sunday afternoon don't know whether early or late - no plan to go to Summit Springs that day. Have thought that evening might be a good time to talk things over with Dowling or anyone else who might have information. However, that could be done Monday night. I shall be Elite Motel - meet me there or Summit Springs.
Best - Ray

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art parody - The letter in the typewriter was the one to you that was interrupted.

Colonel Digs Into Old West History

By Rosalie Jenkins
(A Member of The Star's Staff)

RAY G. SPARKS can keep a listener wide-eyed for hours with tales about the old West, particularly early-day Kansas.

He can describe scenes that rival the frontier portrayed in movies and television—of women settlers in Kansas captured by Indians and rescued by cavalry, of 52 hardy pioneers who held off 1,000 attacking Indians.

More Than Storyteller

But Sparks, who lives at 5830 Cherokee drive, Fairway, is more than a storyteller. The episodes he relates are about real persons and events.

He is one of that group some history professors refer to as laymen historians.

Sparks, a retired Air Force reserve colonel and aviation underwriter for Connecticut General Life Insurance company, has been studying Western history as a serious hobby 50 years.

His specialty is the period from about 1850 to the 1880s, with emphasis on Kansas history.

Sparks has written articles and pamphlets on Kansas history. Historians and historical societies often are referred to him for information on Kansas events.

Search for Truth

"I get a personal satisfaction from studying history," he said. "It challenges the intellect to find out what happened and what did not . . ."

"It is difficult to get truth into history—why not have the truth no matter how small a detail might seem? A great many books on Western history are a compilation of other books, and the errors are only compounded and repeated."

"Sparks's den at home is his office. The library shelves are lined with history books. Other file cabinets, drawers and boxes



THE STUDY OF OLD WEST AND KANSAS HISTORY has been the hobby of Col. Ray G. Sparks since boyhood. Sparks, who has written on Kansas history, has visited historical sites—forts, Indian-cavalry battle scenes — and found thousands of artifacts with a metal detector. On the table in the foreground are several such finds—an iron cavalry cooking pot one-third full of spent bullets that were either fired at or by Indians and a coffee can filled with spent cartridge cases.

Battle of Beecher island in September, 1868.

Sparks said 23 of the 52 scouts had been from Lincoln County and several were related to his family.

Tracked Indian Raiders

The scouts were a group of Kansas frontiersmen, organized and commanded by Col. George A. Forsyth to track down Indian bands that had been raiding settlements.

The battle occurred on an island on the Arickaree fork of the

withdrawing after four days and were gone in six days.

"This battle was undoubtedly the greatest plains fight ever successfully fought with Plains Indians!" he asserted.

Sparks has written about and given talks on the battle for historical organizations, and he said he planned one day to expand his research into a book.

This project is only one of many the historian is planning. He said he had completed about 800 pages of an historical novel.

however, will be a trip late this month to the site of another Indian-cavalry skirmish, July 11, 1869, near Sterling, Colo., in the northeastern tip of the state.

Sparks said a band of Cheyenne dog soldiers under Tall Bull had killed many persons and had captured two women settlers in Lincoln County, in raids 42 days before.

The two young women were Mrs. Susanna Alderdice, 27 years old, whose husband, Tom, had been a Forsyth scout and

could speak no English.

"When they captured Susanna, she watched the Indians kill two of her children and wound her oldest son in the back with an arrow. She begged them to let her keep her 6-month-old baby," Sparks said, "and by some miracle they did."

"But three days later, according to an account by Maria, the baby's crying annoyed them, so they twisted its head off and threw it in the river."

Women Badly Treated

"Both women were subjected to beatings and brutal treatment and repeated rapes by the Indians."

He said the 5th U. S. cavalry from Ft. McPherson, Kas., commanded by Gen. Eugene Carr with his chief scout, William F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody, finally caught up with the band near what is now Sterling.

The soldiers staged a surprise attack on the Indian camp. Before they could reach the two women, Tall Bull killed Susanna with his tomahawk and shot Maria. Sparks said Maria was wounded in the chest and later recovered in an Army hospital.

The soldiers buried Susanna in a moving ceremony at the battle site but did not mark her grave,

the historian said.

A Sparks mission the last six years has been to find the grave and mark it. He said he had made about two trips a year to the site, and was hopeful that this time he finally would locate it.

He was asked why he had become involved with such a quest.

Known by Ancestors

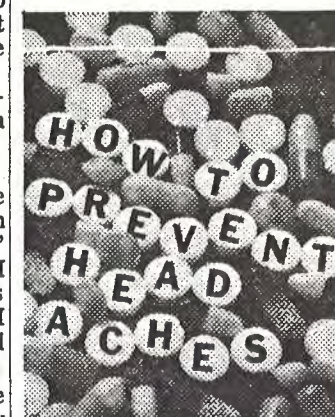
"Some of my ancestors in the county knew her is one reason why I want to find her grave," he replied. "Another is that I think she was one of America's greatest pioneer mothers. . . I think Susanna is at least entitled to have her grave marked."

"She and many others, some of whose stories we probably never will know, had to pay a terrible price for settlement of the West."

Sparks noted that an antique painting, depicting the battle and featuring the two women, Buffalo Bill and General Carr, was on display in the new Buffalo Bill Historical center at the Whitney Gallery of Western Art in Cody, Wyo.

Sparks provided the museum with more information about the battle and corrected their belief that the two women, whose names had not been known, had

been the only survivors of some wagon train Indians had attacked.



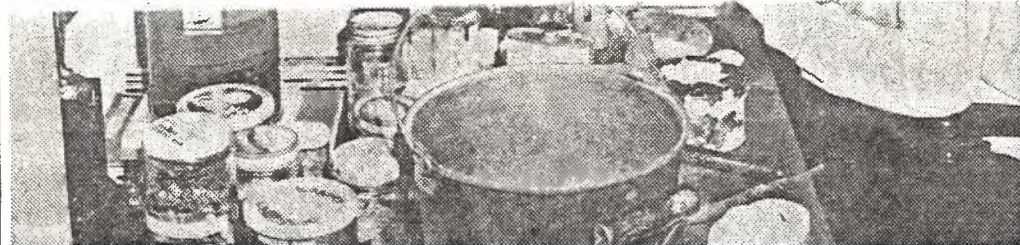
A new drug, a simple exercise, or change in routine could cure your headaches. Learn how tension headaches differ from sinus, migraine, and allergy headaches—and what to do for each kind. Read *Hurting from Headache*, one of 40 articles and features in the September Digest, including:

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"Sparks's den at home is his office. The library shelves are lined with history books. Other file cabinets, drawers and boxes contain the material from his own investigations.

These include hundreds of feet of microfilm reprints from the National Archives of the old records of U. S. Army forts in Kansas in the 1860s and correspondence from descendants of pioneers.

Sparks also gathers material through numerous visits to the sites where history has been made.

On the trips, which he described as the "fun part" of his hobby, Sparks searches for artifacts at the sites of frontier battles, Indian villages, Army forts and stage depots. He uses two metal detectors, one for locating metallic objects buried down to 20 feet in the earth and the other for objects no deeper than 18 inches.

Thousands of Items

Sparks said his basement contained thousands of artifacts, packed away in boxes—pistols, knives, spent bullets, arrowheads, cavalry equipment, clothing, household articles and tools.

He estimated he had found more than 10,000 cartridges.

His collection of cartridges used by buffalo hunters in the Sharp buffalo rifle has been displayed several years by the Kansas State Historical society in Topeka.

A sampling of some of his Indian and cavalry artifacts will be displayed in the picture window at Glenn Books, Inc., 1227 Baltimore avenue, through September. This collection includes material that belonged to the U. S. 7th cavalry while it was stationed at various Kansas forts.

The 7th, organized by Gen. George Armstrong Custer in 1866 at Ft. Riley, Kas., was massacred at the Battle of the Little Big Horn.

Interest Since Boyhood

Although he began his detailed and professional approach to history as a young man, Sparks said he had been fascinated with it since boyhood.

"I lived in Lincoln County (Kansas) as a boy," Sparks related. "I used to like to talk to the men and women who had been early settlers there and were still alive in the early 1900s.

"I heard about the Indian fights from men who had fought them; I heard about the 7th cavalry from men who had served with it."

From these conversations, Sparks also received his first material on an event that has been a major research topic for him—the Forsyth Scouts and the

Battle of Beecher island in September, 1868.

Sparks said 23 of the 52 scouts had been from Lincoln County and several were related to his family.

Tracked Indian Raiders

The scouts were a group of Kansas frontiersmen, organized and commanded by Col. George A. Forsyth to track down Indian bands that had been raiding settlements.

The battle occurred on an island on the Arickaree fork of the Republican river on the Colorado plains a few miles west of the Kansas line. The island was named after Lt. Fred H. Beecher, second-in-command, who was killed early in the 6 day battle, with about 1,000 Cheyenne, Sioux, Arapaho and other Plains Indians.

Sparks said this battle, based on written reports of Forsyth and others, was a classic example of fact that outdoes fiction.

"If you can," he said, "picture 52 men, their horses dead, surrounded by 1,000 Indians, who have even brought their squaws and children to watch a great victory.

"The scouts were out of rations and only had rotting horse and mule meat to eat. Forsyth directed the battle with three bullet wounds. One, which he thought was just a simple scalp wound, turned out to be a skull fracture.

Four Went for Help

"Four scouts sneaked away on foot to go for help at Ft. Wallace (an Army fort near what is now Wallace, Kas.), but relief troops didn't get to the men for nine days. By that time the Indians had given up and withdrawn."

Sparks said the Indians began

withdrawing after four days and were gone in six days.

"This battle was undoubtedly the greatest plains fight ever successfully fought with Plains Indians!" he asserted.

Sparks has written about and given talks on the battle for historical organizations, and he said he planned one day to expand his research into a book.

This project is only one of many the historian is planning. He said he had completed about 800 pages of an historical novel.

Trip to Battle Site

His most immediate project,

however, will be a trip late this month to the site of another Indian-cavalry skirmish, July 11, 1869, near Sterling, Colo., in the northeastern tip of the state.

Sparks said a band of Cheyenne dog soldiers under Tall Bull had killed many persons and had captured two women settlers in Lincoln County, in raids 42 days before.

The two young women were Mrs. Susanna Alderdice, 27 years old, whose husband, Tom, had been a Forsyth scout, and Mrs. Maria Weichelb, 20, a wealthy German immigrant who

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CONNECTICUT GENERAL

LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

P.G.S.

1414 Commerce Tower

P. O. Box 13246

Kansas City, Missouri 64199

Sept 1968

Spahr



Mr. Arthur Carmody
Renton,
Nebraska.

Clipping - A.C.M.
Newspaper

69044

DAVID J. BOYLE
2110 N. Newland St.
Chicago, Ill. 60635

Jan. 17. 1969

Dear Art;

Brother Carmody; if you in Kas. or Nebr. had $\frac{1}{2}$ the rain water that has fallen within the past 3 days, and today from 7 a.m. until I write this at 10 p.m., you could bet your next years earnings on a sure wheat crop and any of the buffalo wallows and water holes overflowing ...AND it's falling on about 4 inches of solid snow. HOW ABOUT That ?

Yes it's a hell of a nite for Sailors and Live Stock and to Hell with the Sailors ...I'm an Army man.

Reevaluating your letter on the HOLE situation and the general direction of the fight, I am mulling over in my mind the scant facts or ledgends we have to go on and I am in sort of a set way to follow what George Bird Grinnell in his book " The Fighting Cheyennes " wrote along about 1913. on page 261 there are excerpts from an old Indian named Good Bear told to George Bent this, of the battle.

On Quote :

The Cheyennes who happened to have their ponies tied up close by their lodges, were the first to get mounted, and at once rode off in search of the soldiers, whom they presently discovered in a little hollow near the stream, dismounted and ready for a fight. One of the Dog Soldiers named Tobacco begin riding around the soldiers and shooting, and the others did the same. Presently the Sioux rode up and jumped off their horses, preferring to fight on foot. They began to crawl through the grass on Kidder's Party, while the Dog Soldiers kept circling about them and firing as they rode. Good Bear had his horse shot under him, and Tobacco, the Cheyenne leader, also had his pony killed. All through the fight Red Bead, the Sioux who was with Kidder, kept Calling to the attacking party of Sioux to let him out, but the Sioux would not listen to him, and kept creeping in closer and closer, until at last all the soldiers were killed. In this fight the Sioux lost two men, one of them Yellow Horse, who had been mad a chief just before the engagement. There were only twelve Cheyennes in the fight, among whom were Tobacco, Big Head and Howling Wolf. The Sioux were under Pawnee Killer, who only a few days before had a peace talk with Custer on the Republican, and Bear Making Trouble.

I have had this book for 9 years and have read little of it and your and my friend, Sutton does quote on it and it has a lot of good stuff in it and I one day... Comes another depression when I have time off will read more of it and it is good as they go and in the meantime ...Until the depression you are welcome to persue it and I'll mail it

Carmody: page 2-1/17/69

to you and you can fix it to your fancy O.K. ?

Sorry, I cant make the trip with you to old Mex. this year, and I wish I could, as I have to go to the Hinterlands of Tex. New Mex. and Ariz. before fall this year and I dread it ...even if I do see some and add to my collection NEW country ...I dread the ordeal.

You mention in your letter about spots in Mexico and incidently CULICAN ...that rings a bell for me ... ONCE back in 1924, My Uncle Jim and associates had a ranch there, ...Culican is a part of the place as memory goes...Navilito ? could be ...any way they raised Lettuce and Tomatoes and as the seasons were constant and never changed, it was plant harvest and pull out and start over again in a tropical Climate and without end. They had Bannas, Monkeys, Alligators Snakes and PEONS.and you couldn't get rid of the Peons. I was in St. Marys College then...against my will and Uncle Jim would welcome me if I came there and I wish I had for some months later I got kicked out of that D...n Baptist joint and was glad of it ...and theres a long story about all these events that I'd like to tell you someday and it had and does still have a romatic background and in the "Lodge" to say the least.

Sorry I haven't heard from Ev. cant figure him ...or his out. He used to bombard me with letters and suddenly they stopped.

Things here are about normal SNAFU ...if you know what means.

If Ev was at hand, and before I start seriously I'd still like to send the pleminary sketch to you for a general review and would make any changes you'd see fit.

SO, if you could get together I'd do my D...st. to Please.

My Kid is back to work now and I can only say that his spirit is high, He seldom complains and works hard at the job and all I can do is sit back and hope.

EXCERPT FROM BOOK

SO I'm only going to show so many Indian Horseman in the picture and the inclosed will show why and I'll judicially put them where a little action will loosen up the theme and ...It's hard to find the exact layout or terrain to place the action and I hope I decided right... I can't show it all and as Theo. Roosevelt stated.. "An ounce of performance is worth a ton of complaint." " Old Ted was a Great Guy ..wish he were Nixon ...Now.

As Ever...

Danz

Imperial, Nebr.
June 15, 1969

Dear Art:

A little bit of unsolved mystery was revealed today near the trail from Fort Wallace to Fort Sedgwick. A group from Champion dug out a human skeleton northeast of the three buttes, which are located on the surveyor's map of 1885.

The skeleton was located on a small hill between a quarter and a half mile north east of the spring where the Frenchman starts. A county road goes over the hill and a cut had been made through it but the grader blade had not reached the bones as they ^{were} down about four feet in the side of the bank.

Mrs Don Welch was digging in the bank, looking for some Indian artifacts and discovered some bones. She took them back to Champion and a nurse identified them as human bones and a group went out there to day and dug out the skeleton.

I happened to be over at the museum this afternoon and Don's son came in and wanted Anoma to go out there and tell them if it was an Indian or a white man's skull. She sent him to me and I went out there, just curious as I couldn't tell anything only that it was a human skull and from the looks of the teeth it was not an old person.

When I got there they had all the bones out and I told them they should be painted with shellac or something to keep the air out as they might disintegrate. Of course the thing they should have done was to leave the excavation to an expert.

They had called the Sheriff and the newspaper man. But the Sheriff just let them go ahead with the digging as it was evident that the skeleton had been there a long time.

I thought that maybe you might be interested or know of somebody in State Historical Society or the University who might be.

The bones will be at Don Welch's Grocery Store in Champion.

Sincerely,

Archie P. Smith

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

National Archives and Records Service

Washington, D.C. 20408



DATE: July 1, 1969

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: NNO-2566ALM

SUBJECT: Military Expedition

TO: Mr. Arthur Carmody
Post Office Box 217
Trenton, Nebraska 69044

The report of the expedition led by Brig. Gen. Robert B. Mitchell was printed in the War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), series I, vol. 48. Reports of the 7th Iowa Cavalry and 1st Nebraska Cavalry, can also be found in these volumes.

Brief histories of these organizations can be found in Frederick H. Dyers A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion (Reprint, New York, 1959).

These publications usually can be found in the larger research libraries.


ELMER O. PARKER
Assistant Director
Old Military Records Division

ARTHUR CARMODY
LICENSED REAL ESTATE BROKER
TRENTON, NEBRASKA 69044



ARTHUR CARMODY
TRENTON, NEBR. 69044

Please return



RAY G. SPARKS

5830 CHEROKEE DRIVE • SHAWNEE MISSION, KANSAS 66205 • PHONE 362-6571

23 August 1969.

Mr. Arthur Carmody,
P.O.Box 217,
Trenton, Nebraska. 69044.

Dear Art:

As we had one letter cross in the mail and I now have another of yours shall reply to both.

Thanks for the kind words regarding my address at the Kidder site-only hope it is true that what I had to say was of some importance. Under these kind of circumstances I often wonder if I have been away from these people so long that I no longer know how to talk to them. I hope that this does not happen, as these people are the backbone of our country.

Those people at Russell Springs are very fortunate to have you as their speaker. Only wish that I could be there to hear your address. As it is I am flying out to the A-A with Stan Learned, Chairman of Phillips Petroleum and will return to Kansas City 7 Sept. This means that I will not be driving which denies me the pleasure of stopping by to see my Cornhusker friends.

I note what you say-with interest-regarding some exploring around the first of October and would be willing to spend some time on the Penokee thing but dont think it merits too much time. Here are my reasons- We know where the sod building was-if there was another one close by someone surely would have known about it,yet there is no such report. An exploration from the air would or might possibly show where such a place may have been. It would be most unusual if there had have been two such houseings within what would be only a very few miles. We know that battle was fought within a radius of only a very few miles from this location. The finding of a uniformed body or bodies at Morland is a definate indication-if they were the bodies of Lynch and Cady-but they may not have been,even though the uniforms and buttons were of the right period. Personally I believe they were Lynch and Cady and I believe this is the scene of the fight. Let us assume that is correct and if so there would be no difficulty in locating the site of the Indian village-which I am certain I have done-let me say further that you are welcome to the location and not just because you wont find anything there-that river has flooded a hundred times since 1857 and deposited three feet of mud on top of anything left. There have been people liveing on that property for many years and if this were not true there would have been reports of many finds over the years. However there is a possibility that there are items nearby on higher grounds,even though I have never heard of anything being found in that vicinity.

(Aug. 23, 1969)

-2-

What about the soddy-I have been to the library in Hill City and looked at the pictures of the model of the building-which said to me that the building, as shown in that model, was not built by these soldiers in 1857. Why? Too big-two rooms-windows and a roof-----but-----the small room could have been built on what the soldiers left-the whole thing enlarged and roofed. Until I have something better this is what I accept. So it is several miles from what we regard as the scene of the fight-to me this is very possible-it puts them on the north side of the river which otherwise would have to be forded with wounded men when they headed for Ft. Kerney-higher ground and perhaps a more favorable location for defense if that became necessary. Let me be quick to add that so far there is absolutely no proof that this was the scene of this fight-everything is circumstantial and it is on this that we are basing our assumptions-best we have and it is overwhelmingly in favor-in fact I accept it. Now the question-what can we prove by investigation that we dont already know?

The material in the Library at Hill City offers but little, to me. They have a long envolved account of how it all happened (which they prize) written or told by some character Smkyhill Thompson or some such who was a Buffalo hunter and trapper there-about's earlier than most anyone else. Great cre dence can be placed on his deductions based on his account of the killing of one of the soldiers-the Indian very craftily counted the shots he fired-six from his revolver-THEN SEVEN FROM HIS SPENCER CARBINE-this cinched his athenticity of knowing what he was talking about-you and I know the Spencer Carbine wasnt even warm yet in the brain of its inventor. I dont want to be uncooperative-perhaps I'm overlooking the obvious-set me right?

X-1564-5

My choice would be old Sheridan-if I could have my druthers. To the best of my knowledge no one has really given that place a work out. Yes youve been there-so have many others-but who has really worked it over. Many have hit and miss at times-even Beougher-but perhaps there have been those that I do not know of and you do? There is the possibility that this place is overrated in my mind-what do you think?

Whatever I do I would like to give it several days of real effort-there is no point in Tom taking time off and we make a long drive to bounce off the surface and glance off a hill or two while we spend time convincing each other how much we know. As you can readily see I'm trying to do that now so you will be properly impressed. Any person, including me, who closes his mind regarding historical events before there are iron clad proofs, is not a historian but is more likely a damned fool-I dont mind being regarded as not much of an historian but I sure dont want you fellows to regard me as a damned fool. So lets have your thoughts.

I am very sorry that I did not know of the affair at the Kuhrts place-we were equiped for night flying and could have easily put off our departure. But I thought it was all over and wanted to get out of the way so Everette would not have to bother with us.

Aug. 23, 1962

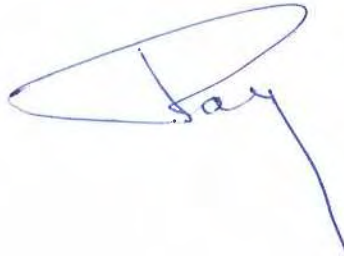
-3-

Thank you so very much for the pictures. Between you and Sutton I'm getting quite a recorded history of my activities. If it isn't too much trouble you could send me the negative of the address at Summit Springs and I can take it over to Studio Sales for a blow-up. After which I will return it.

Thanks-best offer I've had-we went to Sand Creek twice Tom and Mac worked their arse off and found nothing but mosquitos, bugs and sand fleas. Guess no one is ever satisfied until they have been there.

We just bought a 3000 book library-an exceptionally fine one and as it has just arrived I'm going down to look at it and will mail this at the same time.

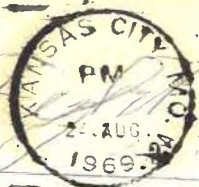
Sincerely,





RAY G. SPARKS
5830 CHEROKEE DRIVE
SHAWNEE MISSION, KANS. 66205

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1557 Summit



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FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

Mr. Arthur Carmody.

P. O. Box 217,

Trenton,

Nebraska. 69044

HARLAN COUNTY ABSTRACT CO.

BONDED

E. E. MCKEE, MANAGER

ALMA, NEBRASKA

68920

Oct. 29, 1969.

Mr. Arthur Carmody.
Trenton, Nebr.

Dear Mr. Carmody:

I have been interested for a long time in the fate of Nelson Buck and his surveying party who were killed by the Indians.

An early history of Harlan County published about 1907 states that they were killed in western Harlan County, near the mouth of Sappa creek.

I am enclosing a copy of a clipping from the Omaha World Herald published October 20th which indicates that the massacre occurred much further West. Perhaps you also saw this clipping.

The Fall Quarterly of the Nebraska State Historical Society, just published gives more detail of this incident in the notes on Page 308.

I am wondering if you might know some thing about the site where this occurred.

My occupation being at time rather closely associated with land surveys I have had my interested stimulated in surveyors.

Sincerely Yours,


E. E. McKee.

Century Flashback

Oct. 28, 1849, from the Omaha Daily Herald

Some later information has been received relative to the fate of Nelson Buck, of Cass County, and a party of 12 with whom he set out in June last to survey a portion of the public lands in western Nebraska. Up to mid-July he maintained an irregular correspondence with his friends in the settlements, but since then no tidings have been received. On Oct. 3 Lt. Hawkins found a deserted camp, two tripods, and some canned fruits about 30 miles southeast of Ft. McPherson. A squaw captured Sept. 26 by Gen. Duncan's cavalry reported: About Aug. 20, when cherries were first ripe, a band of Indians under Pawnee Killer and Whistler crossed the Republican to move over to Beaver between Frenchman's Fork and Red Willow river. Four young men were far in advance. One of them came back and reported the other three killed by white men. Squaws and children went at once into the bushes. The men went toward the Beaver and did not come back until dusk. They said they had killed five and destroyed two wagons and the rest of the white men hid in bushes. All the animals and rations were taken. The Indians are the same that have been punished this summer by Gen. Carr, Col. Roynel and Duncan in turn. There is a possibility the six white men are yet alive.



E.E.McKee

McKee ROGERS COMPANY, Agents

P. O. Box 618

Alma, Nebraska 68920

representing

THE CONTINENTAL
INSURANCE COMPANIES

Oct. 1969



Buck Surveying - Post

Mr. Arthur Carmody.

Trenton, Nebr. 69044

The Sunken Treasure Minus the Treasure

One doesn't often think of shipwrecks and studies. However, it is believed that all of the sunken treasures being found in the Mid-West, 104-year-old cargo of everyday staples intended for the Far West has been removed. So Such finds are usually associated with the shallow reefs in the Caribbean sea. But a treasure-laden shipwreck was uncovered this summer beneath a now-dry channel of the Missouri river just north of Omaha. But it has been reburied, and for good reason.

Archaeologists (the treasure turned out to be of more historical than financial value) decided to insulate the old steamboat hulk with dirt to protect it from this winter's freezing and thawing. The operation was carried out with some delicacy because the scientists have hopes of re-excavating the wreck for further

studies. However, it is believed that all of the 104-year-old cargo of everyday staples intended for the Far West has been removed. So it may be that once out of sight it will also be out of the minds of the archaeologists.

But it is doubtful that the two Omaha men who found and uncovered the sternwheeler Bertrand will ever forget the ship. While the century-old legend about the fortune that went down with the boat turned out to be largely untrue in this case, there must have been great fulfillment in just finding the old riverboat. There is satisfaction for any man in chasing, and catching a dream. Even if the gold is not there.

AS 66205 • PHONE 362-6571

5 November 1969

K.C. TIMES-28 OCT 69

Mr. Arthur Carmody.
Trenton, Nebraska.

Dear Art:

Have delayed writeing as I havent yet made my trip west which is planned for Lincoln, Kansas. The weather has been stinking and the ground wet for about six straight week ends, yet each week I believe I am going and would then have something to report. I have given up on the week end business and will take any day or days that look like things will be right. Unless there is a break soon I'm afraid it will have to await until next year.

There are several projects around there that I have been putting off for years, now I have them set up-all I need is some good weather.

I assume that Everette has had his operation and is, I hope, home and resting easy. I wrote him on that assumption today and told him when he was seeing like an eagle again I'd come out and take him up high where he could see what that country looks like. In coming back from Wyoming in September we were at 37,000 feet flying between the Platte and the Republican on a clear day. It was easy to see far to each side of each river and from that altitude one has the feeling that they could drop an apple in either river. Incidentally, we were making good 550 miles per hour-1:32 from Saratoga to K.C. For those of us who are used to great altitudes this isnt near as interesting as it is to one who has not had the experience of seeing the country laid out like a great map.

Hope everything went well at Culbertson and that the weather cooperated.

Sorry I got you fellows involved in a project which you were likely fed up with. In the future I shall try to be more thoughtful.

Not much going on here except cold-wet-dismal-weather that is not good for Arthritis. Sun out yeaterday and today for first time in weeks.

Sincerely,





RAY G. SPARKS
5830 CHEROKEE DRIVE
SHAWNEE MISSION, KANS. 66205



Mr. Arthur Carmoday.
Trenton,
Nebraska.
69044

HARLAN COUNTY ABSTRACT CO.

BONDED

E. E. MCKEE, ~~MANAGER~~

ALMA, NEBRASKA 68920

Nov. 11, 1969

Mr. Arthur Carmody.
Trenton, Nebr. P.O. Box 217
68044

Dear Mr. Carmody:

I certainly appreciated hearing from you so promptly and all the facts you gave were very interesting to me.

Since hearing from you another article has appeared in the World-Herald. I am enclosing a copy. This also confirms the facts in your letter. In case you did not see it I am sending you a copy herewith.

I would certainly enjoy coming up and viewing these historic sites but at present my wife is ill and I cannot very well leave. I may call you some day.

Sincerely yYours,



EEM

Century Flashback

Missing Party Presumed Dead

Nov. 7, 1849, from the Omaha Daily Herald

The annexed letter, from a son of Nelson Buck, the fate of whose surveying party has been a mystery, would seem to effectually settle the whole matter. The facts in the subjoined letter were obtained from official reports of officers in charge of scouting parties and are correct beyond a doubt.

Fort McPherson, Nov. 2

General Emory:

Dear Sir — In relation to the search for Nelson Buck's surveying party, I am fully satisfied that it was his party that was killed on the Beaver. I found two wagons (or parts of them) which, from the description, are undoubtedly his; and I also found the transit box smashed, and the polar compass box supposed to be his, some parts of harness, pieces of book covers, and also one small piece of paper or bill, with the name of Buck on one side and some figures on the other, which I suppose was part of a bill of goods bought of Clark & Blumber, Platts-

mouth, Neb. The tripods found by Gen. Duncan's I am sure are the old transit tripods, and the Spencer carbine, also found by Duncan's party, I think is the one he took when he left home. These are the facts as far as I know, as no bones were found to tell whether the party were killed or taken prisoners.

W. P. Buck.