

Decatur man killed by Herndon druggist

Editor's Note: This article, written for The Goodland Star-News, concerns the killing in Herndon of a Decatur County man a century ago.

By EVELYN WARD
Sherman County Historical Society
September 30, 1905: Killing In Rawlins County — Charles Stevenson, Druggist, Shoots John Tutt, Colored — Trouble Over Attempt of Tutt to Buy Liquor in Spite of the Refusal by Stevenson — Charles Stevenson, manager of the Herndon Drug company for several years, shot and killed John Tutt, colored, of Decatur County.

The shooting occurred at the front door of Stevenson's store in Herndon. The fatal shot pierced Tutt's heart, and he fell in his tracks on the sidewalk, dead. As he was on the report of the tragedy reached Atwood, the county seat, County Attorney Bye, and Sheriff Chessmore, left for the scene of the shooting.

Coroner Thompson, who lives at Herndon, had taken charge of the body and had it removed to J.R. Kirchner's undertaking rooms. When the officers arrived, the coroner immediately summoned a jury and held an inquest over the dead body.

The Atwood Citizen gives the following story of the killing: "It appears that during the day John Tutt had been drinking. He had reached the stage where he thought it was absolutely necessary to have more of the fire water.

"He went to Charles Stevenson's drug store and asked for a pint of whisky. Stevenson refused to it to him and Tutt declared he would have it if he had to take it himself. After some talk along this line, Tutt went away.

"In a few minutes, he returned and demanded that Stevenson sell him a pint of whisky to take home with him. Stevenson became angry at Tutt for insisting after he had refused to sell him liquor and got his revolver, which was a 38. He then pointed the gun at Tutt and ordered him to leave the store, saying, 'G—

d — you, I will kill you.'
 "Tutt then went down the street but in a few minutes started to go back to the store, when he was intercepted by Dr. Thompson and Harry Fortney, who tried to get him to stay away from Stevenson's store.
 "Tutt insisted that he was going to have the whisky if it cost him \$100. He went to the drug store, where Stevenson met him at the door. Tutt put his hands against Stevenson to push him out of the doorway, when Stevenson shot and killed him.
 "Tutt staggered out to the sidewalk, saying to Henry Meyers, who was standing there, 'Henry, I am hurt.' He staggered a few feet further and fell backwards, dead."

Charles Stevenson took the stand and made the following statement in his own behalf: "I killed John Tutt. I know I did it in self defense."

He then related an account very similar to the aforementioned, concluding by saying: "Tutt got loose from Thompson and said, 'Charley, I am going to have whiskey from you today and I will get a prescription for it.' I said, 'John, it won't do you any good to get the prescription, because I would not fill it for you today.'

"When he made an advance toward me, I pulled my gun and shot him purely as an act of self defense and my own rights." (Historic Note: In 1905, by Kansas law, whisky could only be purchased at a drug store for 'medical' purposes.)

The coroner's jury returned a verdict that Tutt met his death at the hands of Charles Stevenson and that the killing was done with malicious intent. Stevenson was immediately arrested and charged with murder in the first degree.

John Tutt was a colored man about 25 years old, having been born and raised about nine miles east of Oberlin. He was never the least quarrelsome except when drinking. He owned several quarters of land and considerable personal property.

From weekly issues of The Goodland News, provided by the Sherman County Historical Society.

Sulzmans meet for reunion

The 11 children, spouses and families of Bill and Betty Sulzman met recently for a family reunion. Nine states were represented and there were 81 in attendance.

It began on Sept. 3 on the home place where all were reared, now known as "Frank's place," located three miles south of Leoville or five miles east of Selden.

Activities included a tour of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church at Leoville, where all were baptized, and a visit to the home place of their grandfather, Andrew Sulzman, five miles south of Frank's place. The original barn, now covered with tin, is still standing in the canyon. Frank provided trailer rides for the children, as well as many of the adults. The evening was spent at Selden Park with food provided by "Big Boys Barbecue" of Selden, operated by Lad True-tkin, son of Don and Lillian Sulz-

man. There was also fresh corn and watermelon from the Geisinger Gardens. Games and visiting concluded the day.

On Sunday, they gathered at the Don and Agnes Roberts farm north of McCook for hunting, golfing and visiting. They had a buffet supper at the Country Kitchen Restaurant at the Chief Motel Poolside in McCook, where swimming, games, prizes and reminiscing were enjoyed. Paul Sulzman, son of Bob, entertained with his Shakespeare talents.

Children present included: Don Sulzman, Dresden; Bob, Monte Vista, Colo.; Mary Lou, Lakewood, Colo.; Jeanette (Joan), Grand Island, Neb.; Agnes, McCook; Bill, Colorado Springs; Virginia, Centennial, Colo.; Frank, Selden; Susanne (Alice), Shawnee, Okla.; Jim, Selden; and Carol, Littleton, Colo.

Matching grant sought for new ambulance

The Decatur County commissioners approved the documents needed for a matching grant for a new ambulance at their meeting last Tuesday.

Amy Griffey, with the Northwest Kansas Planning and Development Commission, met with commissioners to go over the paperwork. There were some wording changes that needed to be made to the documents so Commissioner Doyle Brown could sign them.

Mrs. Griffey said it is a matching

grant, which means the ambulance service is putting up \$64,750 and they are asking the state for \$64,750. The county money is from the budget carryover from the last few years.

The commissioners approved the documents with the changes. Mrs. Griffey said she would make the corrections that afternoon and then mail the final copies to the county so the papers could be signed and returned.

Club News

Club enjoys garden tour

Fourteen members of Pi Alpha Club enjoyed a tour on Sept. 26 of the beautifully landscaped grounds and distinctive three-level brick home of Gaylord and Shirley Shields, guided by Mrs. Shields.

The house was built by Mr. Shields' parents, Ed and Nettie Shields in the late 1940s. It was owned after their deaths by several others until Gaylord and Shirley bought it when they retired from the farm.

A meeting followed at Sappa Valley Manor with Elaine Bryan

as hostess. Co-hostess was Rosella Meitl. Mrs. Bryan read an "Oprah" interview of Maya Angelou, noted college professor and poet, on her 70-plus birthday.

President Joan Evans told members that the club would entertain for October birthdays at Cedar Living Center. A \$10 donation to the Food Bank will be made for the program thank you. Mrs. Evans also won the hostess gift.

The Oct. 10 meeting will be held at the Golden Age Center with Estella Waldo as hostess.

4-H picnic and hayride set

Just a reminder, our annual kick-off picnic and hayride will be held on Sunday, Oct. 9, starting at 4:30 p.m.

If you wish to car pool or caravan, please meet at the city park at 4 p.m. This is a good time to meet a lot of the families in Stick-

To-It.

At this picnic, we will have the elections for new officers. They will serve from November 2005 to October 2006. So that means I will have to pass my pen on to someone else. Always support all the 4-H clubs for Decatur County.

Students speak at Rotary

Three of seven Decatur Community High School students who traveled overseas with the 2005 Kansas Ambassadors of Music and their vocal instructor, Susan Nelson, spoke at the Sept. 27 meeting of the Oberlin Rotary Club.

The singers were introduced by Ken Morris, program chair for the week.

Mrs. Nelson and Marci Metcalf, Sarah Marcuson and Mackenzie Nelson told about their trip to London, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Paris, Venice and

other beautiful cities. Among points of interest were the Hard Rock Cafe, Picadilly Square, the White Cliffs of Dover, the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame Cathedral, Kensington Palace and Westminster Abbey. The group included a 15-piece band and choir members from northwest Kansas.

Treasurer Jesse Carter reported that \$2,700 had been collected for hurricane victims. Guests included Brian Chance and Janice Shobe.

Comedy Saturday at Gateway

A romantic comedy, "Barefoot in the Park" by Neil Simon, will be presented at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday at The Gateway by the Southwest Nebraska Community Theater Association.

It is sponsored by the Oberlin Arts

and Humanities Commission. Admission is by season ticket or \$10 for adults, and \$5 for students.

For details, call Ella Betts at (785) 475-3557 or Mary Henzel at (785) 475-3329.

Scholarships are available

The Kansas Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliary, through their Endowment Association, offer college and vocational school scholarships to children and grandchildren of VFW membership.

Applicants must have a parent or grandparent affiliated with a VFW post or auxiliary in Kansas, either a life member or a member whose dues are paid for the current year, or

were at the time of his/her death.

Applications are submitted through the post or auxiliary that can verify the membership.

Completed application forms must be returned by Feb. 1.

For details, write state headquarters, Box 1008, Topeka, Kan., 66601-1008, or phone (785) 272-6463.

Annual meeting in Atwood

The annual meeting of the Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development Area will be held at 6 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 13, at the Aberdeen Steak House in Atwood. The agency serves Cheyenne,

Rawlins, Decatur, Sherman, Thomas, Sheridan, Wallace and Logan counties. Entertainment will be by the DCHS Singers.

Those interested in attending may call (785) 462-2602.

Man joins McCook bank

Aaron Broz, a native of Hayes Center, Neb., has joined McCook National Bank as investment services manager.

A lifelong resident of southwest Nebraska, he is a graduate of Mc-

Cook Community College and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a degree in finance. During his college career, he worked for JFC Financial.

Essays offer scholarships

High school students are invited to enter the 59th annual Veterans of Foreign Wars "Voice of Democracy" competition and possibly win scholarships and awards.

Theme is "How I Demonstrate My Freedom." A total of \$145,000 in scholarships will be given, with a first place award of \$25,000.

The script-writing program gives

high school students a chance to voice their opinion on a patriotic theme and express their thoughts to the American people. All students in grades 9 to 12 are eligible to participate through the Veterans of Foreign Wars posts.

Deadline for entries is Nov. 1. For details, call the state headquarters at (785) 272-6463.

Couple plans fall wedding



A. Martin and M. Zirelli

Amanda Jo Martin and Michael Zirelli of San Jose, Calif., plan to be married on Saturday, Nov. 19.

Parents of the couple are Bob and Sheila Martin, Westlake Village, Calif., both graduates of Decatur Community High School, and Gary and Nancy Zirelli, San Carlos, Calif. Her grandparents are Marvin and Marie Bailey, rural Jennings.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, Calif.; and California State University, Northridge, Calif. She earned a Bachelor of Science in nutritional sciences, graduating summa cum laude. She is employed as a food service super-

visor at Kaiser Permanente in San Jose.

Her fiance earned a Bachelor of Science in kinesiology from California Polytechnic State University and a minor in league baseball. After a stint in Giants minor league baseball, he is assistant baseball coach for Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, Calif.

Ogallala Commons plans meeting Saturday

Ogallala Commons and the Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development Area will host the sixth annual Ogallala Commons Fall Conference and Field Tours Day on Friday and Saturday in Colby.

The theme will be "Knowledge for Life: Innovating Education on the High Plains."

It will begin with a panel presentation at 9 a.m. on Friday at the City Limits Convention Center. A tour of the Prairie Museum of Art and History, Kansas State University Northwest Research Extension Cen-

ter, Youth Attraction Strategies in Atwood and other learning centers will follow. Tom Markum of Lexington, Mass., will speak at 5:30 p.m.

Saturday events will feature a presentation by Dr. Cornelia Butler Flora, a rural sociologist from Iowa State University. There will be workshops on entrepreneurial education, community leadership training, adult continuing education, and place-based learning.

For details, call Dr. Darryl Birkenfeld at (806) 938-2529 or by e-mail at darrylb@amaonline.com.

Custodian to repair steps at courthouse

The Decatur County commissioners gave the custodian the go ahead to fix the front steps of the courthouse.

Custodian Bob Berls talked with the commissioners a few weeks ago about the steps because some of the cement was breaking. Mr. Berls said he drilled into the top front half of the steps and the cement there is tough and should hold up for a while.

The commissioners agreed that instead of replacing the concrete, Mr. Berls should patch the steps.

County Clerk Marilyn Horn said

she received a call from City Clerk Deanna Castle to ask where the \$2,000 is that the county was going to give to the pool campaign. None of the commissioners remembered giving anyone an exact figure on how much the county could give to help with the project.

Mrs. Horn said she would look back in the minutes.

At the meeting Sept. 12, commissioners held a five-minute closed session for attorney/client privilege with County Attorney Steve Hirsch. There was no action taken.

Barbecue and salsa in Atwood on Saturday

The second annual "Smokin' on the Beaver" barbecue contest will be held at the Columbian Hall in Atwood on Saturday with 25 teams from three states competing for prizes.

It will offer honors to winning entries in categories including brisket, pork butt, ribs, chicken, beans and an open category, "Fins, Fur and Feathers" for wild game, game birds and fish.

Food cooked in the contest will be served to the public after the judging is finished, which is to be from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday night. The \$10 fee also includes admission to a dance later in the evening.

For details contact, Gary Worthy at (785) 626-3344.

A salsa contest will be open to everyone. No entry fee or pre-registration is required. For details, call Linda Vap at (785) 626-3121.

Jazz Caravan to visit Hoxie

Whit Smith's Hot Jazz Caravan will perform at 3 p.m. on Sunday at the Hoxie High School auditorium.

The sextet will present a blend of western swing, jazz, and ballads, featuring two guitars, two fiddles, a string bass, clarinet, and vocals. Most of the music is improvised on

stage and includes both original compositions and new arrangements of familiar melodies.

It is sponsored by Western Plains Arts Association. Admission is by season ticket or \$10 for adults and \$5 for children and students at the door.

Please join us in celebrating **Elda Campbell's 87th birthday** Sunday, Oct. 9, 2005 2-4 p.m. at the Selden Sr. Center



If unable to attend: cards can reach her at: Prairie Sr. Living Complex 1625 S. Franklin Room 106A, Colby, Kan. 67701

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