

Fact or Fiction? Big Dry Raid Gets Several Local People

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

These stories from local history are sometimes so extraordinary it's hard to believe they actually happened. Check out 'fact or fiction' stories: they're actual Enterprise news clips reprinted from the past.

Several well known local characters featured in a booze roundup last week made by Federal prohibition officers. "Babe" Snyder and his father, Frank, both were caught in the meshes of the net thrown out by dry officers. Frank Steppatt, another large farmer near Brandon, Nebr., was also a victim. Mrs. Dominic Vrba of Holyoke was the only woman involved and was also included in the group.

Perhaps the most notorious of the gang is "Babe" Snyder. Snyder is reported to have been before the Nebraska courts previously on a similar charge and it will be remembered that he was also before the local authorities less than a year ago.

At the Snyder farm about 3 miles east of Venango 2 quarts of liquor were found together with about 20 gallons of beer mash. A complete bottling and capping outfit was also found.

Frank Steppatt, living northeast of Brandon, was the first man arrested. On his farm was found 156 pints of beer, a complete manufacturing outfit and 20 gallons of beer mash. The mash was about ready to be bottled and the capping machine was in readiness for the operation. A quart of whisky was found in the house and some kegs that had contained liquor were also located.

The three men and Mrs. Vrba are reported to have all sold liquor to prohibition officers the week previous to their arrest. The three men were taken to Sterling Thursday and lodged in the Logan County jail over night. Friday they were taken to Sidney where they appeared before Joseph Oberfelder, United States Commissioner.

Mrs. Vrba was taken to Sterling Friday and appeared before U.S. Commissioner C.W. Kinzie.

The Snyders and Steppatt are all heavy wheat farmers and were just beginning the cutting of

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large acreages and were very much worried about their crops as they were detained behind the bars waiting for a hearing.

Working under the direction of dry chiefs, the agents say they were confronted with but little difficulty in making the necessary purchases from the parties in question. It is alleged that all of them have been operating on quite a large scale for some time and have been under the surveillance of dry officials for many months.

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