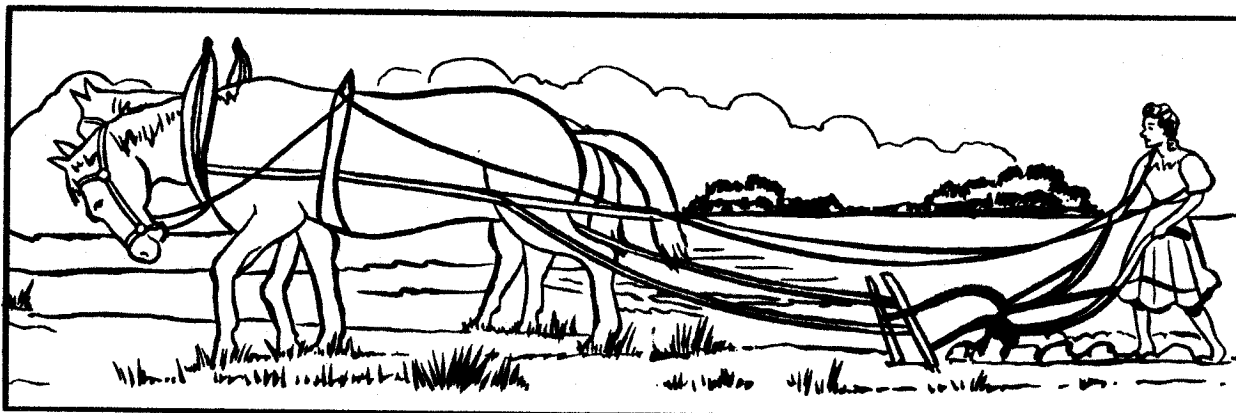


WILLA CATHER PIONEER MEMORIAL

VOLUME III

RED CLOUD, NEBRASKA

NUMBER 1



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AIMS of the WILLA CATHER PIONEER MEMORIAL

1. To perpetuate an interest throughout the world in the work of Willa Cather.
2. To identify and restore to their original condition, places made famous by the writings of Willa Cather.
3. To provide for Willa Cather a living MEMORIAL in the form of art and literary scholarships.
4. To secure the bonding, insurance and housing of a permanent art, literary and historical collection, relating to the life, time and work of Willa Cather.

PROGRESS REPORT

In February the Red Cloud Chapter of the WILLA CATHER PIONEER MEMORIAL held its fourth annual meeting. Members along with representatives of twelve civic and fraternal organizations were given a progress report. Notable items are:

1. The number of visitors to the museum has increased steadily since its opening June, 1956. The number of signatures in our guest book reveals a 20% gain over last year. Altogether, we have had people from 29 different states and 6 foreign countries.
2. Since 1957 the newsletter mailing list has increased from 1000 to 3000.
3. The museum collection, which increases constantly, is valued and insured at over \$10,000.
4. Our bank deposits to date are \$3722.76. The money comes from gifts, royalties from Early Stories of Willa Cather, edited by Mrs. Bennett, sales of books and notepaper, and from life memberships.
5. Life members of the parent Red Cloud Chapter now total 25 with the addition of Lawrence Peirce, Red Cloud pioneer.
6. This year for the first time we are accepting sustaining memberships from people outside Webster County who wish to reach the \$75.00 life membership goal by payments of \$5.00 at a time.

BUILDING FUND

In the fall newsletter we presented to you the plan to purchase and restore the Silas Garber Building to provide a permanent home for the MEMORIAL. Members of the board are extremely pleased with your enthusiastic response to their request for ideas about raising the \$10,000 necessary for the project.

Now is your opportunity for sharing materially in the MEMORIAL. Your contribution to

the Building Fund will make possible the housing of the Willa Cather collection in the building erected by the man she immortalized as Captain Forrester of A Lost Lady.

Mrs. Peggy Benjamin of Omaha has undertaken the task of acquainting people not reached by the newsletter with the Building Fund campaign. Typical of the notes accompanying contributions is this one from Miss Nan Beggs, Pensacola, Florida:

"Thanks so much for affording me this privilege of contributing to the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial at Red Cloud. It is great to see the distinguished and nationwide support you have behind the undertaking. It is also wonderful that you have so planned the project that many may have a small part in paying tribute to such a worthy American author as Willa Cather."

PUBLICATIONS

"Jack-a-Boy" is the story chosen by editor Karl Shapiro to represent Willa Cather in the University of Nebraska quarterly, Prairie Schooner, devoted this spring entirely to Nebraska writers in honor of Lincoln's Centennial Celebration. The story first appeared in 1901 in the Saturday Evening Post and was written while Willa Cather was living and working in Pittsburgh.

Also in the Prairie Schooner is an article by MEMORIAL President Mildred R. Bennett, "Willa Cather in Pittsburgh." It is based partly on reminiscences of the late Dorothy Canfield Fisher and on letters Willa Cather wrote to Lincoln and Pittsburgh friends.

PITTSBURGH

On April 24 Professor Frederick Mayer of the University of Pittsburgh will be the speaker celebrating Willa Cather Week of Pittsburgh's Bicentennial.

A Willa Cather Fund has been established by the bequest of Miss Lida McHattie, who saved \$5000 for this purpose from her \$50-a-month pension. Increased to \$10,000 by an anonymous donor, the Willa Cather Fund will be used for the promotion of travel for teachers, for the recruitment of able teachers, and for other educational activities in the Pittsburgh Public Schools.

THE FAMILY TREE

Lawrence A. Cather has presented the MEMORIAL with a copy of the document used in establishing the Revolutionary service of Jasper Cather, the colonial ancestor of the "Virginia" Cather family and great-great grandfather of Willa. Lawrence Cather was named in honor of Jasper Cather's first two wives, Catherine and Barbara Lawrence.

Mr. Cather has suggested that his office be used as a clearing house on matters of Cather lineage. In the future you may direct your questions to L. A. Cather, Belle Plaine, Kansas.

FUTURE PLANS

The officers and board of governors will meet in Lincoln April 4 to complete Building Fund arrangements, to formulate a publicity program, and to discuss plans made by the scholarship committee: Dr. L. V. Jacks, Josephine Frisbie and Mamie Meredith.

The museum will open for the summer season June 1 and will feature two new displays. Dr. C. B. Schultz is preparing one on the natural history of Webster County. The other is inspired by Captain Forrester of A Lost Lady and will consist of items belonging to the Captain's prototype, Silas Garber (builder of the Farmers and Merchants Bank Building, the objective of our money raising campaign).

Even though the increase in mail during the past few months has been astounding, we feel now more than ever we need your letters of help, ideas and encouragement. You have been so gracious to bolster the MEMORIAL in its infancy that we feel justified in asking you to continue your efforts toward further expansion.

Please consider this newsletter your invitation to join the Building Fund Campaign.

Sincerely yours,

The Officers and Board of Governors
WILLA CATHER PIONEER MEMORIAL

Mildred R. Bennett

by Mildred R. Bennett, President