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Morgan County Today

Psalms 100:3

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Volume 11 Number 18

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Your Community. Your News.

75¢



**A big congratulations to
Sunbright Senior
Mckenna Smith on her
commitment to play basketball
at Roane State next season!**



Morgan County  Today
Your Community. Your News.

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WEEKLY WEATHER



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Tue 06	72°/55°	
Wed 07	66°/59°	
Thu 08	72°/54°	
Fri 09	71°/54°	
Sat 10	73°/56°	
Sun 11	75°/58°	
Mon 12	74°/57°	



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Ms. Avery Pearl
Pet Columnist

Pet Perspective with Ms. Avery Pearl

Ms Ivory Was Vibrating

It has been storming a lot, the last few days. It doesn't bother me, but it scares poor Ms Ivory.

God love her little heart. She gets so scared that she shivers all over, like a vibrating cell phone. She jumps up on Mimi's lap and wants squeezes and wuffins'.

So, Mimi snuggles her and tells her it will be okay. I feel sorry for her.

Mimi and Pap say I'm a brave girl during those old storms. I don't know about all that, but I do know that the rain and gentle thunder sure makes me sleepy.

The big booming thunder, I don't care much for that, but at least I don't get scared like Ms Ivory does.

She gets scared no matter how big or small the storms are. Me, I just snooze through it.

Any-woof, I hope everyone stays dry and warm during all this wet stuff.

For more of my Pet Perspective like and follow me on Facebook at Ms Avery Pearl.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR



All members within the Plateau Electric Cooperative service area will see a \$2.00 per month increase to their base customer charge. The customer charge covers the Co-op's basic cost of providing and maintaining the infrastructure (poles, power lines, substations, equipment, etc.) necessary for delivering electricity to our members, regardless of the total kWh consumed. The increase will become effective during the May billing cycle. There will be no change to the kWh rates at this time.

The Co-op has seen a continual increase in our supplies to maintain the infrastructure, stemming from the beginning of the 2019 COVID era and other more recent market challenges. We continue to review our operations, looking for areas to increase efficiency and manage our members' contributions responsibly. Plateau Electric Cooperative's goal is to provide safe, reliable energy at the lowest cost possible to all members within our service area.

The Deer Lodge Abner Ross Center meet on the third Monday of the month at 6:00 PM.

Coalfield Genealogical and Historical Society meets the second Tuesday of every month at the Senior Citizens Building at 6:00 PM.

Morgan County Republican Party meets the last Thursday of every month at 7:00 PM at the American Legion in Wartburg.

HONOR YOUR HOMETOWN HERO IN SUNBRIGHT

The City of Sunbright is working on a project to honor our hometown heroes. We will be placing an 8x10 photo of your Veteran Hero in a weather-proof frame on Electric Poles throughout the city. You will supply the photo for the City to copy and place in the frame that will be special made.

The cost of each photo is \$155.00 A Form will be need to be completed which may be picked up at the City Hall . When we receive your photo and completed form, we will also need the payment at that time.

Please call City Hall at 423-628-5260 or Charles at 865-216-4593.

HOMETOWN HEROES BANNER PROGRAM

Honoree Profile

Please fill out and send back with payment to City of Sunbright.

RANK: _____
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LAST NAME: _____
BRANCH OF SERVICE: _____
ERA: _____

ERA:

- Global War on Terror (Sept. 22,2001-Present)
- Persian Guld War (Aug. 22, 1990-Aug 31,1991)
- Cold War (Sept 2, 1945-Dec. 26 1991)
- Vietnam Conflict (Feb 28,1962-Nov 7, 1975)
- Korean War (June 27,1950-Jan 31,1955)
- WWII (Dec7, 1941-Dec 31,1946)
- WWI (April 6, 1917-Nov 11, 1918)
- Spanish American War (Apr 1898-Aug 1898)
- Civil War (1861-1865)

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BANNER PRICE: \$155.00

DEADLINE FOR ALL SUBMISSIONS MAY 9TH 2025

NOTICE OF ANNUAL ELECTION OF DIRECTOR OF PLATEAU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

The Annual Election of the Plateau Electric Cooperative will be held Saturday, May 17, 2025. Polls will open at 9:00 a.m. and close at 4:00 p.m. Members living in Morgan County will vote at the Cooperative’s office facilities in Wartburg.

Election Officials:
Peggy Morgan
Barbara Heidel
Larry Schafer
Kim Potter

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Randy Albert Little II
United States Combat Veteran



Randy Albert Little the Second, born June 16, 1988, and called home on April 28, 2025.

Randy lived a life marked by service, loyalty, and heart. From a young age, he was a good boy — kind-hearted, strong-willed, and fiercely protective of those he loved. As he grew, that goodness only deepened, and it carried him into a life of service for our country.

Randy proudly served three tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. He wore the uniform with honor, courage, and a deep sense of duty. Through the hardships and sacrifices, he stood tall, not for recognition or reward, but because he believed in protecting the freedoms we all hold dear. His service is a testament to the strength of his character and the greatness of his spirit.

Those who knew Randy knew a man of great compassion, quiet strength, and unwavering loyalty. He was a son, a friend, a brother to many — someone you could always count on. His laugh, his stories, and his unshakeable spirit will echo in our hearts forever.

We grieve deeply today because Randy mattered. He left an imprint on our lives that cannot be replaced. Though he has been called from us far too soon, his love, his laughter, and his legacy will live on in every life he touched.

Randy, you were a good boy, a good man, and a great hero. We will miss you dearly, but we will never forget you. Thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and your love.

Rest easy now. You've earned it.

The family will receive friends Monday, May 5, 2025 at Schubert Funeral Home in Wartburg from 1:00-2:00 p.m. The family is honoring Randy's wishes to be cremated.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Randy Albert Little II.

Anna Mae Marlow, 98



Anna Mae Marlow, age 98, went to be with the Lord on Friday May 2, 2025 at her home in Joyner surrounded by her family. She was a life long member of Union Baptist Church.

She spent her life working alongside her husband on their farm. She loved cooking Sunday dinners for family. Later in life, she enjoyed doing embroidery and she made numerous quilts for her family.

She was preceded in death by her loving husband of 74 years, William "Billy" Marlow; parents, George and Vinalene Leopper; brother, Henry (Faye) Leopper;

son-in-law, Ronnie Wormsley; and great-grandson, Brady Seiber.

She is survived by her three daughters: Marie Wormsley, Loretta Marlow, and Gail (Robert) Leary; 6 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren, and two great-great grandchildren; sister-in-law, Helen Perry; and a host of nieces and nephews.

The family will receive friends Monday May 5, 2025 from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. at Schubert Funeral Home in Wartburg, funeral service at 6:00 with Bro. Jason Lowe officiating. The graveside service will immediately follow in the Union Cemetery in Joyner.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Anna Mae Marlow.

Janet Gail McDonald West, 69



Janet Gail McDonald West, age 69 of Wartburg passed away April 24, 2025 at her home. She was born on April 8, 1956 in Chattanooga.

She is preceded in death by her parents Powell and Ruth McDonald.

She is survived by her husband Gary "Ol Smoke" West; children Chad, Kimberly (Billy), Jeremy, Wade (Sarah) and

Cody (Aailey); sibling Powell Jr. (Cheryl), Judy (Jerry), Steve (Linda) and Terri.

Thanks to the nurses at Methodist Medical Center, CCU and 4th floor and her Hospice team for their care and compassion especially Misty, Markus, and Tracy.

She fought the good fight, she finished her course, she kept the faith.

The family has chosen cremation, no services are scheduled.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Janet Gail McDonald West.

Psalm 123:1

**Unto thee lift I up mine eyes,
O thou that dwellest in the heavens.**

Bert Eddie Hooper Jr.



Great grandchildren: Maverick Pemberton and Grayson Pemberton.

Sisters: Rebecca Hooper and Beth Hooper (Gary).

Also surviving are a host of nieces and nephews, and his special friend and fishing buddy Larry Bell

Bert Eddie Hooper, Jr. (Eddie) was called to his heavenly home on April 23, 2025. He was surrounded by his family. He was a devoted husband, father, papa, brother, and uncle.

Eddie was preceded in death by his father and mother, Bert and Eleanor Hooper. His son Brandon Hooper, Grandparents Henry and Elizabeth Hooper, Charlie, and Edith Galloway.

Eddie was a member of the First Baptist church of Sunbright.

Eddie leaves behind his beloved wife of 53 years Mandi.

Children: Derek Hooper, Miranda Colon (Brian Conlon) and Mason Hooper (Christian)

Grandchildren: Grace Hooper, Derek Hooper, Tinslee Conlon, and Hooper Conlon.

Eddie worked cable TV his whole life. He was an avid fisherman who loved Dale Hollow Lake, fishing tournaments, and a clean boat. He enjoyed making and using his hand-made fishing baits. He passed down his love for fishing to his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

The family will receive friends on Sunday, April 27, 2025, from 12-2pm Schubert Funeral Home, Wartburg. Funeral services will follow at 2pm with Bro. Jamie Basler and Bro. Mike Hammonds officiating. Interment will follow in the Sunbright Cemetery.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Bert Eddie Hooper, Jr. (Eddie)

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David Zubler
Columnist

Tax news

President Trump suggested Sunday that his new tariffs could help him reduce income taxes for people making less than \$200,000 annually. He has previously said that tariff revenue could replace income taxes.

“We’re going to make a lot of money, and we’re going to cut taxes for the people of this country” through income from tariffs, Trump said. “take a little while before we do that” he added.

President Trump wants to permanently extend reductions in income taxes that were approved with his 2018 tax changes during his first presidency. Many of the changes are due to expire at the end of 2025. He also has suggested adding tax breaks, including exempting workers’ tips and social security earnings, and cutting the corporate tax rate from 21% to 15%.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) recently published an analysis report regarding extending the individual provisions of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA), which are due to expire at the end of 2025. The JCT found that permanently extending the TCJA individual provisions would provide a measurable boost to the economy. In contrast, the CBO found the pro-growth benefits of extending the TCJA would be largely offset by increased deficits “crowding out” private investment.

Many experts are questioning the feasibility of the proposed income tax reductions for people making less than \$200,000 a year.

According to the nonpartisan research firm Peterson Institute for International Economics, even if a 50% tariff was imposed on all goods imported into the country, the income generated would represent less than 40% of what income taxes bring in.

Erica York, vice president of federal tax policy at the Tax Foundation, a think tank focused on tax issues explained that tariffs could raise about \$170 billion in revenue this year, by eliminating individual taxes for

people earning less than \$200,000. However, the country would lose \$700 billion in tax revenue this year, she estimated.

“Even if you make the math work, it’s really replacing one form of tax with another — and the other important point here is these taxes have very different distributional effects across income types,” said Joe Rosenberg, senior fellow at the Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center, another think tank focused on taxes.

A typical low-income household is likely to see their disposable income be reduced by 5.5% from the tariffs, compared with 1.9% for the highest-earning families, according to an estimate from the Yale Budget Lab. The report explains that tariffs impact low and middle-income Americans’ budgets more because they spend a larger percentage of their incomes on basics like food and household goods than compared with high-income Americans.

In addition to extending provisions from The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, President Trump also wants to create a deduction for auto loan interest paid for American cars.

David Zubler is a nationally known tax accountant and Enrolled Agent that resides in East Tennessee. He is the author of six tax books and a syndicated columnist who has shared tax advice on podcasts and national TV and has been referred to as America’s Tax Guru. He is the founder and president of Your Tax Care. He represents clients nationwide before the IRS and provides tax strategies, and tax education, including David’s one-minute tax tip radio recordings at YourTaxCare.com. David can be reached at (865)363-3019 or by email at david@yourtaxcare.com.

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Historically Speaking

Meet Kenneth D. Nichols, the Father of Oak Ridge - Production Facilities, Part 2 (1942-1945): K-25

By Ray Smith - Oak Ridge City Historian

Barbara Scollin, grandniece of Major General Kenneth D. Nichols continues her series on his life.

Ample reasons, most notably leadership skills, personality traits and qualifications, led to choosing General (then Colonel) Kenneth D. Nichols as Deputy District Engineer and subsequently as District Engineer of the Manhattan Engineer District (MED). In this capacity he had supervision of the research and development connected with, and the design, construction and operation of all plants required to produce plutonium-239 and uranium-235, including the construction of the towns of Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and Richland, Washington.

The responsibility of his position was massive as he oversaw a workforce of both military and civilian personnel of approximately 125,000; his Oak Ridge office became the center of the wartime atomic energy's activities. He also was responsible for internal security operations in the production facilities that helped keep the development of the atomic bomb secret.

In this thirteenth installment of several articles covering the life and accomplishments of Kenneth D. Nichols, we learn why the Manhattan Project's biggest secret was K-25.

Colonel Kenneth Nichols wanted to be an engineer in his teens. His passion drove him to graduate first in his Class of Engineering and fifth in his overall class of 1929 at West Point so he could choose the Corps of Engineering branch of service (see 1 st article).

His Ph.D. in hydraulic engineering and years of teaching engineering at West Point further laid the foundation for his responsibility to design, construct and operate the Oak Ridge and Hanford production facilities (see 4 th article). He was a doer. The next two years of his career would amply use his talents and energy to orchestrate the biggest construction project in the history of the world at the time.

Unlike the Y-12 Electromagnetic Separation Plant, the K-25 Gaseous Diffusion Plant for separating isotope U-235 from U-238 was "far more difficult to organize, coordinate, and expedite" remembered Nichols. Theoretically the gaseous diffusion principal worked but was untested outside the laboratory.

Nichols explains, "Uranium hexafluoride gas would be pumped through a bundle of porous tubes contained within a tank called a converter or filter. Passing along the length of the tubes, approximately half the gas would diffuse through the porous wall of tubes; the other half would flow out the end of the tubes. Due to the difference in molecular weight of U-235 and U-238, the part of the gas that diffused through the porous walls of the tubes would contain a slightly higher percentage of U-235 than the gas that flowed through the tubes. ... The process would consist of thousands of stages. ...

"A production plant would consist of miles of barrier tubes; miles of interconnecting pipes; thousands of large converters confining the tubes in each stage; thousands of motors, pumps, and pump seals; and instrumentation piping and instruments to control pressure and volume of flow throughout the plant. The entire system had to be leakproof to a degree never before achieved by such a large system involving flowing gas. The statement was frequently made that the leakage into the entire process could not exceed the

equivalent of one pinhole. If air leaked into the system it would react with the uranium hexafluoride, and the barriers would become plugged and useless."

The almost insurmountable problem with the K-25 plant was the barrier. Nichols explains, "The main problems to be solved involved expert metallurgical, chemical and mechanical engineering as well as scientific research. The hardest problem was developing and producing a suitable barrier material.

Everything depended upon the separation and enrichment rate of the barrier. ... To proceed with the plant without good prospects for a suitable barrier involved the biggest gamble in the whole Manhattan Project. [Brig General] Groves persistently stuck by the decision to proceed with the plant... that took guts."

Nichols first met Dr. Harold C. Urey, head of the gaseous diffusion as well as heavy water projects on the S-1 committee, at a S-1 meeting in June 1942. Nichols' first impression of Urey was that "he would be difficult" and that proved to be true. Confusion at subsequent S-1 meetings on who would be the scientific leader of the K-25

handle all research on the K-25 process except the barrier. Keith and Hugh Taylor, chairman of the department of chemistry at Princeton, would be responsible for the barrier. Keith organized a new company, Kellex as a subsidiary of Kellogg, to handle the barrier issues.

Pushing construction of the gaseous diffusion plant "on faith" was quite a risk. Nichols said, "It was obvious that if we failed, the whole U-235 project would have no chance of producing enough U-235 for a weapon until sometime late in 1946. If we succeeded, our date of August 1945 would be attainable."

By May 1944 no suitable barrier yet existed. Nevertheless, Nichols proceeded with what could be done at the Clinton Engineer Works (CEW). He recalls, "Construction of the entire K-25 project at CEW was 45% complete, the electric power plant 86% finished, the conditioning plant 87% complete and the main plant 37% finished, but no barrier material." Cost estimates for K-25 reached \$281M (approximately \$5B in 2025) before it was known whether or not it would succeed.

As production activities were mainly fo-



Military review on Blankenship Field, Capt. Salvatore Latona receives a metal. Lt. Francis Kratch and Capt. Taylor Womack, left, also received metals from Col. Kenneth D. Nichols, Oak Ridge TN, June 17, 1944. Photo by Ed Westcott. (Courtesy Emily [Westcott] and Don Hunnicutt)

plant created delays.

Eventually, Nichols' discussions with Columbia University and Urey led to Urey designated as the Research Director and Dobie (Percival C.) Keith, vice president of Kellogg Co., responsible for R&D work to ensure success of the gaseous diffusion process. Groves and Conant approved.

Initially Urey was active in addressing the barrier problems but gradually lost confidence in the prospects of success. Nichols recalls this led to Urey, "[writing] a letter to Groves that in effect recommended abandoning the entire gaseous diffusion effort or basing the project on the British design and technology.

"Groves obviously was upset when he showed me the correspondence. ... It was the type of letter that could be used to crucify Groves if he continued the project, disregarding the advice of his top scientists, and we failed. We had to do something. It would be a tough decision."

Meeting with the 'British team' did not resolve the barrier problem. Nichols recalls disappointment with the lack of British support and that Groves and Nichols' "necks were way out and we had to succeed". By January 1944 Groves and Nichols decided Urey had to go to be replaced with Lauchlin M. Currie from National Carbon to

cused on Oak Ridge, Nichols' time was spent coordinating the work of many contractors. Nichols and Groves consulted from time to time with Lyman Bliss, a Union Carbide vice president, about the K-25 project. When Nichols shared with Bliss that he was devoting about 80% of his time with the K-25 contractors, Bliss said, "the only mistake you are making is that you are not spending 100% of your time on it. If the gaseous diffusion plant doesn't produce soon, the entire CEW project will be a failure."

New processes and procedures were developed. Nichols recalls, "A new level of quality control for cleanliness had to be maintained. Special welding classes had to be conducted to train welders to meet these new high standards. Leak detectors needed to be developed, and men trained to operate them. Kellex did an amazing job of setting the specifications and standards, and we had to take unusual measures to ensure compliance."

Finally, by year-end 1944, acceptable barrier tubes were manufactured and installed. Nichols recalls, "Dunning was good on solving his end of the problems. But on the barrier, it took Carbide getting into it and Bell Telephone Labs and finally a young fellow in [Dobie] Keith's Kellex Laboratory came up with the answer."

Historically Speaking
Meet Kenneth D. Nichols, the Father of
Oak Ridge - Production Facilities,
Part 2 (1942-1945): K-25

By Ray Smith - Oak Ridge City Historian

Gradually increments of K-25 went online upon completion and testing with almost full operation by April 1945.

The civilian and military persons involved in K-25 during the war peaked at 19,680. The amazing efforts of Kellex, J.A. Jones Construction and other critical companies are too numerous to mention here. General Nichols provides a detailed account of the problems and successes involved with K-25 in his book *The Road to Trinity, A Personal Account of How America's Nuclear Policies Were Made* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1987. ISBN 0-688-06910-X. OCLC 15223648) as did William J. Wilcox Jr. in his book *K-25, A Brief History of The Manhattan Project's "Biggest" Secret* (Oak Ridge TN, January 1, 2017 ISBN OCLC104123336). Please take the time to read these two must have books and others written on this amazing story.

One of the other critical companies was Chrysler who manufactured the converters used in the gaseous diffusion units. K.T. Keller, president of Chrysler, initially had problems agreeing to certain MED contract provisions but terms were resolved.

Nichols recalled, "It was about a \$60M project. . . . We had no idea what it would cost. [Keller] said, 'I can estimate that it would cost the same per pound of material as an automobile does. That would be \$60M. You can audit it, and we'll audit it, and we can agree on overhead figures, and I will give you any unused money back when we finish the project.'

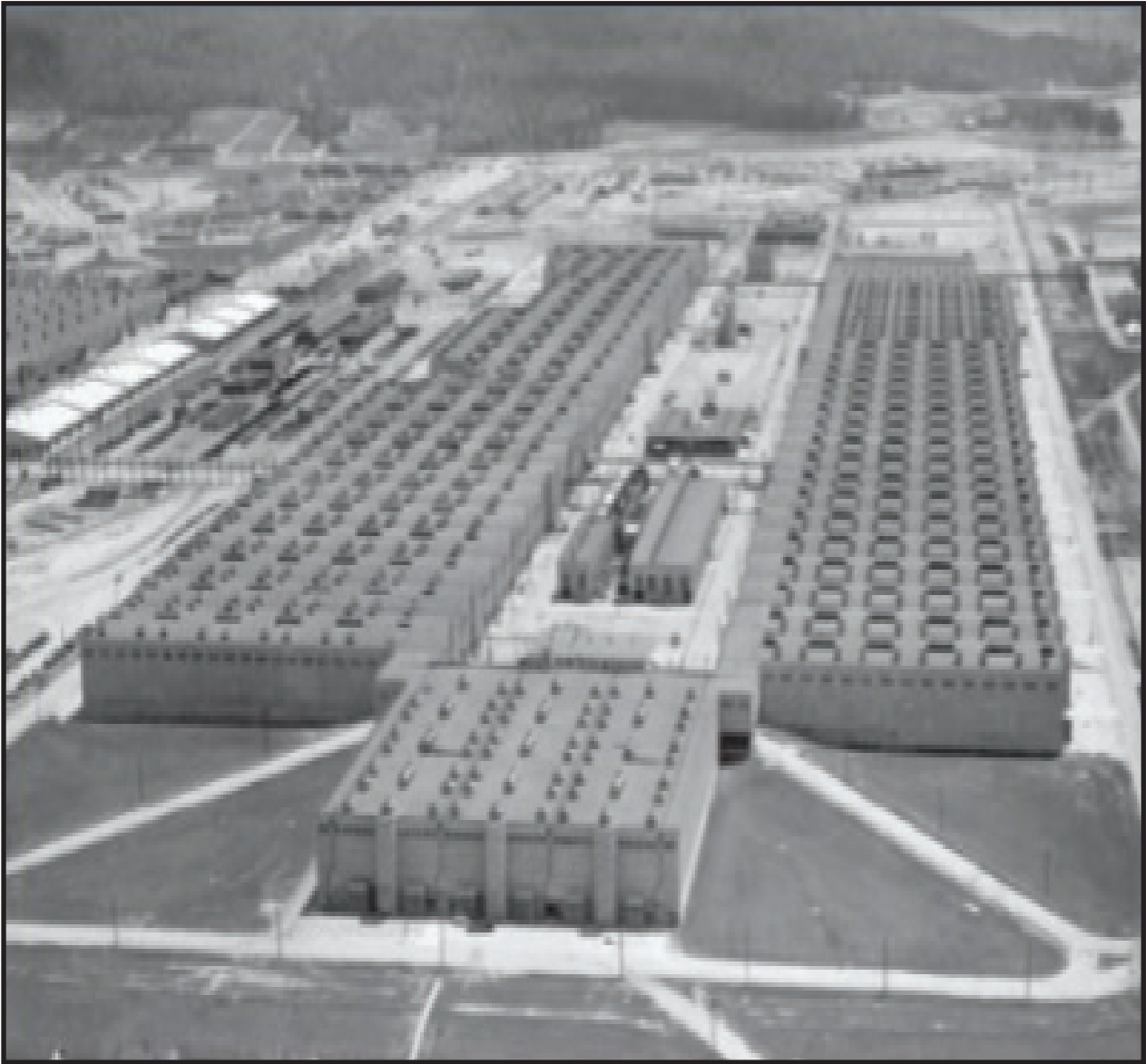
He called me one day, he'd finished auditing first, because he had to bill us. He said, 'Nichols, I saved \$20M. What should I do with the money?' I said, 'Send me the check.' And he always commented about that: That was the first time anybody had given him a direct answer so fast. . . . I figured if he had the \$20M he wanted to get rid of, let's take it."

K-25 set records in every way – covering 44 acres (2 million square feet) with four floors it was the largest building in the world at that time. The "U" shaped plant was the most advanced, most fully instrumented of its time. The single most expensive gamble of the Manhattan Project, K-25 cost a total of \$512M (approximately \$9.2B in 2025). The barrier material was an enormous technical challenge and is still considered top secret. Without the determination of General Groves, Colonel Nichols, Dobie Keith, John Dunning and a host of others, it would not have succeeded.

Thank you to everyone involved with K-25 and their families for their critical work and sacrifices during the war.

Next up: Production Facilities, Part 3 (1942-1945): X-10 & HEW Grateful acknowledgements to K. David Nichols, Jr.; Ray Smith; Sandy Fye; Dr. Bianka J. Adams, Alisa Whitley, Douglas J. Wilson and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Office of History; Emily (Westcott) and Don Hunnicutt; Martin McBride; Diane Gulley; Gerald A. Potts; and Bruce W. Scollin for their assistance with this article.

Thanks to Barbara Rogers Scollin, grandniece of General Kenneth D. Nichols, for writing this Historically Speaking column and series. She has captured the perception of then Colonel Nichols as he was in the thick of it and very much engaged in the success or potential failure of the Manhattan Project.



K-25 Gaseous Diffusion Plant, Clinton Engineer Works, Oak Ridge TN. Covering 44 acres, K-25 was the largest building in the world in 1945. (Public domain courtesy of Barbara Scollin)



K-25 Gaseous Diffusion Plant, Clinton Engineer Works, Oak Ridge TN The Control Room was the most advanced, most fully instrumented plant of its time. (Public domain Courtesy of Barbara Scollin)

John Chapter 10



Melvin Howard

(John 10:1-6) The Illustration of the good shepherd: The shepherd-sheep motif is common in the Bible due to the reality that sheep were an important staple in the ancient world, both for food and clothing. It is not surprising, therefore, that numerous biblical figures of speech have this back-ground. The sheepfold was an enclosure designed to protect sheep at night from predators---man or beast. The area had a “door” (an opening) at which the shepherd sometimes slept, using himself as a guard for the sheep. The flock was led to pasture in the morning and retrieved at night.

The one who enters a sheepfold by climbing over the enclosure rather than using the door identifies himself as a thief and robber (one who does violence). The shepherd has no need for stealth; he openly accesses the door. The illustration draws a contrast between dishonesty and integrity. The “porter” was a gatekeeper, either the shepherd himself (v. 7-10) or a reliable person hired for this position. His function was to guard the sheep against enemies. The flock was familiar with the sound of his voice; hence, for their own welfare, they “listen [carefully and constantly] to his voice.” The shepherd has such a relationship with his sheep that he has them named, and they recognize that name and follow him as he leads them out (v. 3). These are distinct roles; the shepherd leads and the sheep follow. The sheep will not follow a stranger. Jesus was illustrating spiritual lessons, but his Jewish audience did not understand his meaning (v. 6).

(John 10:7-18) Practical Applications: The Lord begins to identify the various components of his metaphors. He is the only door to the fold (14:6; Acts 4:12), and he is that by which the sheep enter into safety. Jesus uses his figures flexibly in this narrative; at times he is the door, in other instances he is the shepherd. All of his competitors (either messianic pretenders or those who opposed his teaching, the scribes and Pharisees) were spiritual criminals to whom the faithful must pay no heed (v. 8). Christ is the exclusive door to salvation and to sustenance (v. 9). This exclusivism is hardly in tune with the politics of modern cosmopolitanism. The “thieves” (those in opposition to Christ and his teaching) are destructive, in glaring distinction to the life-giving Savior (v. 10).

The “good shepherd” (Christ) lays down his life for the sheep. The act is sacrificial and willingly done (v. 11). His impending death is in view. Mere hirelings flee; they have no real interest in the sheep (v. 12-13). The Jewish leaders, who had long professed to be Israel’s shepherds, fit this picture perfectly. They were dishonest charlatans, and the rank and file of the Hebrew populace was their victims. Just as there is a close relationship between the Son and the Father, so there is a similar familiarity between the Shepherd and his followers; he is willing even to lay down his life for them (v. 15).

The Lord speaks of “other sheep” that are not presently in his fold. Eventually, however, they will be brought in, they will listen to his voice, and the whole group will be “one flock.” This is a prophecy of the entire Christian community, Jews and Gentiles, who will constitute the “one body,” the one church (Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23). There is no room for the modern denominational conglomerate.

Again the Lord stresses his voluntary sacrifice on behalf of those who are to be saved. The Jewish rulers imagine they have been in control and have eliminated this “messianic imposter,” but they are self-deceived instruments in the sovereign, providential hand of the Almighty. Christ and his Father are in complete control (v. 17-18).

(John 10:19-21) Division among the Jews: John says that Jesus’ teaching created a division among the Jews. Not all division is wrong. Many claimed the Lord was either demon-possessed or downright crazy, and they were perplexed that anyone would listen to him (v. 20). The integrity of his message was not the ranting of one possessed of an evil spirit; his preaching was good in quality and uplifting in influence. Moreover, his miracles argued against the false charges. No demon-possessed person ever opened the eyes of the blind! (v. 21).

(John 10:22-39) Rebellion and attempted murder: the feast of dedication was not a biblical celebration. It was initiated during the inter-biblical era after the Jews had overthrown their Greek oppressors under the vicious hand of Antiochus Epiphanes. The temple had been defiled for three years (167-164 B.C.), but in December of 164 B.C., Judah Maccabaeus and his men (loyal Jews) overthrew the invaders and restored the temple to its sacred status. The celebration of this victory lasted for eight days and was observed throughout Palestine. Today it is called Hanukkah and is observed in December. John comments that it was winter and Jesus was walking in Solomon’s porch, which was joined to the court of the Gentiles on the eastern side of the temple.

The Jews surrounded the Lord and demanded that he tell them plain-

ly if he was the Messiah (v. 24). Christ pointed out that the evidence introduced already had been sufficient for them to draw a logical conclusion. His “works,” done by his Father’s authority, documented his message. But they did not believe him because they were not “sheep” quality, willing to be led by the Shepherd (v. 25-26). Sheep listen and follow the Shepherd, which the Jews, for the most part, were unwilling to do. Both verbs represent ongoing activity, and that is the key to his argument. The following verse is grossly misused by Calvinists. They contend that the phrases, “shall never perish” and “no one shall snatch them out of the Father’s hand,” are proof of the impossibility of apostasy. However, both blessings are predicated upon the devoted “listening” and “following” of the sheep. They cannot be “snatched” away to perish contrary to their own will, but they can leave voluntarily. Judas did, and he “perished” (17:12).

Jesus then said, “I and the Father are one” (v. 30). This text does not support the Oneness Pentecostal position that the Father and Son are the same person. (a) The verb “are” is plural. (b) “One” is neuter gender, signifying a shared nature---that of deity. The Jews well understood the thrust of Christ’s declaration---if modern cultists (the Watchtower people) do not. He was claiming oneness with God; they picked up stones to execute him for the alleged crime of blasphemy (v. 33). From their perspective he was but a mere man, and yet he was claiming to be deity.

Christ then frames an ad hominem argument, not designed to establish positive truth, but to expose the inconsistency of his adversaries and shut their mouths. Combined with this was another form of logic which argues that if an adversary concedes a proposition with greater objections, he surely should admit a similar proposition with lesser objections (Mt. 6:35, 30). The Lord cited Psalm 82:6---“Is it not written in your law, ‘I said, you are gods?’” (v. 34). Note the emphasis: “your law.” In effect: “Will you repudiate your own law?”

The term “gods” (elohim in the Old Testament) occasionally was used accommodately for those who served by divine authority, even though they were flawed people (see Ex. 21:6; 22:8). Certain Old Testament judges were adorned with the very name of God because they were the conduits through whom the revelation of God came. Since the Jews had no problem with this symbolic language in their own law regarding frail men, why should they object to Christ’s claim, “I am the Son of God,” since he had been sent into the world by the Father and set apart for a special redemptive mission? (v. 34-36). Moreover, he was not flawed like ordinary people.

Christ declared that his credibility turned on whether he did “the works of God.” If he did, believe him; if he did not, reject him. They could not deny the signs; they would not accept the man. His message and miracles affirmed his mutual relationship with God. Again they tried to take him but could not.

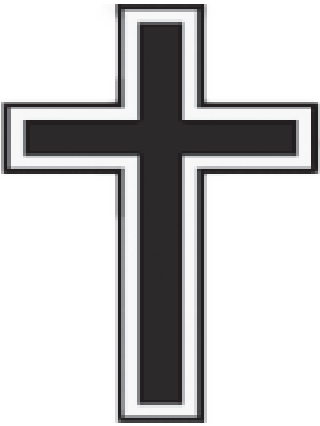
(John 10:40-42) A Contrast in Preachers: At this point, Jesus again returned to the region east of the Jordan where John the Baptist had immersed numerous people, and there the Lord remained for a while. Many came to hear him. They said regarding Christ: “John indeed did no sign,” the meaning of which seems to be that his ministry was not characterized by miracles---yet he was a most effective preacher. John’s mission was to prepare the way for Christ, and he was remarkable for achieving that objective. He convinced people of the integrity of Christ’s ministry. Many in the Transjordan believed on Jesus because of John’s preparatory work. The point seems to be this: if John’s preaching was tremendously effective without accompanying miracles, how much more ought the Jews to have accepted Jesus whose ministry was documented with miracles!


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