

Stolen Equipment Used in Operation of Greeley Farm

BY MIKE GUSTAFSON

Greeley.—“We thought they were big farm operators from down around Grand Island,” a farmer living near here said yesterday concerning Clayton Millspaugh and Joe Reha, both of Grand Island, who are being held in the Hall county jail on charges of theft.

The two have been connected with thefts in a 10-county area in central Nebraska with loot totaling nearly \$20,000. Their activities began last September and loot was distributed between Millspaugh's home in Grand Island and his rented farms near Shelton and Greeley.

Farmers here reported they had seen the pickup truck, belonging to Reha, go by several times on the roads leading to the Millspaugh farm.

But as the old 281 road between Wolbach and Greeley is often used by Kansas suit case farmers towing and hauling machinery to their South Dakota farms, nothing was thought of the machinery movement.

The farm which was used as a cache for a large amount of stolen property here by the two men is located five miles east of Greeley on the old 281 road and one mile south. The farm is set back off a little traveled, winding road and half hidden by an incline in the terrain. It appeared to be a perfect set-up for the purpose for which it was being used.

Millspaugh rented the farm a year ago from John Grady of Grand Island. The farm includes some good bottom land which had been planted mostly to corn last year.

Some of the corn had been picked with a nearly new one-row picker belonging to Millspaugh, except for a reported \$100 note against it at the bank. There were still more than 100 acres of corn to be picked.

Despite the small amount of corn picked, there were two medium sized new cob piles on the place and

evidence that two large piles had been burned recently. An F-20 tractor was still belted to the DMM corn sheller stolen from the farm of Everett Waddington north of Shelton April 15. A short distance away was another sheller, a small John Deere model.

There was evidence that one or both of the men stayed on the farm at times. The kitchen was littered with make-shift cooking equipment, there were a couple of half-loaves of bread and some jam on the table, and egg shells were strewn over the floor. Between the table and the old oil stove were a couple of mattresses, one on top of the other, reportedly stolen from the Church of God camp near Lexington.

Millspaugh was up to date with his farming, having gotten in around 30 acres of oats this spring. He had cut the stalks with a cutter stolen from Dick Hulsted Feb. 22 and sowed the oats with a drill stolen from Gerhardt Placke of St. Libory Sept. 26.

The two men were bold operators. At Gothenburg, they drove a Ford tractor, stolen from Ted Ryan who runs the Gothenburg Farm Equipment Company, down main street one evening heading for the loading point.

At York, Millspaugh was trying to make a cash deal for a Ford tractor with the Ford implement dealer there. Failing to strike a deal, the two men later that evening helped themselves to the tractor. Perhaps they didn't know how fortunate they were, but the key ring on the Ford tractor also contained the key to the machinery yard of the York Ford dealer.

Evidently the two had plans for turning much of their machinery loot into cash but had not decided yet just how to do it. Sheriffs and interested farmers had been watching for stolen property at the several commission farm sales held throughout the area in January and February this year.

Clayton Millspaugh / Joe Reha - Stolen Equipment

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