

(As a person who does genealogy, I look for obituaries to find out about the family of a person, and dates and places; this article I would call an Editorial. It does confirm the death date of Robert Burt.)

Newspaper: "Upper Des Moines", Algona Iowa
January 5, 1970

ANOTHER TUMBLING-ROD MURDER – On Thursday, December 30th, a young man named Robert Burt, aged about twenty years, while engaged in cutting bands for a thrashing machine near Armstrong's Grove, was caught by the tumbling rod, one leg torn off, and otherwise so terribly bruised that he lived but about four hours after the accident.

This is simply a repetition of the old and stereotyped story that we may read in the local columns of almost every paper in the land – "killed by a tumbling rod."

The Eleventh General Assembly of Iowa, passed an act, Section 1, Chapter 183, requiring the boxing of tumbling rods to all threshing machines running in this State. The penalty attached to the law – which we believe was a forfeiture of pay – was found insufficient to enforce a due observance of the law, and the increasing number of accidents arising from its open violation, induced the Twelfth General Assembly to pass "ac Act to amend Chapter 183," &, making its violation a "misdemeanor," and punishable by a fine of "not less than ten, or more than fifty dollars, for every day, or part of a day, he shall so violate the provisions of said act."

The Amendment has, so far as we can see, had but very little effect in staying the slaughter of men upon this modern Molech (defined: a deity whose worship was marked by the propitiatory sacrifice of children by their own parents). This is the second of the kind we have had to record in this immediate vicinity since the last harvest.

How long must this state of things continue? How many widows and orphans must be made and how many of our young men must be immolated (defined: To kill as a sacrifice) upon the altar of avarice, ere the few survivors will awake to a sense of their condition? How long will men be permitted to go on with impunity and every day violate the plainest provisions of wholesome laws?

Now, there is a remedy for this as well as the thousand other evils we daily witness. The remedy is in a stringent law, with a severe penalty, and the rigid enforcement of that law. Let petitions go up to the present Legislature asking for the passage of a law making the running of a machine in violation thereof, a criminal offense, and punishable by fine and imprisonment, and the killing of a person while running in violation of the law – murder, and punishable as such. If our Legislature shall, in its wisdom, see fit to give us a law of that character, it will then remain only for the people of the State to see that it is rigidly enforced, without fear, favor or affection, and the remedy will be all sufficient to cure this great and growing evil.