

# WEST PLAINS GAZETTE

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# LETTERS

We welcome letters from our readers. Address all correspondence to: West Plains Gazette, P.O. Box 469, West Plains, MO 65775.

I have a problem which I hope one of your readers may help me solve. Having met dead ends at every turn, I don't know where else to go.

My great-grandmother, Mary Marticia Tennessee Davis, was born in Howell County sometime around the Civil War. She married Clark Edgar of West Plains, who was a resident for forty years until his death in 1915. Mary said that she was orphaned at an early age and grew up with various families in the county. She never knew who her mother and father were and didn't know her birth date. Throughout her life, she kept as her birthday the date of her marriage to Clark Edgar. The only other thing she knew was that she had two brothers named James and Joseph.

Although Mary Davis died in 1944 I have continued to search for her parents and particularly her date of birth so that it can be corrected on her tombstone. Although it is too late for her, I would like someone somewhere to think that her family cares, even forty years after her death.

Tamara Kennedy  
7205 Ridge Road  
Frederick, Maryland 21701

I am trying to help my cousin, Loretta Evans Milstead, work on her genealogy. She sent me a typed copy of a letter which ran in your magazine in the fall of 1980. The letter written by Clarice Dean, confirmed some things that I had located here in North Carolina. I wrote her at the address given and the letter was returned. I wonder if any of your readers know her current address.

I have so many relatives in the Howell County/Fulton County, Arkansas area. My families on my mother's side include, Dodson, Underwood, Morrow, Myers and on my father's side, Reasons, Marriott, Newell, Clark. I would welcome letters from descendants of any of these families.

Charlotte R. Carrere  
715 Simmons St.  
Goldsboro, NC 27530

## A Pat on the Back

So many of your articles have been so beneficial to my Koshkonong High School Missouri history classes. Your articles on West Plains after the Civil War were also a spark for the study of the Reconstruction era for American History.

Keep up the good work! Learning of our own area is so much more interesting to history students.

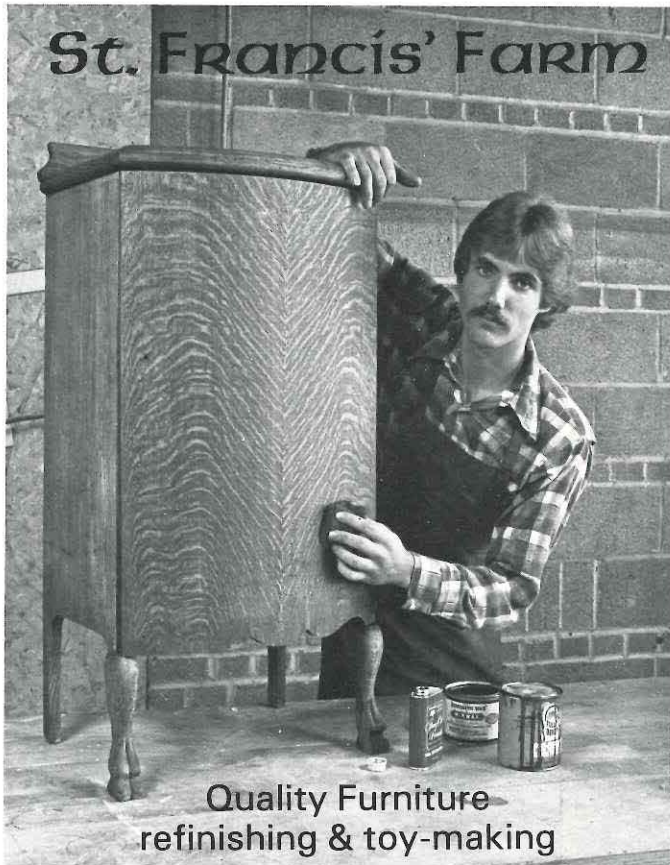
Mary Lee Pease  
Koshkonong High School

I enjoy the *Gazette* very much. I remember so many of the people that you have feature articles about such as the A.H. Thornburgh family, the Williams sisters of the *Quill*, the Russell Cochran family that lived on Main Street and had a daughter named Nancy, and so many more. I was raised up in West Plains and left there in 1941 after World War II started.

Wishing you the best for your lovely *Gazette* and your many interesting articles.

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My husband came from back in your part of Missouri. In fact, the first issue of your magazine that we ever had was the one with the history of Howell County and the Howell family. Tillman's mother was a descendant of that family. He enjoyed it so much that I subscribed for a gift.

Tillman used to spend hours reading through each one of those magazines when they came and often read about folks that he knew or knew about. He is gone now, passed away last November. However, I want to still take the magazine as there are things you print that he has mentioned about. And I was back there about eight years ago and saw some of the things myself. Also I am trying to do research for his families and I keep hoping that someday there might something about the Lovelace people even though they were mainly in Thayer and Koshkonong.

Mrs. Tillman Lovelace  
Afton, Wyoming

My check is enclosed for a two year subscription to a great magazine. I enjoy all of the articles in the *Gazette* but since my roots are in Ozark County I have especially liked stories such as the one on Aunt Bess Newton and, more recently, the article about Uncle Doc Morrison and the Zanoni Mill. As to the future I would like to see a story about W.J. "Joe" Morrison who helped start the game refuge and was the first ranger there. His son A.B. Morrison followed in his footsteps and was a ranger on the refuge until he retired recently.

May I wish you continued good luck and prosperity with the *Gazette* which has brought so much pleasure to so many people.

Thelma Cain  
Wichita, Kansas

Never have I received so much for so little. So many of the people you have mentioned in your magazines have meant so much to me. West Plains is still a very vital part of my life.

James Morris  
Stockton, California

I enjoy each issue of the *Gazette* — just wish they came out every month! I don't know the people in all of the articles, but every story is a great piece of past history and really enjoyable reading. I have an extra copy of issue Number One in mint condition; would someone like to make an offer for it?

Mrs. Robert Wehmer  
206 East High  
Willow Springs, MO 65793

I've enjoyed receiving the *Gazette* ever so much because it gives us a lot about people in and around Missouri. Since we are from southern Louisiana and my late husband, Roy A. Hile, was from Missouri, we can keep up with his people there and the children can learn more about their father. His sister, Mrs. Bell Hardin, and family still live there.

My husband's picture was in the Bill Virdon magazine. He played ball and was a friend of Bill's in school. His mother, the late Helen Duke Hill, and her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. Duke, lived in West Plains then moved to Thayer.

We've visited your town and loved it, so we are enjoying your magazine very much.

Mrs. Leverdie B. Hill  
Rayne, Louisiana

[Thanks for the kind words. The favorable comments we hear from our many friends are one of the best parts of working on the *Gazette*.]

(Continued on page 71.)



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-photo courtesy Harlin House Museum



# Our Own Boy of Summer

The story of Preacher Roe's Baseball career  
as told to Terry Fuhrmann Hampton

Those were the glory days of baseball. A time when baseball players were heroes, and they played for the love of the game, not a million dollars a year. Even though in the late 40s and early 50s, it was the St. Louis Cardinals who had the undying support of most baseball fans in Missouri and Arkansas, there was another team farther away, on the east coast, who could not be ignored . . . Duke Snider, Jackie Robinson, Pee Wee Reese, Roy Campanella, Gil Hodges, Billy Cox, Carl Furillo . . . and Preacher Roe. Even those of us who weren't alive to see the games of three decades ago have heard of these baseball legends. These players played on one of the most revered teams baseball has ever known, the remarkable, the glorious Brooklyn Dodgers.

One Dodger in particular stands out in significance to folks in southern Missouri and northern Arkansas; his name is Elwin C. "Preacher" Roe, a resident of the Ozarks all of his life. Preacher's career peaked in 1951. As a pitcher he ended that year with a record of 22 wins and only 3 losses, the third best year's percentage in the history of baseball for 20 game winners. It's a record that still tops the list in the National League; the other two pitchers were American Leaguers.

I'll leave the rest of the details of Preacher's career for him to tell in his own words because he's the one who tells it best. But first, here are some other statistics.

Preacher was born February 26, 1916, the son of Dr. C.E. and Elizabeth Ducker Roe. He's lived in West Plains for over thirty years, but he was raised in Viola, Arkansas along with his sister, Mrs. Essie Fite of West Plains, and five brothers, including the late Glen Roe, past mayor of West Plains.

Preacher met his wife, Mozee Clay, when she moved from Oxford, Arkansas to Viola at the age of twelve. Preacher and Mozee were married September 7, 1938, and they have two sons, Elwin C., Jr. and Tommy.

Preacher's brother Glen, who had moved to West Plains around 1945, and the late Bob Butler were the ones chiefly responsible for Preacher moving his family to West Plains. The Roes had considered moving to Thayer, but Glen and Bob spotted a house for them which Preacher bought without seeing in 1951. The Roes lived in their home on Nichols Drive for thirty-three years before moving to their new house on the southwest edge of West Plains in January of this year.

Preacher played ball through the 1954 season and then opened "Preacher Roe's Market" (on the corner of Broadway and Porter Wagoner Boulevard in West Plains) in January of 1955. He owned the market for nineteen and a half years before selling it to Gene Nelson who changed the name to "Nu-Way Super Market."

With personal data taken care of, let us now turn to baseball. We'll begin . . . at the beginning.

*Gazette:* How did you get the nickname of Preacher?

Preacher: Well, I tell everybody it's because I was so mean when I was a kid that everyone said I had to be a preacher, but that's not hardly right. I had an uncle that came back from the first world war who hadn't ever seen me. He said, 'What's your name, young man?' And for some reason I said, 'Preacher.' I was three at the time. Nobody knows why I said it. My mother said maybe it was because I liked the preacher we had at our church so well.

*G:* Where are you from originally?

*P:* I was born in Ash Flat, Arkansas, but we went to Wild Cherry for five years and then to Viola when I was six years old. I grew up in Viola and stayed there until 1940. Then I taught school and coached high school basketball for eight years at Hardy. I moved from there to West Plains in 1951.

So Viola is my hometown — where I was raised. The people there were great to me; I know I had the goodwill of all of them. West Plains is my home and has been since 1951, and I love it. But I



Mozee and Preacher with son Elwin, Jr. in Viola. August 14, 1955. (Tommy is in the background.)

-courtesy Edna Ducker





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### 1955 Postcard.

still love the place where I grew up, the country and the people at Viola.

G: Then it was Viola where you first started playing ball?

P: Yes. We didn't have high school baseball, as such, down there, but we'd usually get a team together and play two or three games in high school. Each summer we'd have a team. We had a twelve-year-old youngster's team, so I started at that age and came right on through. My dad always saw that I had a team to play on. Of course down there just about all you had to do was play ball or pitch horseshoes, and I'd rather play ball. As long as there was a ball around I was happy.

G: Were there any organized sports in high school?

P: Yes, we had basketball. We were from a small town, but we had a pretty good-sized consolidated school and we always had good basketball teams. We had a county track association, but I never was any good at track. I always played basketball and in summer it was baseball.

G: Did your brother Glen have any inclination to play ball?

P: No, Glen never did care much about it. When we were young, he was the only one who didn't like to play much. He would play occasionally, but he didn't like to. There were six boys and a girl in our

-courtesy Rena Wood

family, and when my sister married and had her first child, that made us have a ball team of our own. With us six boys, my sister's husband made seven, their son was eight, and my dad was nine. One year in Fulton County they had nine candidates in the Democratic race for sheriff. So we had a ballgame; the Roe family versus the sheriff candidates.

We always played ball. All of my other brothers liked to play except Glen. I had one brother that would've made it, but he had an accident and broke a leg and couldn't do much after that. My younger brother, he was too high-tempered or he would have made it as a pitcher. He was bigger than me. He was six feet three inches tall and had a bigger frame than me and could probably throw harder.

Of course my dad was an ex-professional player too. When he was in medical school, and he got his degree he played ball for two years in the Cotton States League which was class B then. He played in class A in Memphis and decided that wasn't for him and he came home to practice medicine.

G: Did you always think you would play ball in the majors or was it just a pastime for you?

P: Well, it was just a pastime mostly, but my dad always said I was going to be a pitcher and later on, when I was about college age, I began to have thoughts of it, but until then it was just a pastime.



G: When you were growing up, were you a Cardinal fan like most folks in this part of the country?

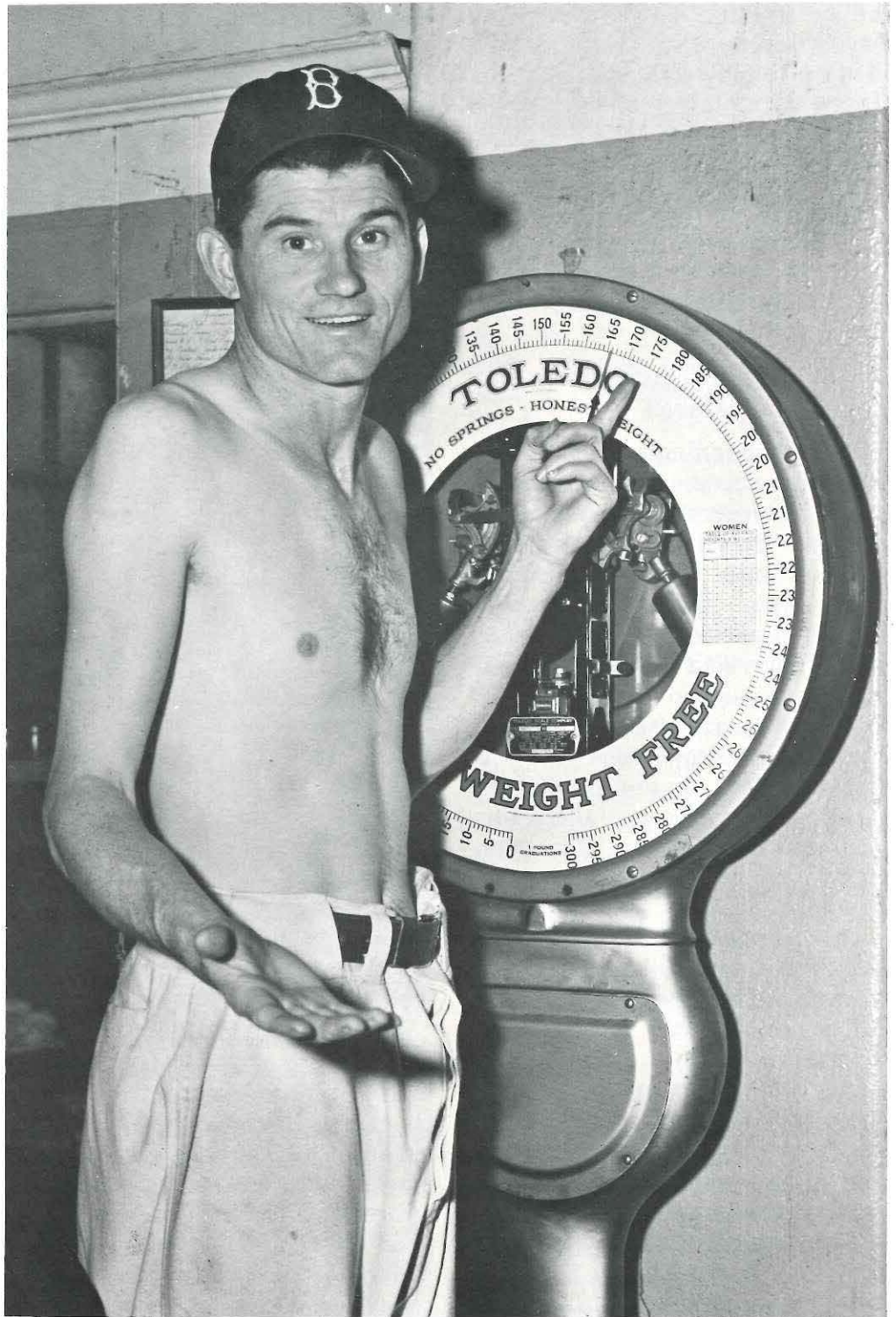
P: You bet we were Cardinal fans. Of course then we followed them on the radio. (Incidentally, I did sign up with the Cardinals first.) But by radio, I tell you what, then you could get as interested in that as you do the TV now. Those guys were experts at making you believe you could hear the ball hit the bat and everything else. I later found out it was all sound effects, but it was really good.

G: Did you have any baseball idols from those early days?

P: Oh yes. I was a Lon Warneke fan. I always liked Pepper Martin and the Dean brothers and Lefty Grove; of course I was left-handed, and I always looked for those left-handed pitchers. I got to play with Warneke and Martin.

G: Were you always a pitcher?

P: No, believe it or not. Well, my dad wouldn't let me pitch until I was sixteen. He didn't think it was good for a youngster to throw much. I played the outfield and when we had the twelve, thirteen, and fourteen-year-old team, I was a left-handed catcher. The kid who was the pitcher on that team went into pro baseball as a catcher. He got into AAA and eventually on the schedule of the Cardinals as catcher following Walker Cooper, but for some reason he took a dislike to baseball and decided he'd quit, but he was going great guns. Seemed kind a unusual he'd end up catching and me pitching.



Throughout his career, Preacher was often referred to as the 'ole bag of bones' or the 'skinny left-hander,' He is shown here in 1950 tipping the scales at 166 pounds.

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G: Was he the only fellow you played ball with in Arkansas that went on to play professionally?

P: The only one from down around Viola. Between my college years I played one year in an amateur league over in Russellville, Arkansas. I played with two boys over there that went into pro ball. One was named Gunter and the other Korte.

G: How did you get your break into professional baseball?

P: The real opening I got, as far as being discovered, was because of a guy being forced to cover a bet. We had a man from Viola that had gone to Kansas City and opened a barber shop. There was a state semi-pro tournament going on in Kansas City, and this barber kept blowing about how the boys in Viola could play baseball. He said, 'There's a guy down there who can pitch and beat anything up here.' So the manager of one of the teams up there said, 'Tell you what, you get this boy up here and if he wins a game, I'll pay his way, and if he don't, you pay his way.'

Well, the man couldn't back out, so he called me to see if I'd come and of course I did want to play anywhere I could — that was the year I was a sophomore in college — so I went up there. This ole boy [*the manager*] didn't know me from Adam, but if he didn't pitch me, who would pay the bet? So he had me and his regular pitcher to warm up with the catcher and take turns throwing to him and let the catcher decide who would pitch. So the catcher decided that I'd get the



Preacher with sons Tommy and Elwin, Jr. in Brooklyn in 1949.

opportunity. We won that tournament, and I won three ballgames. Of course that was being scouted because Kansas City was a big place. There was nine scouts there and then after that, in my junior year at college, I had scouts watching me pretty good. But I really got lucky in Kansas City. I couldn't get paid being an amateur — all I could get was my

expenses, but I had the best time and it was the best break I ever got.

G: When did you start in the minors?

P: I signed with the Cardinals in 1938, but they said it was too late in the season to do anything. Then starting in '39, I spent two years in Rochester, New York and then

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from there I went to Columbus, Ohio for three years. [Both were AAA teams.] Well, the Cardinals had eight left-handers with more experience and a better record than I had — left-handers like Max Lanier, Ernie White, Howard

Pollet, Max Macon, to name a few — so I didn't have a chance to make the Cardinal team. Then they sold me to Pittsburgh. The rule then was they could option you out, they could send you to the minors five years. Then they had to keep you or let you go if anybody wanted you. Pittsburgh claimed me so I went over there in 1944 and stayed there four years and from there I stayed seven with Brooklyn.

G: How much were you paid in those early minor league days?

P: You wouldn't believe it, but I got \$400 a month. In 1939 that was pretty good money. It's hard to realize now, but I drove a car, and I'd come home in the fall and I'd bird hunt every day. My wife and I built a house in Viola. I did finally get up to \$600 a month.

G: Is Viola where you made your home in the off-season throughout your baseball career?

P: After about two years in baseball, I decided I wasn't going to make a living in baseball at \$400 to \$600 a month, so I would teach school in the winter time. We moved to Hardy [Arkansas] then, and I'd teach school and coach the basketball team. Finally, when I went to the Dodgers after the 1949 season, well then I figured I could probably make a living at it, so I quit teaching.

G: I understand you went to Harding College in Searcy, Arkansas and one of your uniforms is on display there?

P: Yes, in the field house there they

have my uniform. It was a small school, but it was a good baseball school. They didn't have football, but they could support baseball because it's not too expensive of a sport. They had good baseball and basketball and they always had good track. Now, of course they have the works.

*From Sunday afternoon baseball in Viola to the Harding college team through five years in the minors, Preacher worked his way to the top of the baseball world — the major leagues. The year was 1944, and Elwin C. Roe stepped out of the Cardinal farm system onto the field with the Pittsburgh Pirates.*

G: What was it like playing in your first major league game? Were you the starting pitcher?

P: Yes, believe it or not. When the Cardinals sold me to Pittsburgh that was during the war of course. The teams trained in the northern cities; they didn't spend the money to go south. So the Pirates trained in Muncy, Indiana. But being my first real shot at the majors, I was determined to make it. I had a good catcher at Viola; Horace Watson from Viola caught me for years down there. He should have been in the majors too, but for some reason he didn't turn his efforts that way. So we went over to the gym at high school and for six weeks we trained over there. Of course when I got to Muncy I was ready to pitch. Training was short and it was cold weather and since I was in better shape, I got to pitch opening day. That was the only

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opening I ever got to pitch, and it was against the Cardinals who had sold me.

There's just one sad note in that whole story — I got beat. But the good part is I did go nine innings. I pitched a complete game and got beat 2 to 1 which was pretty respectable. It was quite a thing. I was proud to get to pitch opening day, but you're always nervous before each game and especially the first game — everybody was nervous. I think I got by pretty good.

G: In Stan Musial's biography, he says in Pittsburgh you were just a thrower, but in Brooklyn, you became an outstanding pitcher. What made the difference?

P: Well, I got smart. You see, when you're young, you can throw hard — when someone would ask who had the best fastball in the National League, I would be mentioned somewhere pretty near the top the first three or four years. But you find out that throwing hard up there isn't all there is to it. In fact I was kind of a mediocre pitcher; I was what you'd call a .500 pitcher; I'd win one, and I'd lose one. We had some boys who were good, smart baseball men. In fact, Al Lopez, who's in the Hall of Fame now, was my catcher. Old Rip Sewell was a good pitcher, and the two of them convinced me that I needed to pick up another pitch or two. They taught me how to change speeds and a slider and how to turn the ball over a little bit, and I became quite a lot better pitcher in my own opinion. I had better control. In fact I had always went through such a big motion in my pitching — I raised my leg so high — that my control was bad. I'd strike out one and walk two. Then Lopez changed my pitching form. I did away with a little of the

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extra motion, and if I walked over one man a game, it was very unusual. It made a big difference.

G: You were a baseball star for the Dodgers when Brooklyn was revered by everyone . . .

P: We had some awful good teams. Yes, we sure did. We always had a running feud with the Giants and the Cardinals. Of course that was back in the Cardinals' heyday. I thought we had about as good a team as I'd ever seen. I think nearly everyone knew the Dodgers then.

G: I think many fans consider that to be about the best years of baseball there's ever been, too.

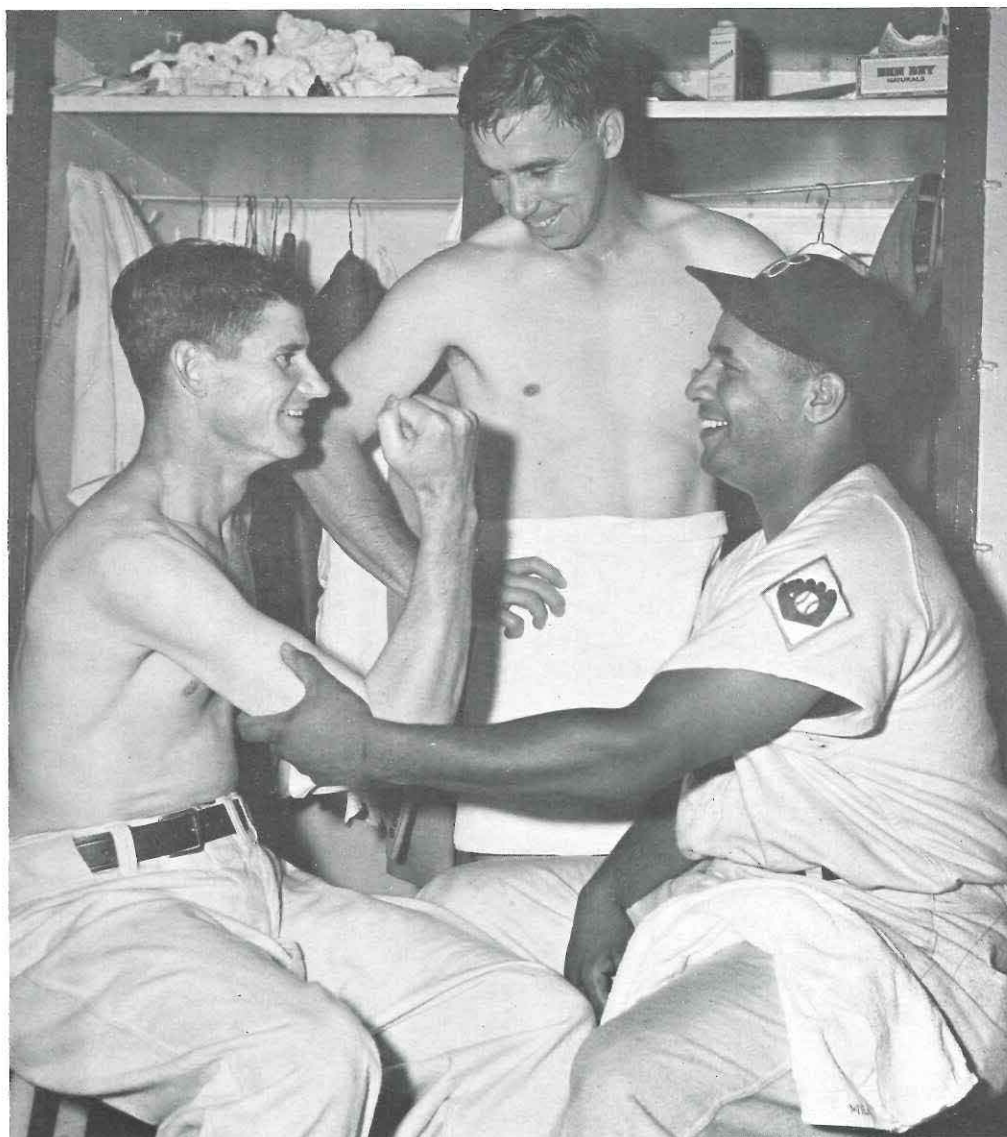
P: That was the beginning of the change in baseball. That was the beginning of the black man in the game along about that period. It began to change the game.

G: You played with Jackie Robinson. Was there trouble with his teammates accepting him?

P: No, not that I know of. I was with Pittsburgh in '47, the year that Jackie came up to play with the Dodgers. But after I was over there in '48, no, there was not a problem with his own team. I will say he had an awful rough time in the league. I don't think it was any team in particular. I just think it was certain people on certain teams. Out of the dugout you'd hear things, but you couldn't go put your finger on any one person or any one club. We had Campanella and Robinson on our team and they were really good.

G: Have you kept up any friendships over the years?

P: We haven't kept up too much. I was a non-flyer. I started out flying with them in '48, but I got grounded in '49 when I found out the altitude and my ticker didn't go hand and hand. So now I don't fly to go to a lot of the things they have. But we keep up some with Carl Erskine, mostly, and Duke Snider's family especially, on the old Dodgers. But I do try to follow everybody. I occasionally see Stan Musial in St. Louis. I've been to one



Preacher with fellow Dodgers, Pee Wee Reese and Roy Campanella.

old timers' game since I quit — that's the last one.

*Many who have only heard of Preacher Roe as a ball player may remember his spitball. Preacher's spitball has gained unnecessary and unfair attention over the years, and anyone who believes it is the reason for Preacher's pitching success is mistaken. Preacher's 93 win 37 loss record with the Dodgers could not have been achieved through spitballing alone, and Preacher's overall record probably wouldn't differ much at all, even if he had never thrown a spitball in his major league career.*

G: Well, Preacher I have to ask about the spitball. Did you use it often or has that been blown out of proportion?

P: There's a bunch of guys talked about it, now more than ever, but the story goes that four times I was

supposed to have. Let's see, I got Stan Musial out once, and I was supposed to have used it then. But what you wanted to do was to make them think you were using it. Of course then it didn't matter — Stan Musial would hit it I don't care what. But you just made 'em think that you were and give 'em something to worry about.

But let's take today, you can see on television — and the game's not any different today on this point — the hitter going to bat. Just observe him. The first thing you see he'll be standing over on the side and he'll have a big pine tar rag, and he rubs that all over his bat. What you don't know is he's been sitting in the dugout rubbing it against a steel rail or a bottle or something to make it harder. Then he goes to bat with two gloves on and a helmet. But the pitcher, if the ball even hits the ground, what does





the umpire do about it? He looks at it and if there's a little spot of dirt on it the hitter can't hit that dirty ball. So I don't think I had any advantage over anybody if I used one once in awhile.

But Musial didn't care. He'd go at anybody's throw. He'd just take his chances, and they were pretty good.

For the Dodgers, 1951 was one of the most remarkable and bizarre seasons in the history of baseball. In August of that year the Dodgers led the second place Giants by thirteen and a half games. How could the Dodgers lose the National League pennant? How they did indeed lose it was an especially heart-breaking story for the pitcher with the best winning percentage in the National League (for that year or any other) — Preacher Roe.

The Giants went on an almost unbelievable winning streak, in-

cluding sixteen wins in a row. The Dodger lead was steadily cut away until they were only one game out in front. A September 27 loss to Boston, in which Roy Campanella was thrown out of the game, meant that the Dodgers were only a half game ahead. Eventually the pennant race ended in a tie.

The pre-series playoffs started with the Dodgers losing the first game and winning the second. As the final game of the 1951 National League playoff drew to a close a Dodger victory seemed assured. In the bottom of the ninth the Dodgers led the Giants 4 to 1; the pennant was only three outs away. Giants Alvin Dark and Don Mueller both got hits off of pitcher Don Newcombe. The next batter fouled out, but then Whitey Lockman hit a double and drove in a run.

Then manager Chuck Dressen made the decision to bring in Ralph Branca to relieve Newcombe. The

#### PREACHER'S HOME RUN

When asked about his batting average, Preacher says, "I was the worst hitter in baseball! I tell you one thing, I could bunt if a sacrifice was in order."

Preacher's batting average wasn't all that bad, especially for a pitcher. He did, however, hit only one home run in his major league career. After Preacher's run around the bases, his teammates laid out a white carpet (of towels) for his walk into the dugout.

Later, four of Preacher's fellow Dodgers who were also some of the best hitters in baseball, presented him with the huge bat shown at left. Shown to the right of Preacher are Duke Snider, Carl Furillo, Gil Hodges, and Roy Campanella. To the left of Preacher is show business personality, Happy Felton.



-courtesy Harlin House Museum  
1950s Preacher Roe postcard.

score was 4 to 2 when Bobby Thomson, who represented the winning run, stepped to the plate.

Branca threw his first pitch — a strike. It was the next pitch delivered by Branca that assured Bobby Thomson his place in baseball history. Bobby Thomson hit a homerun and finished the season for the Brooklyn Dodgers.

For the sake of those who have never heard the enthusiastic reaction of Giants broadcaster Russ





Photos on this page courtesy of Harding University

### PREACHER ROE NIGHT

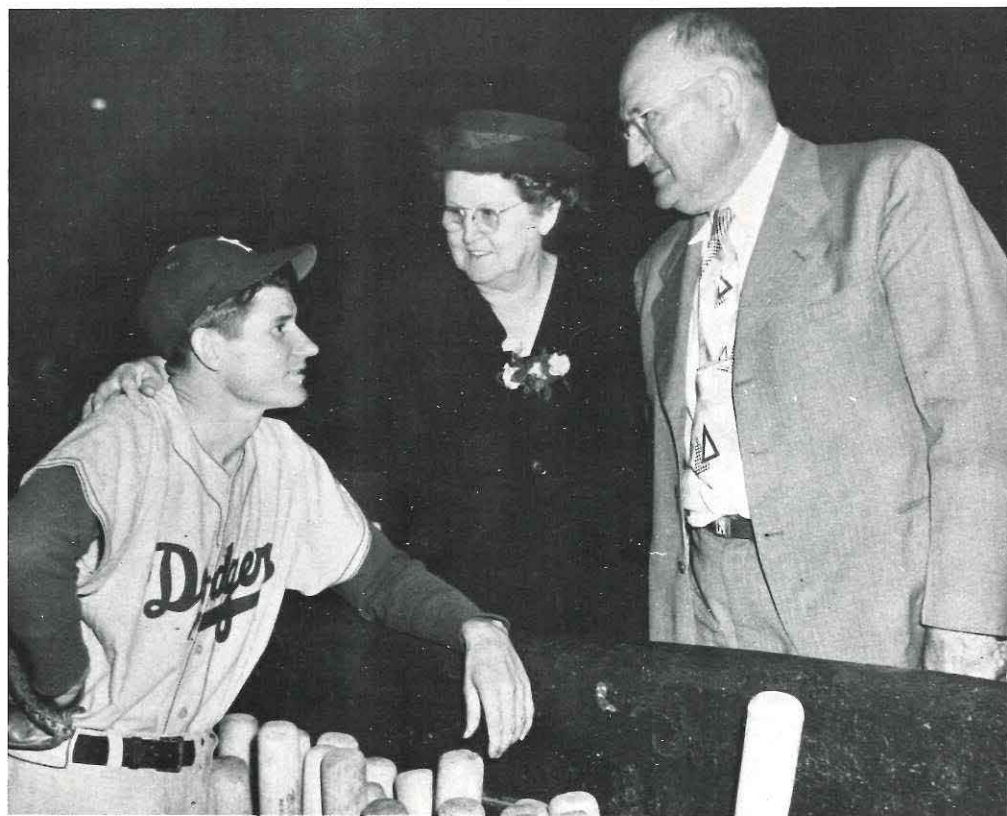
On September 19, 1952 hundreds of Arkansas and Missouri baseball fans celebrated "Preacher Roe Night" at Sportsman's Park in St. Louis. Dr. George S. Benson, president of Harding College at that time and spokesman for the fans, presented Preacher with the keys to a brand-new Cadillac purchased for Brooklyn's star pitcher by his friends, neighbors, and fans.

Shown above with Preacher is Dr. Benson reading a proclamation from Harding College and (at left) M.E. "Pinky" Berryhill, Preacher's college coach. In response to the gift, Preacher gave Harding College the Brooklyn uniform he wore in the 1949 World Series. Preacher pitched the second game of that series, shutting out the New York Yankees, 1 to 0.

Preacher also delighted the fans on hand at Sportsman's Park that night by pitching a shutout victory over the Cardinals — his twenty-first win of the season.

*Hodges to Bobby Thomson's homerun here is his expression of disbelief:*

There's a long fly . . . it's gonna be . . . I believe . . . the Giants win the pennant. The Giants win the pennant. The Giants win the pennant. The Giants win the pennant.



Preacher with his parents Dr. C.E. and Elizabeth Ducker Roe on "Preacher Roe" Night at Sportsman's Park.

Bobby hit into the lower deck of the left field stands. The Giants win the pennant and they're going crazy, they're going crazy. I don't believe it. I don't believe it. I don't believe it. I will NOT believe it.

*Well, enough of that. The*

*Dodgers lost, and Preacher recalls that final playoff game:*

P: After Bobby Thomson hit the famous homerun, we had to walk the 500 feet from our bench right down the field to our clubhouse and that was the longest 500 feet I ever walked.

My turn to pitch didn't come



around during the playoffs, so I didn't pitch against the Giants, but if we had won it, I was going to open the Series.

G: With your accomplishments as a pitcher in 1951, the Dodgers losing the pennant that year must have been extra-disappointing for you.

P: Yes, that was about the biggest disappointment and the hardest thing. I went into the last week of the season at 22-2. The next game I lost. I pitched a six-hit ball game and no base on balls and we got twelve hits and six base on balls, and I got beat 3 to 2. That made it kind of rough. On the other hand that would have — of course I'm looking at this selfishly — but I would have had a lot better percentage. I would have been the all-time leader on winning percentage and another thing, that would have clinched the pennant.

*Preacher continues the story of that September 27, 1951 loss to Boston:*



**Preacher Roe delivering a pitch. The catcher is Roy Campanella. Preacher's pitching earned him *Sporting News* Pitcher of the Year honors in 1952.**

Campanella was catching and with a man on third we played the infield in for a play at the plate. After the ball was hit the runner on third started home, but Campy went up the line and met the runner and tagged him out — he was out by four feet. This guy had treated Campanella rough at the plate so Campanella met him about two steps up and tagged him right in the mouth. So the umpire said he

tagged him too high, but he's dead still laying there four feet from the plate; he never even touched it. So Campanella said something to the umpire, and he run him out. Then the rhubarb started. You've never seen such a mess. I ran up to the plate — this umpire for some reason never did like me — I said, 'Don't throw my catcher out.' And he said, 'He's done gone and you're' (Continued on page 66.)



*Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign;  
Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son,  
and shall call his name Immanuel.*

*Isaiah 7:14, King James Version*

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Nellie Josephine Hinks Patterson  
1878 — 1962

# Nellie Patterson

## Gentle and Wise Were Her Teaching Ways

by Sue Ann Jones

At left is Nellie at age seventeen.

As careers go, Nellie Patterson's was relatively short. She spent only about fifteen years during the early part of this century teaching in one-room schools scattered over Ozark County, and later in the larger schools of Gainesville. But in those years, she became widely known as a woman of wit, wisdom, compassion, and faith. She personified the true Ozarkian: rugged, yet gentle; independent, but devoted to her family and friends.

She was born Nellie Josephine Hinks on May 11, 1878 in West Line, Missouri in Cass County. Her father, John Hinks, was an Englishman who had learned the stone-cutting trade in London. One of Hinks's granddaughters, Earlene Patterson Morrison, whose recollections are the basis for this article, remembers being told that John Hinks cut the stone for several buildings in St. Louis which are still standing.

While working in St. Louis, Hinks met and married Martha Jane Dunlap Roofe, a young widow with

one small son, Earl.

Every job seems to have its hazards. For stone cutters, the dreaded ailment was a lung disease, similar to miners' Black Lung, caused by continued breathing of the dust generated when stone is cut. When breathing became a problem for John Hinks, he moved his family to an eighty-acre farm in Cass County.

Mrs. Morrison recalls, "He had never farmed, but they said he became one of the best farmers around because he bought all the journals and texts he could find, and he went right by the book."

Other than Nellie the Hinkses had one other son of their own: Edgar who was born in 1873.

When Nellie was three, her father died, again leaving Martha Jane a widow with children to care for. Against her family's wishes, she married Benjamin Gard, who was older than she, and who was already stricken with arthritis.

Martha Jane's two sons, by then almost grown, came to Ozark

County in the early 1890s to visit Earl Roofe's uncle, George Roofe, who lived near Wilhoit.

"They thought this would be fine cattle country. Then it was free range, and the grass grew rank. The underbrush wasn't thick like it is now," Mrs. Morrison said.

Martha Jane and Benjamin moved their family to Ozark County in May 1895, and settled on a branch of Pine Creek about six miles northeast of Gainesville. Nellie was seventeen.

A month later, Nellie, who had passed the first eighth grade examination ever given in Cass County, enrolled in the Teacher's Institute at Gainesville. In a few weeks, she completed the training there, which included etymology, rhetoric, and physics. She passed the examination, and was eligible to teach school, without any high school training. But, because she was a stranger, she was unable to find employment. She returned to the teachers training program for another certificate.



Finally, she was hired as teacher for the Brushy Knob School. She was nineteen, earning twenty dollars a month, and later wrote in the *Ozark County Times* that "I considered my fortune made."

Recalling for the *Times* the school where she first taught, Nellie Patterson wrote, "The little log schoolhouse was set up high on Brushy Knob, facing east, where we could view the hills in Howell County. We had shutters for windows, and long benches accommodating four or five pupils each. When I viewed that roomful of boys and girls, some of whom were as old or older than I, I'll admit I quaked in my boots. All the equipment we had was a rough small blackboard, a box of chalk, a bucket and dipper, and a broom."

After Brushy Knob, she taught in Lutie, twenty miles west of Gainesville. She boarded there and rode her gentle mare, named Old Dolly.

In 1902, she married John Lewis (Jack) Patterson, a friend from Cass County who came to Ozark County to visit her. Patterson, born September 22, 1872, was the son of John and Elmira Patterson. When the elder Patterson died, leaving his wife with ten children to support, Jack, one of the older children, went to work for neighboring farmers to help the family survive. He was ten years old then, and never managed to ac-

quire much formal education.

At community affairs in Cass County, he met Nellie Hinks. When Nellie's step-father took his family to Ozark County, Jack Patterson soon followed, and later, on February 23, 1902, he was married to Nellie at the Ozark County courthouse by the late B. W. (Wink) Hogard.

"They had their marriage certificate framed with their picture," recalls Mrs. Morrison. "It was pretty fancy. I said once, 'Ma, that's the only thing I will ask for,' and she said, 'You can have it when I'm done with it.' But it burned in the fire."

The Pattersons lived with Nellie's mother and step-father, Martha Jane and Benjamin Gard, and Jack helped farm their land until he could buy 160 acres of his own about two miles away on Little Pine Creek four miles east of Gainesville. One of their grandsons, Stan Morrison, now owns the land.

"There was a two-room house on the land already," Mrs. Morrison said. "And Pa built a dining room and kitchen, and added the porch and upstairs." After they were married Mrs. Patterson taught at the Luna School, then temporarily retired to raise a family.

The Pattersons had five children, Evelyn, born 1903; Earlene, born 1904; Margaret, born 1906; John, born 1910; and Douglas, born

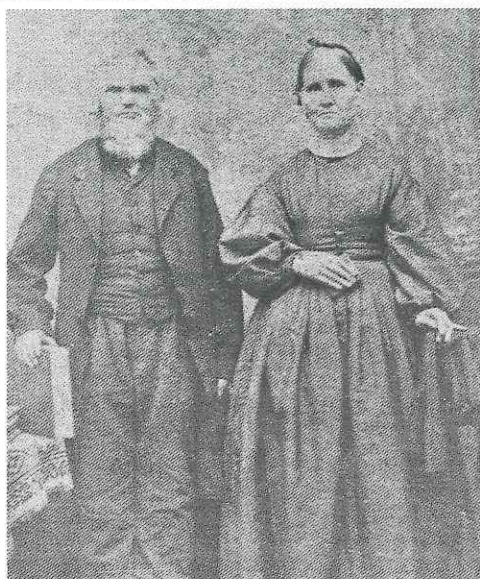
1915.

In the evenings, Nellie gathered her children around and read to them. Other nights, she staged spelling bees and ciphering matches. Their pa told them breath-taking stories of the time when as a young man he made a trip to the Indian Reservation in Oklahoma. His party was set upon by robbers in one instance trying to steal their horses. Another time they got stuck in the quick sands of the Arkansas River.

Evelyn and Earlene went to Lilly Ridge school, riding their mother's mare, Old Dolly, two-and-a-half miles through the woods, following an old wagon trail.

"Evelyn was always in the saddle; I was always behind," Mrs. Morrison remembered. "Neither one of us could reach the stirrups. I guess the teacher helped us on each afternoon. I remember once Evelyn said she would get off and catch a baby quail she saw as we were riding to school. But the mother quail fluffed out her wings and ran at Evelyn and scared her. She ran back and grabbed the saddle horn and just had to hang there the rest of the way to school."

When Doug was ready for first grade, Mrs. Patterson returned to teaching, assigned to the fifth through eighth grades at the Gainesville school. Her other children had been attending Lilly Ridge, but she moved them to



Nellie's grandparents David and Jane Dunlap, taken in 1860s.



Nellie's mother, Martha Jane Dunlap Roofe Hinks Gard, 1845 — 1925.



Nellie's daughter, Edna Earlene Patterson Morrison, born in 1904.



Gainesville to further their education.

"They didn't give an eighth grade examination at Lilly Ridge," Mrs. Morrison said. "So we went and went. Finally Ma said she would send us to Gainesville so Evelyn and I could get out of eighth grade."

Their father had traded some land to Ralph Robbins for a house in town. The four children and their grandmother Gard lived there during one eight-month term. The next year, when Mrs. Patterson began teaching and Doug enrolled at Gainesville, she lived with the five children in the house, and her mother returned to the farm to keep house for Jack Patterson.

Later, Nellie taught at Lilly Ridge, Sallee, Brushy Knob, and Gabeel schools while the girls stayed in Gainesville, living in the basement of their house and renting out the ground floor. The boys went wherever their mother taught. Jack Patterson drove his wife and sons in the family car to whatever community she was

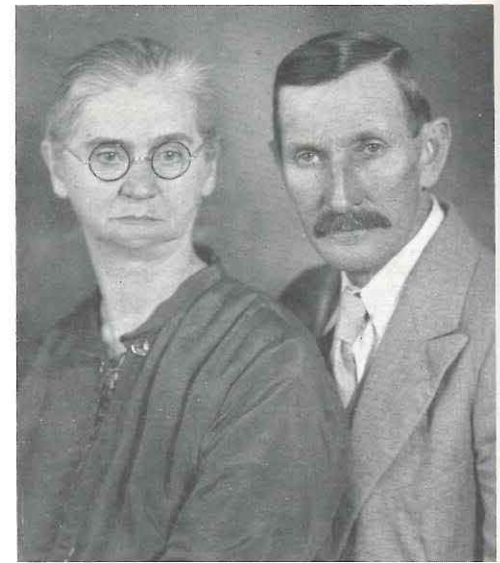
teaching in and fetched them home each weekend.

Mrs. Patterson quit teaching in about 1933. Her grandson, David Morrison, explained why:

"She had an eighth-grade education and that was enough for a while. Then they kept upgrading the requirements. Next, they had to have a high school education, or take a test. She took the test. She taught as long as she could until they had to have high school, period. Her son, Doug, was in high school when that requirement was passed. She seriously considered going back to high school then, and Doug tried to discourage her in every way. He didn't want his mother as a classmate."

So she didn't go back to high school, but she landed a job administering the high school exam to prospective teachers.

During her teaching years, Mrs. Patterson won the hearts of many Ozark County school children. In 1978 one of Mrs. Patterson's former students, Edith Adamson, wrote to the *Springfield Daily News*



Nellie (age 58) and Jack Patterson (age 64).

describing her delightful school days at Lilly Ridge:

*There was a friendly atmosphere in that one room, as well as on the playground, because we had a teacher who had kind understanding and an optimistic attitude toward us and toward life.*

*There was plenty of hard work, for she wanted us to*



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*learn all the things we should. But she thought of many special little things to do for us — like a picnic down by the spring branch when the wild grapes were ripe, or letting us have class together outside while we sat on the ricks of wood. On one occasion she and all we girls wore our hair down one day, just for fun.*

She was kind. But she was sharp, too. The late M. J. Luna, another former student, often told the story of a fellow student who had misbehaved and who was certain that Mrs. Patterson planned to paddle him the next day.

He wore several layers of pants, in preparation for the punishment. We'll never know what Mrs. Patterson had originally planned, but the punishment was most appropriate, whether intentional or accidental. The student was not paddled. He was told to stand on the floor all day. It was hot, and by the end of the day the sweltering boy appeared to be most sorry for both

his misdeed and for trying to outsmart the teacher.

Because she was a gifted writer, Mrs. Patterson was often asked to write obituaries for the county newspaper. She also administered to friends and neighbors before their deaths, attending them during illness and childbirth.

She practiced her faith through her gentle deeds and encouraging words. She had a near-photographic memory for whatever she read, and she read the Bible frequently. She taught ladies' Bible classes for many years in the Church of Christ.

At that church's recent dedication of its new building in Gainesville, Doin Pitchford, the church's first preacher, said he had told Mrs. Patterson in his early days of preaching that he didn't think he was doing any good. But she took him by the hand, he recalled, and said, "Just preach the truth and leave the rest to God."

Her love of reading and knowledge was passed on to her children.

Mrs. Morrison said, "Every Christmas, mother saw to it that we got a book. Once in a while there would be a doll or something else, but always, there was a book."

Their mother's affection for teaching was contagious. Earlene, Evelyn, and Margaret became teachers. All three attended what is now Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield.

Twenty-six years after Nellie began her career at Brushy Knob, Earlene started her own forty-three year long career there in 1923. (At forty dollars a month — twice Nellie's starting salary.)

"I had a little discipline problem, but I remembered what my mother had told me: 'Just tell them (the troublemakers) they are no part of the school until they obey the rules. Tell them they will not be recognized in class.' And every time, they got tired of doing nothing and would come around."

Earlene taught at Brushy Knob a year before she finished high school. With her \$40-a-month salary, she had enough at the end



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of the term to buy a high school graduation dress, buy a class ring, and go to the summer term at SMS.

In 1933, she married Afton Morrison. They had seven children, including two sets of twins: Marianna Virginia Hastings, born 1934; Marlene Sue Korholz and Margaret Lou Maninger, born 1935; Afton Clayborn Morrison, born 1937; Stanley Hinks and Stephen Patterson Morrison, born 1942; and David Earl Morrison, born 1945.

As her mother had done with some of her children, Earlene Morrison took her children with her to whatever school she was teaching in until they were old enough to attend high school. David, her youngest, had his mother as his teacher for the first seven grades of elementary school, in several one-room schools around the county.

"She had a rule," David recalls, "if we got a whippin' at school, we'd get one when we got home, too."

Earlene and Evelyn attended SMS when they weren't teaching. Both earned lifetime teaching cer-

tificates in about 1930. Thirty years later they went back to SMS and earned bachelor degrees.

Evelyn taught thirty-seven years and also served as county superintendent. She married Dawse Morrison in 1940, and they have one son, Dwain. Evelyn Morrison died in 1980.

Margaret Patterson graduated from high school and married Onard Upton in 1927. The couple attended SMS together, then returned to Gainesville after they had earned their degrees. Upton was superintendent of the school system one year, and Mrs. Upton taught high school.

Margaret taught school eighteen years before her death in 1974.

John Patterson bought a farm near his parent's land, but he eventually went to work for Hallmark Cards in Kansas City. He's now retired and lives in Joplin.

Douglas Patterson worked on his family's farm, then moved to Kansas, where he owned an oil-well-servicing business. He sold the business in 1973 to Earlene and Af-



Above: Jack and Nellie with their children; Douglas, Margaret, Evelyn, Earlene and John. Opposite: with grandchildren. Both pictures taken in 1951.

ton Morrison's son, David. Doug now lives in Logan, Kansas.

With their children grown, Jack and Nellie Patterson settled into a quiet life on their farm. Friends came from across the county to buy their apples. Mrs. Patterson kept busy with church activities.

In 1953 cancer struck Jack Patterson. He underwent surgery in Springfield but did not recover. He died at home, with his wife and four of their five children at his bedside.

Another tragedy struck the family in November 1955. Evelyn and her family had built a new home for themselves, but when Jack Patterson died they moved in with Nellie. Dawse Morrison was a truck driver, and was on the road when fire swept through the Patterson family home.








"Evelyn and Ma and Dwain were sitting around the heating stove and they kept hearing a crackling noise," Mrs. Morrison said. "Evelyn opened the stairway door and smoke poured out. Dwain got some guns from upstairs, but that was all. My mother took some pictures off the wall and put a sheet on the floor, then gathered up the corners. That was all they saved. Evelyn was so afraid Ma would go back in she stayed right with her until it was all over."


They lost everything including all of Nellie's beloved books.

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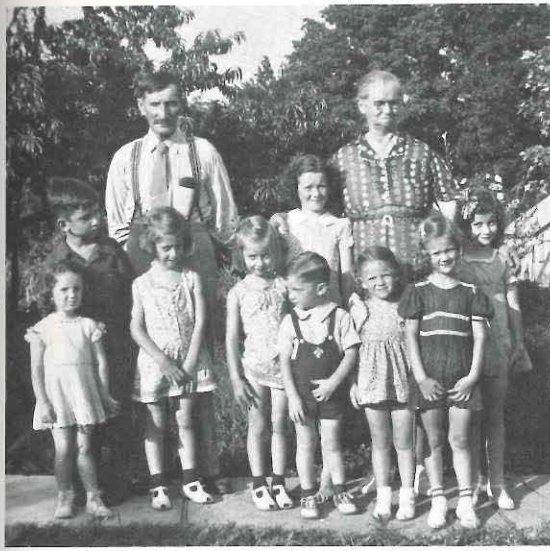
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"They drove up to my house in the middle of the night and Ma said, 'Well, our house is gone.' I don't remember seeing her cry. She was very sad, though. She said, 'All my treasures are gone.' They weren't things that were worth much, but things that had lots of memories," Mrs. Morrison said.

Nellie Patterson lived with Evelyn and her family until her death on March 10, 1962. She, too, was stricken by cancer.

"She never suffered or never let us know. She took treatments in Mountain Home and West Plains, but they didn't seem to help," Mrs. Morrison said.

As the end neared, her five children gathered in the Morrison house. She seemed to take comfort in knowing all of them were there.

"I had been up with her all the night before, and had lain down," Mrs. Morrison said. "They told me she said 'Where's Earlene?' I guess she had looked around and saw I

wasn't there, and she knew it was the end and wanted us all there."

The Pattersons are buried in Lilly Ridge cemetery, near the school where Nellie taught lessons outdoors with her students perched on ricks of firewood, and where, in what was surely a delightful adventure half a century ago, she and her little-girl students once wore their hair down all day long. She has been dead more than twenty years, but her kindness and intelligence have not been forgotten.

As this article was being written, Janet Ebrite Taber stopped by. Upon hearing the subject of the article, she said, "Oh, I've heard of her. My grandmother (Ola Kirkpatrick) has told me she was the kindest, most thoughtful person she ever knew."

Nellie Patterson was called "Ma" by her family, her many grandchildren, and her neighbors. Mention her name to them, or to any other of her Ozark County friends, and their faces break into a smile and they are quick to recall her wit and wisdom.

My dad, M. J. Luna, was superintendent of the Gainesville schools for twenty-four years before his death in 1968. He came to know dozens of teachers and teaching methods, but according to my mother, he never found one who could top Nellie Patterson, who once had been his teacher.

"He thought of Mrs. Patterson as the smartest teacher he'd ever known," she said. G



Jack and Nellie Hinks Patterson on their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

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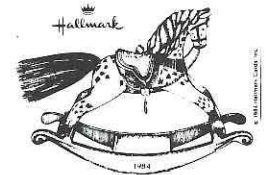
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By a unanimous vote the  
 motion was carried that the name of  
 the club be  
 Miami Club

*It's rare when the opportunity arises to record a history "straight from the source," but such is the case with the Miami Club. When Tom and Betty Norton bought their home on Grace Avenue, they knew it had at one time belonged to West Plains jeweler and musician C. G. "Charley" Brown, but they were surprised to discover that a few of his keepsakes were still in the attic. Among the pictures and papers was the ledger of the Miami Club. (Mr. Brown held various offices in the club and was secretary when it disbanded.)*

*From the club's organizational meeting on October 6, 1901 to its disbandment in November 1908 its activities were carefully recorded by the various secretaries of the club. Following are excerpts from the club's ledger containing the minutes of the meetings of the Miami Club. (Even though the club met quite regularly, space will not allow more than a few selected entries to be recorded here.)*

October 6, 1901.

A number of the young men of West Plains, Mo. met in the office of Livingston and Burroughs for the purpose of organizing a young men's club. Temporary

organization was made by the election of Chas. G. Brown, chairman, Wayne Langston, Secretary . . . After discussing plans for the organization and management of the club, the meeting adjourned . . .

October 11, 1901.

Meeting called to order by the chairman, C. G. Brown . . . Committee Reports: House and Lease -- Report made that the second floor of the Galloway Building [according to Charles Armstrong this is the building presently occupied by Casual Impressions on Washington Avenue. Joe Aid, whose father belonged to the organization remembered at least some of the club's dances being held in the building on East Main that was destroyed by the explosion in 1928] had been leased for one year at \$15.00 per month . . .

Committee on Names -- The following names for the club were presented: Miami, Arion, Nonpareil, Wellington, Pickwick, Usonia, Essex, Scioto, La Cota, Bijon, Warwick, and Atheneum. Further time granted. Finance Committee -- Report was that a \$2.50 initiation fee be charged and monthly dues of \$1.00 commencing December 1st, 1901 . . .



October 13, 1901.

. . . After quite a discussion it was moved and carried that the club vote on name. By a unanimous vote the motion was carried that the name of the club be

### Miami Club

The name committee was there discharged . . .

October 18, 1901.

*The Constitution and By Laws committee submitted a constitution for the club which was adopted.*

After this a very animated and heated discussion took place in which most of the members expressed themselves to their hearts content.

At the early hour of 11 p.m. the club adjourned to meet Friday night Oct. 25, 1901.

October 25, 1901.

*After roll was called and absentees noted, the club elected its officers.*

The result of the election was as follows.

|                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| President      | Jos. N. Burroughs |
| 1st Vice Pres. | Jas. S. McKamey   |
| 2nd Vice Pres. | A. B. Patterson   |
| 3rd Vice Pres. | Will Gum          |
| Secretary      | Wayne Langston    |
| Treasurer      | C. G. Brown       |
| Directors      | H. E. Hampton     |
|                | A. C. McGinty     |
|                | Chas. Johnson     |
|                | A. C. Dunlop      |
|                | J. H. Green       |

November 4, 1901.

*Several names were presented for membership in the club to be voted on at the next regular meeting.*

November 18, 1901.

. . . Two of our worthy members Johnson and Langston, after much labor succeeded in making a ballot box to be used in voting on new members, on motion the club was required to use same . . . The

following was result of the ballot,

|                  |         |
|------------------|---------|
| M. B. Clarke     | Elected |
| C. E. Williamson | "       |
| Prof. Webb       | "       |
| W. J. Orr        | "       |
| E. J. Green      | "       |
| Guy S. Woodside  | "       |
| C. E. Burnett    | "       |
| Lee M. Catron    | "       |
| Ed Dwyer         | "       |

December 9, 1901.

Meeting called to order in K. P. Hall by Pres. J. N. Burroughs. Minutes of previous meeting read and approved as read. All motions made during the evening were voted down or called "out of order" by President so the minutes are "shy"

Adjourned to meet Dec. 16, 1901.

Dec. 16, 1901.

. . . Committee on Literature reported that the following nineteen periodicals,

- (1) Outing (2) Outlook, (3) Scribners, (4) Munsey, (5) Century (6) Success, (7) McClures, (8) Ainslees, (9) Review of Reviews (10) Saturday Evening Post, (11) Leslies Monthly (12) Leslies Weekly, (13) Harpers Monthly, (14) Harpers Weekly, (15) Era, (16) Smart Set, (17) Argosy, (18) Cosmopolitan, and (19) Everybodys Magazine

could be obtained of J. W. Grumiauxs Agency for \$28.00, on motion the report was accepted and the committee discharged . . .

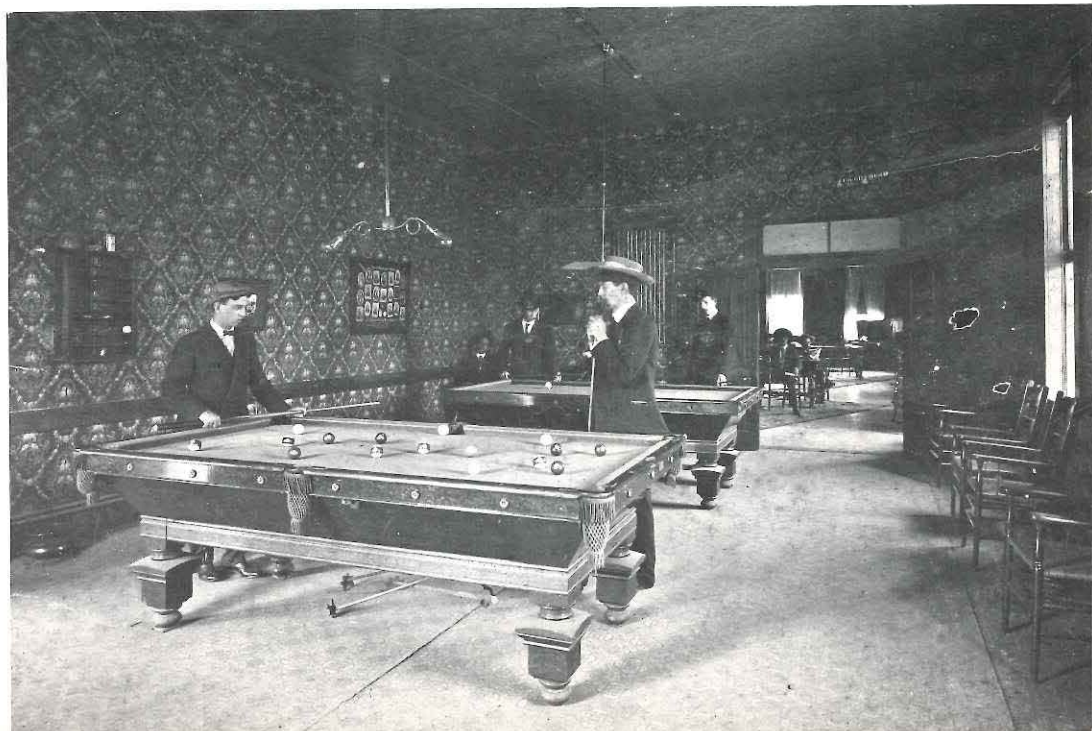
December 30, 1901.

*This meeting was called to order for the first time in "Miami Hall," and the discussion turned to the buying of furnishings for the hall.*

*The report of the furniture committee stated that the club could buy the Brussels carpet for 77½¢ yd. the chairs for \$19.00 Dozen and the rockers for \$2.50 each, the tables — 6 foot \$11.00, 10 foot \$21.00 . . .*

From the December 1, 1903 *Quill*: The Miami Club of this city has just added some new furnishings to their already elegant rooms, including pictures, a handsome book case, billiard tables, linoleum, rugs and other articles. Membership of this club includes some of the most progressive businessmen of West Plains and everything is first class and up to the highest moral standard. The institution is a great pleasure and benefit to the young men of our city and certainly merits the encouragement and approval of all citizens.

Several members are shown on these two pages enjoying the new billiard tables. C.T. Aid is at far left in the photo on the opposite page which was taken from the same angle as the one at right, but evidently on a different day; the same young man is at the center of both pictures and he is wearing a different suit (but the same expression). Note also that the window at right is closed and everyone is wearing a jacket in the photo on this page.





During the months of December, January, and February a good many names were added to the membership of the Miami Club and an amendment was passed requiring new members to pay a \$10.00 initiation fee. The club also voted to be incorporated as a literary or scientific club, and they bought a piano and other furnishings.

March 3, 1902

... Our worthy President made us a talk at this point which was more appreciated by the members than any ever made before the club, and, we, as members, are sure it will do much good to the club in general if his advice is followed out ...

Club business continued as usual throughout the spring, and on June 30, 1902 the club elected new officers.

It being time for the semi-annual election of officers, the club proceeded to this head business and elected officers as follows:

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Pres.                  | J. N. Burroughs |
| reelected unanimously. |                 |
| 1st V. Pres.           | C. T. Aid       |
| 2nd " "                | A. L. Lindsay   |
| 3rd " "                | Harry Green     |
| Secy.                  | E. V. Holt      |
| Treas.                 | J. O. Carter    |
|                        | A. B. Patterson |
|                        | Clyde Simons    |
| Directors              | Bun McGinty     |
|                        | James Curry     |
|                        | C. G. Brown     |



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August 31, 1902

Directors Meeting

Called to order by the Pres. J. N. Burroughs. Subject of lectures was discussed for sometime after which on motion the proposition was rejected.

Sept. 5, 1902

Directors Meeting

Called to order by the Pres. Motion made and carried to have a social impromptu Saturday night ...

*It seems the Miami Club was plagued with members who did not pay their dues and by frequent resignations. The following entry is a prime example.*

November 17, 1902

... On motion C. T. Aid was appointed as Committee of one to purchase a dresser for the Ladies reception room. On motion the chair appointed Dr. Edwards Robert Burroughs, and A. C. McGinty as Committee to renew lease on our club rooms for one more year. The resignation of E. V. Holt as Secretary was accepted but as member was rejected.

Motion was carried that in the future all new names of applications must be accompanied by \$10.00 before they become eligible to be voted upon.

Secretary was instructed to inform all members that an election would be held Nov. 24, 1902 for the purpose of electing Secretary and two directors to fill out unexpired terms.

Treasurers report showed, over-drawn in bank \$1.74. Amount dues not collected \$32.00.

*At the next meeting on November 24, 1902, Elmer Kellett was elected secretary to take E. V. Holt's place and a dresser was purchased for \$9.00. Mr. Kellett's turn at secretarial duties was short-lived, and during the election of officers at the January 2, 1903 meeting Wayne Langston was again elected secretary.*

March 9, 1903

... A "roll of Members of The Miami Club" was read by secretary and adopted by the club as all members in good standing, 43 in all.

*At the June 3, 1903 meeting of the Miami Club a new president L. Luster was elected to serve the term of office from July 1st to January 1st, 1904 ...* On motion, a vote of thanks was tendered Mr. J. N. Burroughs for his untiring efforts and impartial treatment as Pres. of the Miami.

On motion the offer of Rev. Osborne on Lecture course was rejected ...

June 24, 1903

At a call meeting of the board it was decided to have a dance in the Miami Club Rooms July 4, 1903. Admission, dancers \$1.00, spectators 50¢.

Sept 21, 1903

The minutes of the meeting for Sept 21, 1903 were either lost or stolen, the Secretary reported that he left them in his regular secretary book but when he went to write them up they were gone.

*Entries in the ledger are sparse in 1904 — the club was evidently meeting only every two months. Bu*





-courtesy Joe Aid

Members of the Miami Club's 1904 baseball team. The "Giants" (shown at left in the light uniforms) are, seated in front: George Meredith, Fent Chapin, William Langston, and Edward Norton. Kneeling: J. Orval Carter, A.T. Hollenbeck and C.T. Aid (Captain). Charles Mumford and Will Zorn are standing in back. The "Lilliputians" (in dark uniforms at right) Jim Burroughs and Ed Simons. Standing: Amiel Noe, Elmer Kellett, and A.B. Patterson. Standing between the teams is umpire Dewey Hatlin. For the game played June 1904, the score was Giants 19, Lilliputians 18, in ten innings.

*election of officers was held on schedule in January and June, and at least two dozen new members were accepted into the club. And even though it is not recorded the club probably continued to hold social events quite often.*

June 8, 1905

*This was a busy meeting. The club voted in thirteen new members, there was a reading of an amendment to the club's constitution, and officers were elected. C. T. Aid was elected president. The club also discussed a ball game.*

*. . . Motion made and carried that the club give a ball game at an early date; that both teams be selected from members of Miami Club and that the President appoint a committee of six to make all arrangements for said game . . .*

*President-elect Aid thanked the members of the club for the honor he had received from them and invited them to the ice cream parlor to partake of refreshments. Said invitation was unanimously accepted and on motion the club adjourned before the president-elect could change his mind.*

*Throughout the rest of 1905 and most of 1906 meetings consisted of routine business for the club. They met monthly, held dances, and duly elected their officers every six months. Then on December 6, 1906 the club ledger drops a bombshell.*

*Meeting called to order by President Green who stated the object of the meeting. It being for the purpose of discussing the future of the club.*

*Upon motion it was decided to dispose of the furniture and fixtures of the club and a committee of Aid, Patterson and Brown were appointed to take an inventory of furniture and to close a deal with some lodge or lodges and report back to club before February 1, 1907.*

*It was also decided to hold a Christmas dance Tuesday night December 15, 1907.*

*In a few days whatever problems the club was experiencing must have been solved because at the December 15 meeting, the deal for the sale of the furniture and fixtures of the club was reported off, and at the December 29 meeting the lease on the Miami Club's building was ordered renewed for one year.*

*Nothing seemed wrong in 1908 either, the club had a stag banquet, more dances, and they voted not to put in a phone in the Miami Club rooms. But the minutes of the meetings obviously did not record everything that was happening within the organization.*

November 23, 1908

*Meeting called to order by President (Will) Gum. Minutes of last meeting read and approved.*

*A motion was carried to notify all who were in arrears for dues to pay same before December 1 under penalty of suspension.*

*It was decided to disband the Miami Club and a committee of Patterson, Langston, and Rhodes were appointed to sell furniture, etc. and get ready to vacate rooms January 1, 1909.*

*The following suspensions for non-payment of dues were recorded . . .*

(no date entered)

*. . . The treasurer's report showed a balance of \$311.75 in treasury after having collected \$225.00 from sale of furniture to K of P [Knights of Pythias] lodge and upon motion it was decided to declare a dividend of \$22.00 to each of the 14 members in good standing and it was reported that the billiard and pool tables were taken down and stored in second story of the Curry Drug Co. Bldg. Checks were issued to the following members. C. G. Brown, J. O. Carter, Will Curry, Lewis Luster, A. B. Patterson, Wayne Langston, Thos. Rhodes, Will Gum, Chas. Renfrow, Thurman Green, Kim Pressley, Roy Perkins, Joe Aid, Paul Evans.*

*Thus ended the Miami Club.*

G



# A History of the First Christian Church in West Plains



-courtesy of Jack Bess

The First Christian Church shortly after construction of the first church in 1884, looking southwest. Notice the board sidewalks and the picket fence which extends to the right where Summit Street was later added.

*The founding father of the First Christian Church of West Plains, Adam S. Wright, was my great-great grandfather. Adam Wright's daughter Alice Wright was the mother of Russell Sage Cochran, my paternal grandfather.*

*Because of circumstances of time and geography, our branch of the family here in West Plains knew very little of Adam Wright and his family. Adam Wright died in 1890, before my grandfather Russell S. Cochran was born. Also, the Wrights and the Cochrans met when the Wrights moved to Evening Shade, Arkansas, where the Cochrans had a general store.*

*My grandmother Mary Francis Van Wormer Cochran, who we all called Polly, was very interested in*

*family history and was always eager to pass along information and answer questions, but while she had great depth of information on the Van Wormer family and her grandfather Dixon's family, she passed on very little about the Cochrans (all of whom lived in Arkansas except for my grandfather), and nothing about the Wrights.*

*Polly did tell me that it was Alice Wright Cochran who built the large house on West Main where Dr. Stoll now lives. Her husband died quite young and she shouldered the responsibility of the family.*

*We know that Adam S. Wright was born in Indiana on August 26, 1840. His family moved to southern Missouri while he was a boy. In*

*1857, at the age of 17, he was baptized into the Christian Church by the Reverend Amos Buchanan.*

*On March 20, 1861, he was married to Miss Rhoda I. Durham. That same year, war clouds were gathering, and Adam Wright cast his lot with the Union. He enlisted in the United States (Union) Army the first year of the War and served four long years to the close, receiving an honorable discharge.*

*After the ravages of the War, the devastation of the entire area around West Plains was almost total; not a single house was standing, fences were gone, property lines in question. But when the energies of the settlers like Adam Wright finally turned from war to re-establishing homes, families,*



and businesses, significant progress was made in a relatively short time. Adam Wright moved his family to a farm near Hutton Valley, where he combined a life of farming with itinerant preaching. His good wife Rhoda was often left in charge of the family and the farm as Adam made regular forays into all parts of Howell and Oregon counties, spreading the message of the Disciples of Christ.

The movement known as Disciples of Christ originated in the early 1800s when Thomas Campbell, an Irish immigrant, Barton Stone, and others sought to unify the various denominations of Protestantism by reducing the theology of the church to essentials: belief in Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God. These men did not want to create yet another denomination, rather, they wanted to create a new church, based on Jesus Christ and brotherly love, that the other denominations would be able to join with. Alexander Campbell, son of Thomas Campbell, founded Bethany College and the message of the Disciples of Christ spread westward to the new frontiers.

Adam Wright came to West Plains in the spring of 1878 to preach the message of the Christian Church, and found many battle-scarred Howell Countians who were attracted to his lessons of unity, tolerance, and brotherly love. Having no meeting place to present his sermons, Brother Wright visited several West Plains churches, and soon his preaching was heard by Colonel William Monks, who was very well-known in West Plains at the time as a major Civil War figure. Colonel Monks' account of the Civil War days around West Plains has become a classic of local history, and may be found in the West Plains Public Library.

Colonel Monks was so favorably impressed with Brother Wright and his message that he soon offered to fix up a room at his home on West Main Street where Brother Wright could preach his messages and meet with the group that would become the congregation of the First Christian Church.

Colonel Monks' home was one of

the largest and finest in West Plains, and later became a hotel known as the West Plains House. Before Adam Wright came to preach, Colonel Monks and his wife had been Baptists, but within a short time, he joined the new church and was baptized by Adam Wright in June, 1878, at the Tom Bond pond south of West Plains. And on the second Sunday in June, 1878, the congregation of the First Christian Church was organized at the home of Colonel Monks by Adam S. Wright.

To continue with the rest of the story, the following account was written by Mrs. Mary Monks Green during the church's Golden Jubilee celebration in June, 1928.

- Russ Cochran

At the same time as Col. Monks' baptism, Miss Sallie Renfrow and Mrs. Abner White were baptized. There was quite a concourse of people at the baptismal service. Among those who attended from other counties were Jarret Conkin and Walter Bean from Ozark County, friends of Colonel Monks; C.M. Pease, wife and baby, Fred, and Mrs. Thomas Rice from Douglas County; relatives of Colonel Monks. These were guests at the Colonel Monks home, including

Adam S. Wright. The baptizing was on Saturday, Adam S. Wright preached the next day, Sunday, and an old lady — Mrs. Reed, united with the church and was baptized the same day by Adam S. Wright, in Howell Creek that runs through West Plains. A heavy rain the night before made it possible by furnishing plenty of water.

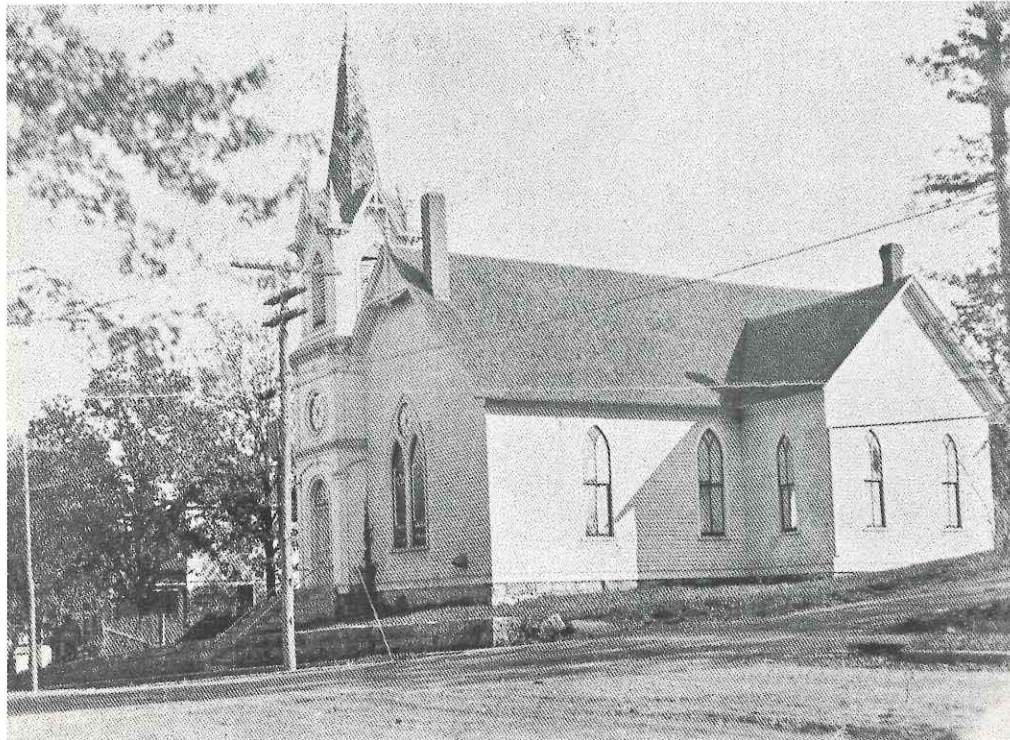
The best information obtainable shows the following to have been among the first members of the First Christian Church of West Plains: Mr. and Mrs. William Gum, Mr. and Mrs. William Renfrow, William Monks, Miss Sallie Renfrow, Mrs. Reed, Mr. and Mrs. Dick Dawson, Riley Cox, Mrs. Wadkin, Mrs. Abner White, Mrs. Brown, Jasper Hard, and Mrs. Maggie Trowbridge.

Adam S. Wright recommended as pastor for the congregation, the Reverend W.I. Frost of Houston, Missouri. Reverend Frost was called, thereby being the first pastor of the congregation of the First Christian Church of West Plains. While making his home in West Plains, he and his family resided on Washington Avenue.

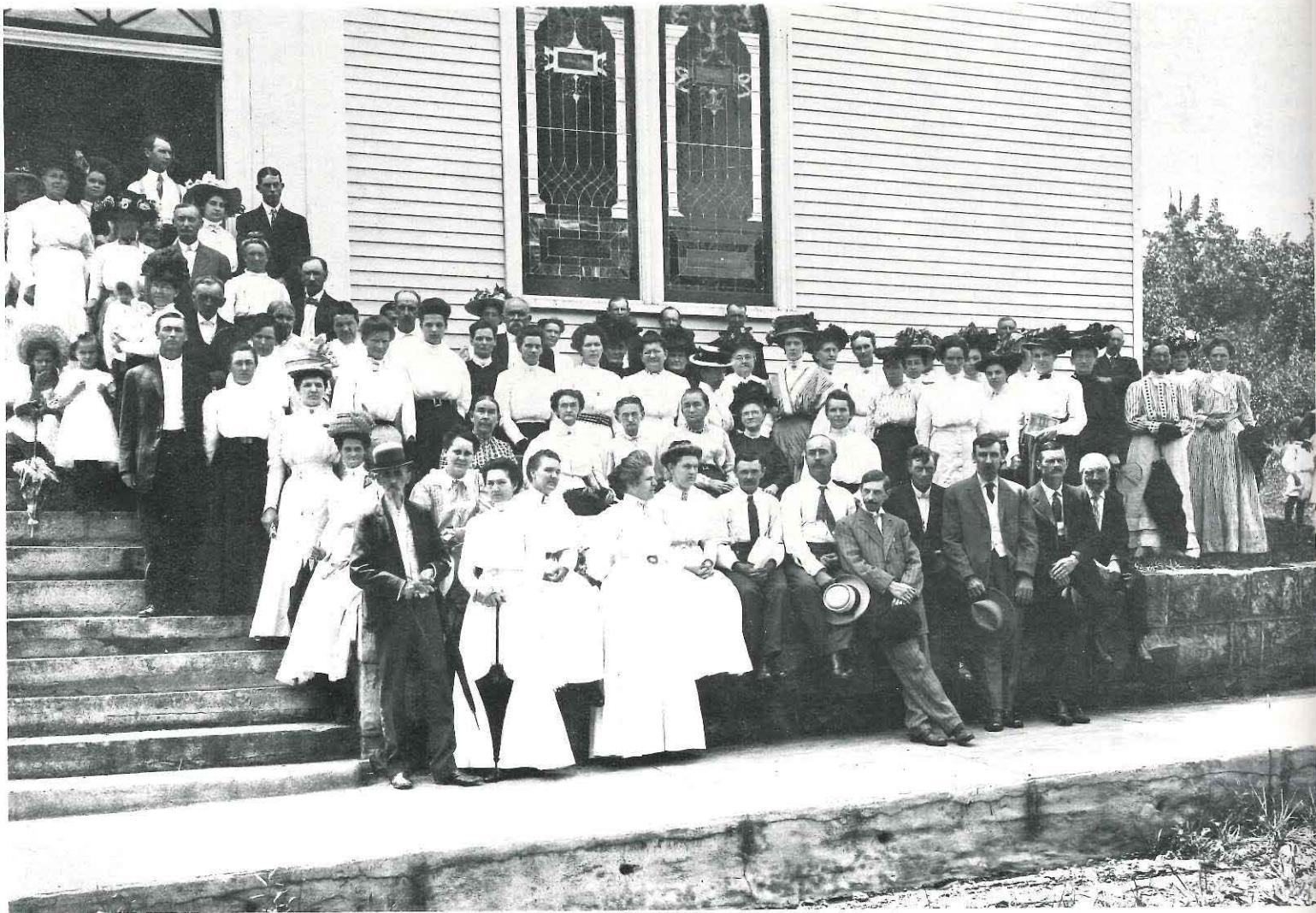
In the Fall of 1878 Adam S. Wright was called to the pastorate of the congregation at Salem, Missouri, and removed his family

This is a 1915 view of the First Christian Church, looking east. Summit Street runs to the right.

-photo by Dr. Bohrer







**This Gleerup photo, taken at the front of the church around 1915, shows new concrete sidewalks. Notice all of the ladies wearing hats are wearing exactly the same style.**

to Salem, Missouri December, 1878, and the first of the year of 1879 took charge of the work.

During 1879 and 1880, meetings of the congregation at West Plains were held in the Court House, a one room frame building on the south side of Court Square.

We cannot say how long Reverend Frost held the pastorate, but we know that after he moved from West Plains, he came often to preach for the congregation as did Adam S. Wright. In the words of another, Brother Frost was a man of many fine and noble qualities and an able and zealous minister.

In the spring of 1880, Judge H.D.

Green made the good confession, and was baptized by Adam S. Wright in a stream near the Galloway School House. Afterwards Mrs. Green became a member. The same year, 1880, Colonel Monks was ordained to preach the Gospel, the ordination papers being signed by William Gum, Church Clerk. Colonel Monks did not preach as pastor of any church, but gave what time he could to the upbuilding of rural congregations.

William Gum was church clerk in 1880, and it is our belief that he was the only church clerk of the congregation from the time of its

organization up to 1880, and for sometime thereafter, as he was a charter member, a fervent believer, and an active worker during this period.

The lot upon which the Christian Church stands was deeded April 30, 1880, by H.T. Smith and Fannie S. Smith, his wife, to C.D. Bolin, B.C. Woodrom and James Logan, Trustees of the West Plains Christian Church for which they paid \$20.00.

By this time the congregation had gained several members, although they had no church roof to cover their heads, they were not marking time but making a visible

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impression upon the community that the Christian Church was permanently established in West Plains.

C.D. Bolin, one of the first trustees of the West Plains Christian Church, joined the congregation in the latter part of 1879, or the early part of 1880 under the preaching of the Reverend Lane. James Logan must have joined about the same time and B.C. Woodrom was also a member of long standing.

During the period of 1881, 1882 and 1883, some of the additional members added to the congregation were T.B. Carmical, his wife Martha Carmical, Mrs. Parrot, Fran Parrot, James Parrot, Mr. and Mrs. Humphrey, Charley Humphrey, George Humphrey, John Lasater, James Livingston, Frank Kellett, Mrs. Kellett, Caroline Freeze, Mrs. Phillips, Judge and Mrs. Hale and others.

In the summer of 1883, Dad Benton was given the contract and commenced the erection of the Christian Church building on the present site.

When the construction was progressing, Brother Wright came from Evening Shade, where he was serving as pastor, to hold a meeting for the congregation at West Plains. He was entertained at the Colonel Monks home. Brother Wright owned a farm in the southern part of the county. But in a conversation about the Christian Church at West Plains, Brother Wright expressed a desire that if he could obtain a few acres of land adjoining town so he could cultivate a garden, he would serve as pastor for the congregation for less salary and help with the construction of the church building.

Colonel Monks owned forty acres adjoining the city limits, but had sold all but six acres. The six acres touched on West Main Street, not far from the church building, and this land was purchased at a nominal price by Adam S. Wright. He erected a building on the land and brought his family from Evening Shade to West Plains on December 1, 1883, and took charge of the congregation as



The laying of the cornerstone of the present church building, 1925. Those identifiable include Joe Martin, the Reverend Prunty, Raleigh Galloway, and Sam Roper.

pastor.

While the church house was being built, the congregation held its Sunday School and Church services in the Central School building that stood on the site of the West Plains High School building just off West Main Street. The congregation moved in the new house before it reached completion.

Near this period the Episcopalians came to West Plains to

establish a congregation of the Episcopal Church. Adam Wright invited them to hold their meetings in the incompleated Christian Church building. They gladly accepted the invitation.

Adam S. Wright was pastor of the congregation from December 1, 1883 to the first of the year of 1889 when he was called to churches in Saline and Johnson Counties in Missouri. Adam S. Wright's soul



Taken in the late 1920s at the corner of West Main and Summit, this is the Aurora Sunday School Class of the First Christian Church. At extreme left is former West Plains mayor M.C. Amyx, and at extreme right is Judge Will H.D. Green. Notice the hats again — they're all the same style.



passed to his Maker April 23, 1890, and his body was brought to West Plains for burial in Oak Lawn Cemetery.

This history would not be complete without saying a word about our devoted sister, Mrs. E.E. Thomson. It was Sister Thomson who kept the spark of missionary interest alive in the local congregation through the years of her life. She gave liberally of her self and her money, and at her death gave the church its first parsonage, the building which had been her home. The church has never had in its membership a woman who loved Christ more or was more loyal to the church than was Sister Thomson.

The present church building was completed and dedicated the fifth Sunday of August 1925, under the ministry, leadership and splendid business management of R.E.L. Prunty. At the laying of the cornerstone of the church, the following articles were placed in the cornerstone by the persons named: Holy Bible, L.F. Hudgens; Newspapers of West Plains, W.P. Renfrow; History of the church, M.J. Buford; Pictures, B.F. Piper; Church Roster, L.L. Bruns; Committees, J.M. Malcarm; Roster of Mens class, Mrs. R.E.L. Prunty; Loyal Bereans, Dr. Claude Bohrer; Cheerful Wigglers, Miss Lucille Prunty; Loyal Workers, O.H. Bruns; Primary Class, Mrs. James R. Martin;



Mrs. Joe Martin, who played organ for the First Christian Church from 1925 through 1946. At other times, Mrs. Martin played the organ for the Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian Churches in West Plains.

Fidelis Class, Miss Aline Bruns; Loyal Boys, L.F. Hudgens; Cradle Roll, Mrs. O.H. Bruns; Ladies Aid, Mrs. Dan Washington; The Flag, Martha Washington; Kurrian Society, Mrs. Willard McCallon; Missionary Society, Mrs. Russell Foster; Glee Club, Miss Lucille Prunty; Christian Endeavor, Miss Belle West; Coin of the Realm, Mrs. Mary Harlin. The small silk flag placed in the cornerstone was carried

through the first World War by George Washington, who upon his return from the battlefields of Europe gave the token to his mother, Mrs. Dan Washington. As his sister, Miss Martha Washington, who is a descendant of the first president of the United States, put the flag in the receptacle, the audience, led by Dr. Claude Bohrer, sang "My Country, Tis of Thee". Besides all the articles above there



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This postcard view of the First Christian Church is probably from the 1930s or 1940s before the Educational Building was added in the 1950s. The former parsonage is visible at extreme right.

were photographs of the old church erected in 1883, pictures of the work being done on the foundation for the new church, a roster of the members and the various pastors and the name of the architect and contractor, Fred G. Fisher. The cornerstone was laid at the northeast corner of the building by Mt. Zion Lodge No. 327 A.F. and

A.M., with an escort of Knights Templar in full uniform. The ceremony was in charge of District Deputy Grand Master Raleigh W. Galloway.

Elizabeth Phelps was the first person baptized after the dedication of the new church building. The marble baptistry was a gift of John R. Reed and wife to the con-

gregation as a memorial erected in the memory of their daughter, Eva Reed Mullins, the deceased wife of Brother Major Bob Mullins.

The congregation grew rapidly under the ministry of Brother E.R. Clarkson and in 1925 totaled five hundred and twenty-two.

*-Mary Monks Green*



1932, Father and Son day at the church.



Mary Monks Green, who wrote the preceding history in 1928, was Colonel Monks' daughter and wife of Judge H.D. Green. The son of Mary Monks Green and Judge H.D. Green was named William H.D. Green, after his father and grandfather. This man, who later became known as Judge Will H.D. Green, or to everyone in the church as "Judge Green," was the superintendent of the Sunday School for over half a century and was certainly one of the strongest supporters of the First Christian Church.

The Kurrian Society, organized in 1910 by Mrs. J.R. Reed, Mrs. Mattie Trowbridge, and Mrs. Rufus McVey, was a group of "select ladies" of the church who met to study and work on church-related projects. One of their projects was the purchase of the pipe organ that was installed in the new church building in 1925. The organ cost over \$4,000, and the husbands of the Kurrians signed a note for the payment. The Kurrians paid off the note in 1938, thirteen years after the purchase, after many fund-raising activities.

Mrs. Joe M. Martin, well-known West Plains music teacher, was the new church's first organist, where she played the new organ every Sunday morning and evening for over twenty-two years, until she retired in 1946.

The First Christian Church has been associated with the Boy



A 1933 Sunday School class. Front row from left: the Reverend A.G. Smith, Van Cochran, Dulcie Cochran, Archie Endicott, William Cochran, Mary Buckner, Beulah Simms, Virginia Piper. Second row: Helen Hard, Reginal Harwell, Ruth Kelsey, Unidentified, Unidentified, Pauline Powell, Zora Lee Bess, Hazel Rooney. Third row: Johnnie Fisher, Myron Howell, Unidentified, Claudine Boenning, Leonard Piper, Virginia McCallon, Dorothy Allen, Elizabeth McCallon. Fourth row: Herbert Piper, Bill Lloyd, Elizabeth Penn Hawkins, Edith Harris, Edwina Bottom Piper, LaVerne Bottom Givens (behind Edwina), Betty Buckner, Faye Powell, Martha Sue Green. Fifth row: Lourena Schneider Galloway, Evelyn Boenning, Neva House, and Gladys Kelsey.

Scouts of America since 1941, and many outstanding young scouts have studied in the Fellowship Hall of the church.

The First Christian Church was the first church in the community to begin radio broadcasts of their morning worship service, soon after radio station KWPM was established in 1947. The radio ministry began with Rev. L.O. White and continues today with Rev. David Hicks, broadcasting every Sunday morning from 11:30 until noon.

As the church membership continued to grow, the church found a need for more room for Sunday School classes, and in 1939 the church purchased the Harper property just east of the church. Because of World War II and an improvement program on the main building, no action was taken on construction of this addition until 1951, when the official board of the church started a two-year study and fund-raising campaign. The new addition, known as the Educational Building, was built in 1954,

during the ministry of Rev. E.M. Wheatley. Ten years later, in 1964, the church purchased the next two properties to the east, known as the Dr. Spears property and the Swanson property. Two of West Plains' fine old homes had to be torn down as the properties were cleared, graded, and paved as a parking lot.

The Rev. David Hicks and his wife Norma have served the First Christian Church since 1972, longer than any other minister. And according to Rev. Hicks, they have been good years. He says, "These last twelve years have been the most exciting years in my ministry, and I look forward to sharing in the continuing history of a great church and a great church family."

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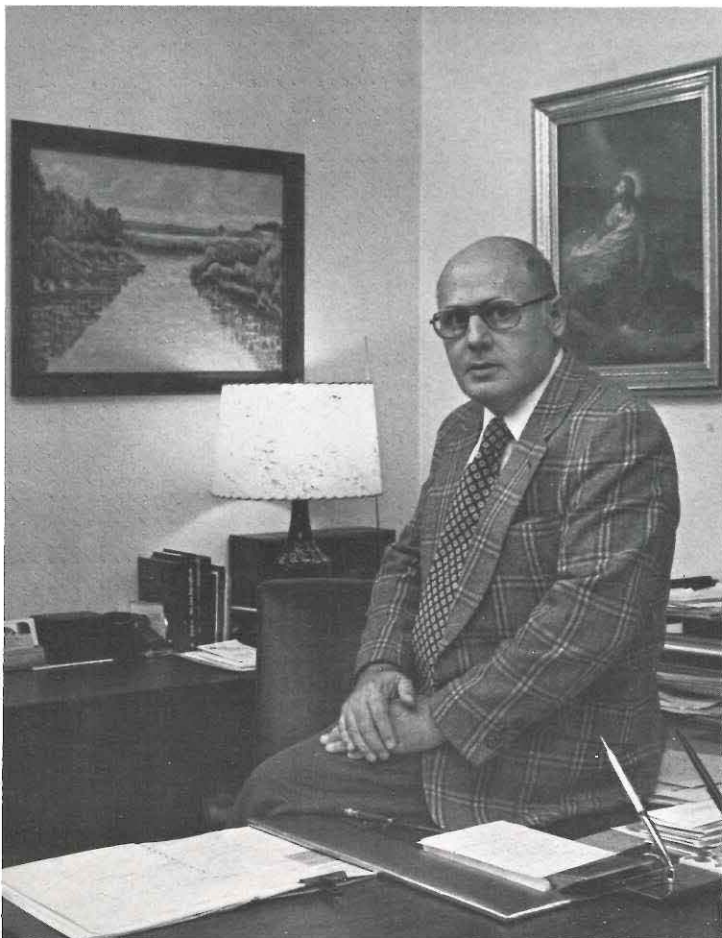
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This is a photo taken at a Christmas party around 1948. *Gazette* publisher Russ Cochran, age 11, is standing at upper left in front of the gas heater, with ears cocked forward. Brother Rick's about six or seven heads to the right, and little brother Mike is about seven more heads to the right, in front of Danny Smith, next to Debbie Bash.



The Reverend David Hicks.

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Luke 2:11

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## GAZETTE GALLERY

The group photos on these two pages were taken by West Plains photographer W.T. Glerup.

Above is a North Methodist Sunday School class (with visitors) around 1912. Front row: May Horniday, Jessie Horniday, Mary Atwell, Bertha Woodrel, and Annie Althouse. Second row: Kate —, Ruth Dressler, Bess O'Brian (Thompson), Phyllis Shaffer (teacher and preacher's wife), Daisy Summers Amos, Louise Van Wormer, and one of the other three women was named Lawhead. Back row: Stella Hanrich, Maude Duncan, Minnie Davis, Effie McCleary, Dixie Hamilton, Lenora Strickland, Annie Mitchell, and Alice Duncan.

Above right is a women's club picture taken approximately the same time as the photo above. Standing in back at left is Fanny Riles Torrey and fourth from left Gwendolyn Wainwright Brooks.

At right is a Baptist group on July 29, 1909.







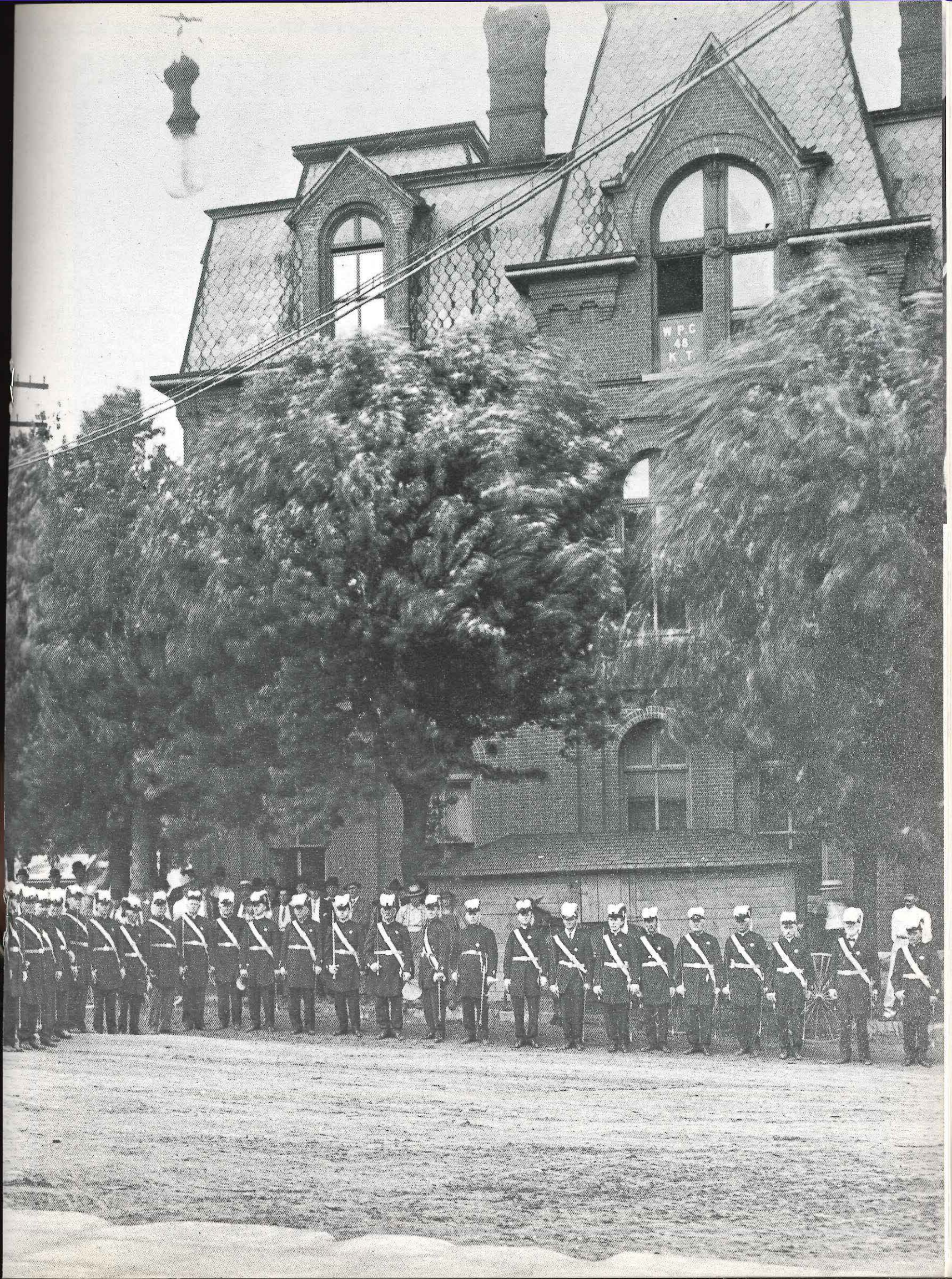


# Knights Templar

circa 1920



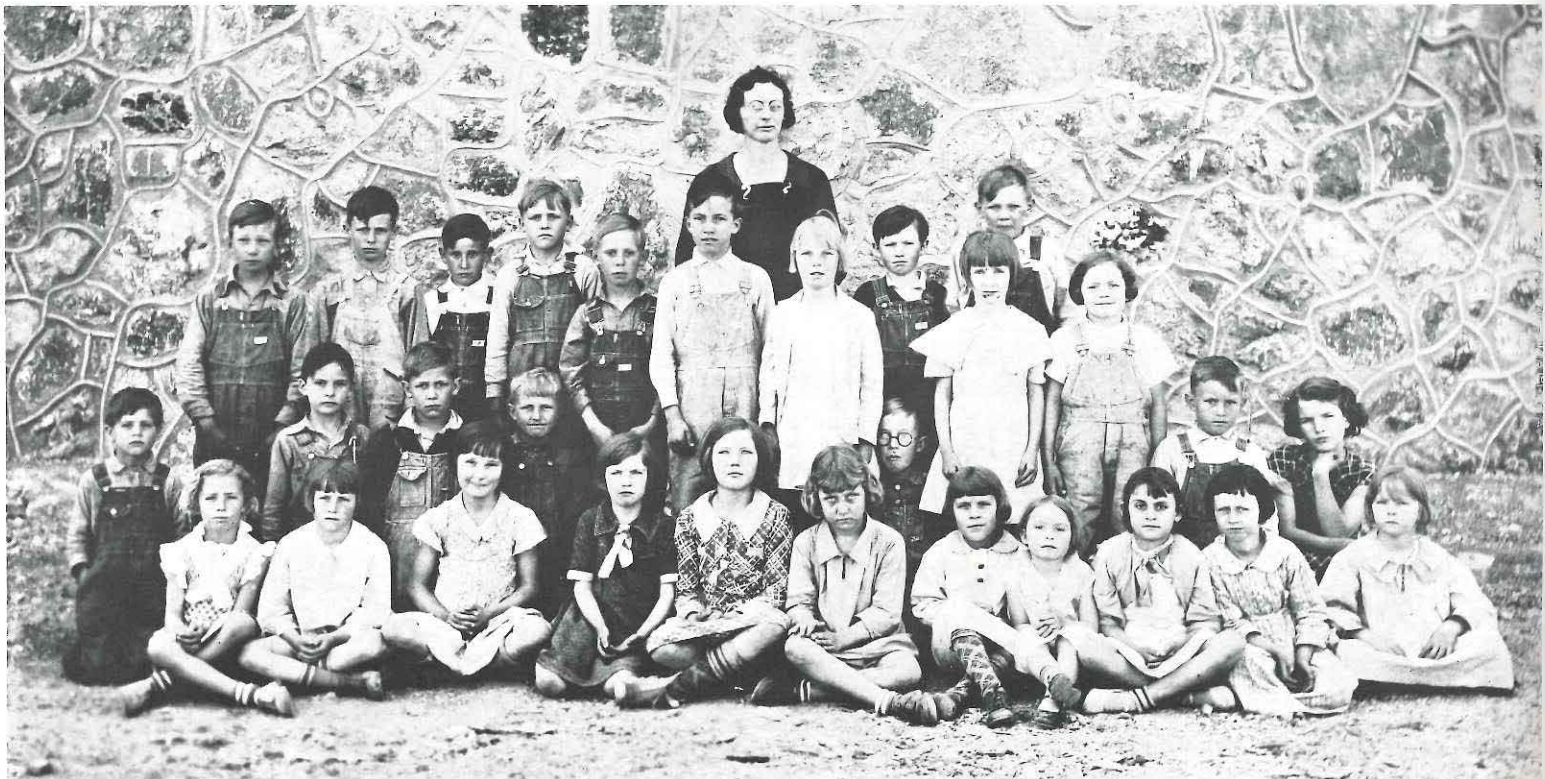






Hobo Day  
1934

then . . .



-courtesy Lucille Green

The second and third grades or third and fourth grades at Viola, Arkansas, in 1934 or 1935. First row, from left: J.V. Dewitt, Marjorie Ellen Woods, Lucille Roe Greene, Inez Cantrell Burns, Ruby Bridges Handlesman, Anna Mae Bridges Wray, Norma Upton Rosier, Anna Faye Smith, Unknown, Irene Andrews, Christine Deatherage, Johnece Carroll Love. Row two: Bobby Rex Carter, Olen Moss, Billy Gene Pope, Wendell Brittain. Row three: J.T. McCandless, Carmen Vest, Charles Franks, Charles Cooper, Charles Brison, Devoe Faulkenberry, Eunanell Malone, Eunice Stone Cooper, Glenna Belle Gillihan, Raymond Roe, Beatrice Billings. Back row: Bertha Wood (teacher), Norman Deatherage, Woodrow Billings.



the  
Class of  
1934

Members of the class of 1934 who attended their 50-year reunion May 26, 1984 were (from left, front row): Ruth Pentecost Stewart, Margaret Morrison Meredith, Lucille Welch Woodruff, Opal Carter Manning. Second row: Dorothy Harrison Frazee, Maxine Palmer Lile, Mayme Willard Taylor. Third row: Annette Kennedy Harrison, Aileen Laswell Nunn, Katheryn Self Fox, Alma Henderson Richards. Fourth row: Lois Chapin Moore, Dorothy Ryan Whitehill, Evelyn Mock Kittering, Margaret Washington Stewart. Fifth row: Kanola Engleman, James Kenneth Powell, Jewel Manze Isreal, Irene McDaniel Kimberlin. Sixth row: Chet Collins, Mary Barrett Pyron, Charles Kimberlin, Betty Rodgers Gundy, Marjory Rodgers Rice. Seventh row: Bythel McCrackin, Raymond Lowe, Bill Shelton, Clifford Garrett. Back row: Max Farrell, Glenn Collins, Harry Chapin.



... now

... and in between



Twenty-five years ago, on July 23, 1959, members of the class of '34 held their silver anniversary reunion at the First Christian Church Fellowship Hall in West Plains. Thirty-eight members of the class attended the 25-year reunion along with eight members of the faculty. Seated on the front row above are Fenton Alsup, Prof. J.W. Welsh, Prof. Currin Davis, Naomi Holt, Yolanda Killion Thompson, Mrs. Russell Leonard, Lucille Grimes, and Prof. J.R. Martin. (Front row all members of the faculty except Fenton Alsup who was a student.) Other students standing from left are: Raymond Lowe, Charles Kimberlin, John Milstead, Albert Harry Adams, Max Farrell, Bill Dick Green, Anise Ellis Dalton, Virginia Warner Davis Cussen, Jay Cordell, Irene McDaniel Kimberlin, Lois Briscoe Fernimen, Ruth Pentecost Stewart, Glenn Collins, Agnes Bray Kingsland, Dorothy Ryan Whitehall, Maxine Palmer Lile, Aileen Lasswell Nunn, Dr. Wayne Rose, Opal Carter Longely Manning, Alma Henderson Richards, Beth Clark Hiler, Margaret Morrison Donahue Meredith, Mary Barrett Pyron, Margaret Washington Stewart, Clifford Garrett, Annette Kennedy Harrison, the Reverend Kenneth Powell, Lois Chapin Moore, Jewel Manze Magenot Israel, Evelyn Mock Kittering, and Mary Love Kasselberg.





-courtesy Dorothy Mock Griffin

Taken in August 1948, this picture shows the West Plains Women's Softball team. This team travelled to neighboring towns and is shown here at Mtn. Grove following a tournament there. Front row from left: Anna Lou Schaller; Betty Chapin; Ardith Jackson, pitcher; Norma Edmonds; and Faye Poe. Second row: Marcella Hardcastle; Dorothy Ogle; Ann Williams, catcher; and Cora Lee Wright. Back row: Shelby Lane, coach and manager; Geneva King; Hilda Bently; Ruth Williams; Dorothy Mock; and Clay King, coach.



A third and fourth grade group around 1909. Hal Thornburgh, who loaned us the photo, says it appears to be taken with old Central in the background. Those identified include, first row, second from left, Ova Washington and fifth from left, Ruth Bricker. Row two, starting fourth from left: \_\_ McCracken, \_\_ Shadwell, Lovetra Mitchell, and Myrtle Davis. Third row, second from left, Hal Thornburgh, fourth from left, Hisel Freer, Jim Plunkett, unidentified, Lee Pool, and at far right, Joe Trimble. Fourth row (with only three boys), the last one is Bob Martin. Back row: Mabel Davis, teacher and sixth boy from left (wearing overalls) is Jack Burkhart.





# GAMES

## The Kind Kids Played Before Cabbage Patch Was a Doll

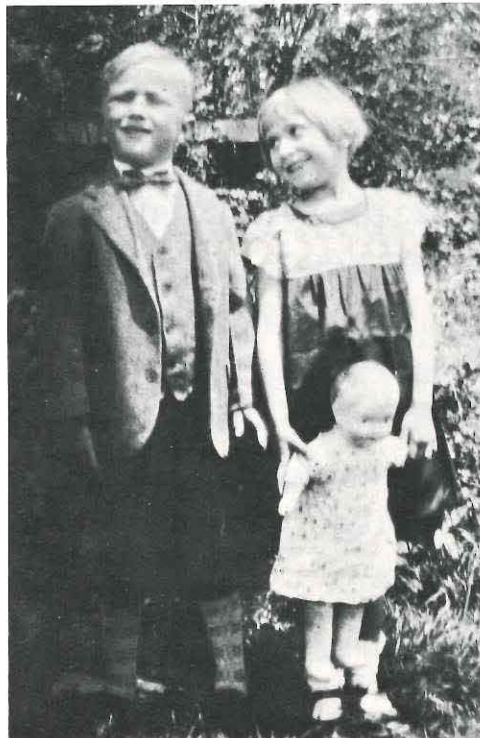
by Shirley Carter Piland

At left is Doris Hunt Patillo and Shirley Carter Piland about 1927. Below is Shirley with cousin Eugene Lewis. Bottom right is little sister Freda (Carter Edwards) in the early 1930s.

A sassafras sapling, tough and springy, makes an ideal "horsey" unless, of course, one is three years old and doesn't weigh enough to hold it down. Doris and I had allowed my little sister, Freda, to tag along with us that day to the sassafras patch where we often played. Being in a benevolent mood, we let her have first choice. She picked a nice smooth young tree. We pulled it down for her, helped her on, and turned it loose. To our horror the sapling shot back upright and there was Freda upside down in the top of it hanging on for dear life. We pulled her back down in a hurry and thanked goodness that she had not been catapulted clear over into Ozark County.

Doris, the daughter of Sam and Esta Hunt, lived just around the curve from us by the road or just up the hill from the big pond in hallooing distance as the crow flies. She had two brothers, both much older than she, and I had Freda who was much younger than I. Doris and I were near the same age and were together every day. Sapling riding was only one of the many wild and ingenious games that we played.

We, like farm children everywhere who grew up during the Depression of the thirties, had to be resourceful. We didn't have many toys. Television was still on the drawing board; even the radio



was not yet a common household item. We had Victrolas with the big morning glory horn on top and a crank in the side that someone had to keep turning to keep the music going, but one can listen to a record only so many times.

Nevertheless, we were never bored. We rode the saplings and left few trees on either of our farms unscaled. We did have a favorite, however. Anyone who has ever climbed trees knows that the hickory makes the best jungle gym. The smooth limbs grow perpendicular to the trunk and are spaced exactly right for secure steps and handholds. One such tree grew behind our barn. Doris and I spent many hours "watching for the spar of another pirate ship" from the top of that old hickory.

Sometimes we helped Freda up to the first limb so that she could climb too, but most of the time she would be sitting at the base waiting for us to come down. Just south of the barn was an oak grove with a tangled web of grapevines looping down to form swings. Doris's brothers usually had a good rope swing with an old tire tied to it on a tree in their front yard or one hanging from a rafter on their back porch, but the vines, with bark worn smooth and away from the house, suited us better.

Our threesome became a foursome for three or four weeks every summer when my cousin, Gene Lewis, came down from Springfield to get a taste of country living. Gene always arrived with



an ample supply of his dad's cast-off pipes, a can of Prince Albert, and a package or two of roll-your-own cigarette papers. This was an exciting addition to our standard fare of life-ever-lasting, grapevine, and dried mullin leaves. We got more excitement than we bargained for early





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one morning, however. We decided to light up out behind the chicken house while the folks were at the barn, milking. To conserve our few matches, we built a small fire from dried grass and twigs, but our small flame was soon out of control and the chicken house was on fire. Luckily Dad saw the smoke in time to save the building, but some little posteriors burned for quite some time. That experience did not put an end to our smoking, but we smoked very surreptitiously and with great care thereafter.

Curiously, none of us smoke as adults.

Gene also showed us how to take the criers out of our dolls and make whistles out of them.

Another pastime that he enjoyed with us was sliding on the barn roof. Dad had built a dairy shed on to the end of the barn. The metal roof of the shed came just to the window in the gable of the barn so that we could climb up the logs on the inside, climb out the window, and slide down the shed roof. A shingle-covered extension to the



Front row: Franklin Wood and Freda Carter (Edwards). Second row: Maxine Hensley (Doll), Shirley Carter (Piland), and Lorene Hensley (Brown). Back row: Gene Lewis and Earl Nevells.

shed stopped our descent, but we kept a pile of hay on the ground below just in case. Inside the barn we swung from rafter to rafter, walked the log braces, and jumped from them into the fresh, loosely stacked hay beneath us.

When we tired of the barn, we would go fishing. The big pond was teeming with bluegill, frogs, and turtles. Our mothers let us take an iron skillet, some lard, a cup of cornmeal, and a few potatoes, and we cooked our catch right on the pond bank. When the fish quit biting, we would amuse ourselves with thunder and lightning, a game we devised of swishing our poles through the water. After that we would crack walnuts under the trees nearby.

The high road bank in front of Hunt's store probably puzzled strangers who were just passing through. The clay was punched full of holes most of which had bottles in them. Three inch paths meandered among the holes. Local people knew that those diggings were Doris and Shirley's town. The holes were houses, stores, and garages, and the bottles were the cars, trucks, and buses. We drove





Shirley (at left) and baby Freda.

miles on that bank and our knees took on a permanent reddish-brown hue.

We did have chores to do. We had to feed and water the chickens, pick up chips and carry in wood, run errands, wash dishes, and bring home the cows. Hunts even had one old gentle cow that we could ride. When the chores were done, we were free to pursue our own activities pretty much as we pleased.

We were accompanied everywhere by Doris's Old Rover and my Old Pat, two long-suffering shepherd dogs who were good guardians. When we dressed up in

old clothes from a trunk in our attic, Pat and Rover were very likely to find themselves modelling my great grandmother's plumed hats or leg-of-mutton waists. Our cats, too, were often unwilling models for our doll clothes.

We walked on tin cans and much taller stilts, rolled hoops and old tires, curled up inside tires and rolled each other, built carts, made playhouses, and cut out paper dolls from Sears and Roebuck or "Monkey" Ward catalogs. We did our swimming in the cold, spring-fed North Fork River. In winter we skated on the shallow pond at the foot of the Elijah road hill and rode our sleds down the hill when it snowed. We built snowmen and snow forts where some fierce battles took place. On days that were too cold for us to be out, we played checkers, dominoes, and Old Maid, or curled up in a warm corner somewhere with *Tom Sawyer*, *Little Women*, *Black Beauty*, or maybe *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. When we had the measles, our mothers read to us.

We had visiting playmates occasionally, but most of our association with other children was at school. At school, too, we children were left pretty much to our own ingenuity during playtime. The teacher usually came outside and watched to see that we played fairly and that we didn't get too rough, but there were no gym classes with sophisticated equipment and no little leagues. We played scrub and two-eyed cat with a homemade string ball and used anything we could find for a bat. Bernice McDaniel (now Mrs. Reed Cobb)

knocked many home runs with an old piece of two by four. We played stink base, nine stick, mad dog, jail, red rover, tap the rabbit, three deep, Annie over, and dodge ball. We played hide and seek, played marbles for keeps, and ran all kinds of races. After last recess on Friday afternoon, we always had either a spelling bee or a cyphering, geography, or reading match.

Perhaps our lives were not exciting by today's standards, but we had fun and were never bored. Finally, one hot June morning my Uncle Henry took Gene, Doris, Freda, and me to the far end of the farm on the pretext of helping him cut some sprouts. The sun was 'way past its zenith when Gene's mother finally came for us with the electrifying news that Shirley and Freda had a little brother. Franklin Wood had arrived, and . . . but that's the beginning of a whole new story. G



Freda and Franklin Wood on "Old Sog."

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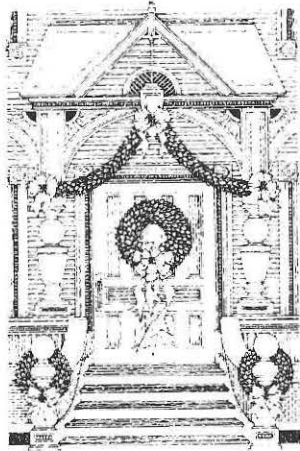





-Elledge Collection

Fourth of July baseball game in 1899. Front row: Earl Mills, Hal Woodside, Will Kilpatric, Toots Carter, Ira Carter, Joe Biggers, and Pete Monroe. Back row: Joe M. Martin, Emmett Rendall, Virgil Gillihand, Alfred Curry, Wiley Roy, Jim McGinty, Elmer Kellett, Tom Hard, Bud Burroughs, Fred Pease, Jim Powell, and Lynn Smith.

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# SUNDAY AFTERNOON BASEBALL

by  
**Annabelle Scott Whobrey**

*Take me out to the ball game . . .* an applicable song in the early 20s around our farm. Since rural people devised most of their own entertainment, many of my childhood memories are composed of community get togethers; dinners on the ground, play parties, and various to-dos filled with visiting.

It was this situation that inspired my dad to organize a baseball team and open up a new pastime for sunny summer afternoons. It worked well because everyone liked a game of competition and most agreed to support the home team.

My parents owned the big general store in our neighborhood and as a business-getter they purchased material for the players' uniforms. One of the local ladies volunteered to make the suits and after the effort was over was heard to say, "I'll never like soft, grey material again; I treadled that machine many a mile!" However, she was seen sitting on the front row and rooting for the team each time they played.

Most of the spectators sat on the grass. Some took out wagon and buggy seats and used those, but the elite took the seats from their Model T to sit on. Dad also erected a few bleachers — crude affairs made from poles and wide boards.

Dad not only outfitted the players, but he furnished the ball and bat and a place to play in a meadow back of our house. It was an ideal spot, easily reached from the public road and as level as any piece of ground in the Missouri Ozarks. I remember there had to be a wagon load of rocks picked up off the field before it took on the appearance of a baseball diamond. Being a store owner, Dad could

buy wholesale and bought enough chicken wire to make a backdrop behind the catcher. He cut long poles from our woods and hung the wire on that, making it safer for the onlookers. Bases were fashioned from gunny sacks with a little straw inside them, giving many a runner a somewhat softer place to land when sliding into base. I viewed the whole set-up as being quite professional in appearance and when teams came from the city to play, I *knew* we were big time!

Oddly enough, the games I most remember were a result of me having a mole on the back of my neck.

It was rumored around our neighborhood the little Scott girl was a spoiled brat; I simply threw spasms when I got into a barber chair. I had a painful and legitimate reason for the fits I threw. No matter how much a barber was cautioned about my mole he clipped it at the end of every haircut. I guess dad worried a lot out loud and somebody suggested he take me to a certain black barber in Springfield. In desperation, and as a last resort, we hunted out the shop on Jefferson Street in Springfield. Dad explained about my fright of having hair cuts and the barber soon set me at ease. His soft voice assured me he would not forget about my mole. I guess it was a rare happening for white folks to enter a "colored" place of business back in those days of segregation, but it proved the perfect solution to my hair cuts.

My dad never met a man he didn't get acquainted with, and he and the barber did a lot of laughing and visiting. I believe he called the barber Nick, and they discussed everything from bad brats to base-

ball. Dad learned of the black team there in the city, and he asked them out.

The black team arrived riding in the back of a truck, singing their hearts out. I suppose several of the country kids had never seen a black person, and they stood open-mouthed. I felt like I was very knowledgeable, knowing Nick and counting him a friend.

Well, the black team sure took the show; they hit balls into the sassafras grove and over to the barn lot! Since baseballs were scarce, it kept the kids busy hunting balls, but it was a fun filled time for all.

As a youngster, I supposed all of the ball games hinged on entertaining the community, but looking back, I wonder. Perhaps, my parents had an ulterior motive since they operated a concession stand. It was run from the back of our tin lizzy truck that Dad used for hauling his store supplies. It was a complete goody cart during ball games, and Dad had plenty of ice for the tubs of soda pop. He cut oodles of ice in winter from our pond and stored it in his homemade ice house. Thus, in summer time we had the luxury of ice, and Mama's big zinc wash tubs took on the chore of holding chipped ice and soda pop on the Sundays we had ball games. It was not only an opportune time to sell pop, but they sold little pokes of roasted peanuts, Cracker Jacks, and candy; they took in several nickels and dimes during the game, and any player who hit a homer was treated to a free soda.

On sunny Sundays we rushed around from Sunday School so Dad could get his truck loaded and





photo by Minnie Cowan

courtesy Terry Stine

Two early-day Sunday afternoon ball players, Winnie Stowe and Paul Cowan.

open the afternoon concession stand. The gate was opened into our field and people parked their cars close enough to be noticed. Those still riding horses, buggies, or wagons tied their animals in the nearby sassafras grove.

The umpire was an unbiased and unpaid fellow that many didn't always agree with, but the disagreement was mostly good-natured. Lots of coaching went on from the sidelines, and it was truly a time of togetherness. "Play ball" were words that brought an ordinary meadow alive and magically turned it into a ball park for a community affair.

G

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The class of 1954 held their thirty year reunion on July 7, 1984. Above is the class this summer and below is the class thirty-four years ago as they graduated from the eighth grade. The picture was taken at Carmical (?) School. Front row: Sam Freel (teacher), Betty Ruth (Stevenson) Launius, Nita Jean (Easley) Brown, Rosa Mae (Mitts) Thomas, Pat (Aid) Hollingshad, Nellie (Bragg) Brixey, Loyda (Joliff) Stapleton, Evelyn (Good) Johnson, Virginia Puckett, Mary Jo (Smith) Baker, Dorthea (McMurtrey) Bailey, Betty (Johnston) Riley, Greta (Hopkins) Pruett, Norma Jean (Dickerson) Rogers, Eula (Anderson) Rowden, Elaine (Bottom) Franks, Ernestine (Henry) Wilson, Sue (Decker) Gammon, Helen (Hiler) Gannon, Ella Marie (Krohn) Nale, Edna (James) Condray, Betty Jean "B.J." (Patterson) Hickox, Janet (Paris) Newman, Martha Ruth (Steele) Ratcliff, Rosemary (LaFever) Birmingham, Nellie (Green) Chopski. Back row: Harvey Barton, Robert Hileman, Newt Brill, Harry Clark, Jim Peters, Don McGoldrick, Joe Brown, Gary Hickox, Neal Jones, Truman Easley, Jr., Dale Delarm, Jim Lashley, Reathel Marsh, Herbert Willard, Harvey Coldiron, Fred Land, Jim Downing, Leon Hopkins, Bill Willard, Fred Barnett, Norman Eugene Thompson, Larry Atha, Dale Yates, Dean Bennett, Gale Newman, Dean Crafton. Not pictured, Dona (Farrell) McShane.

# THE CLASS OF 1954

First row: W.N. Carr, Doyle Young, Dale Yates, Dean Crafton, Richard Dowling, Ruby Bernard, Barbara Turner, Laura Bradford, Ruth Parrish, Edna James, Zelma Newton, Pat Aid, Sue Decker, Neal Davis, Donald Hale, Billy Joe Hensley, Charles Piler, Bill Troutt, Leeman McCrackin, Jimmie Lashley, Gale Newman, Janet Paris, Harry Clark, Earl Kellett, Steve Evans. Second row: Fred Barnett, Jimmie Downing, Junior Burks, Henry Morgan, Herbert Ford, Donna Ingold, Ruby Johnson, Nita Jean Easley, Deborah Nan Bash, Betty Jean Patterson, Dixie Decker, Eva Jane Hard, Rosemary LaFever, Dale Delarm, Gary Hickox, Ray Launburger, Norman Frost, Dale Anderson, Lemac Hall, Freddy Land, Larry Lambe, Utah Meyers, Jerry Dunahoe, Leon Hopkins, Larry Atha, Junior Barnett. Third row: Kermit Collins, Bobby Graves, Ralph Moore, George Rhear, Frank Reavis, Betty Johnston, Loyda Joliff, Elaine Bottom, Shirley Smith, Barbara Hollingshed, Dollie Watson, Kathryn Hoglen, Billy Jean Johnston, Martha Steele, Flo Jean Hard, Mary Jo Smith, Dona Farrell, Richard Stoll, Noah Alsup, Henry DeShazo, Truman Easley, Ted Gullic, Newt Brill. Left: Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Strong. Right: Miss Carter and Mr. Weaver.







## Cora Crass Dotson

Howell County Poet and Historian

*The above poem was written by Cora in 1939 for a woman who was celebrating her 91st birthday. Today, at age 93, Cora also has "known joy along the way, and had her share of strife." In the following interview, Cora shares memories of her own life.*

When my grandparents, Gerhard and Sophia Scholten Theissen came to White Church in 1875, my Momma (Emma) was ten and Uncle Dolph (their only other child) was fourteen. My grandparents were the first Catholic settlers in White Church, but it was already a settlement before they came here. There was a little school there that my mother went to when she was ten years old. It was called a subscription school; they only went

there a few months.

Then old man Tucker donated two acres for the public school district 39 — I don't know when it was built, but that's where I went to school and my son went there until it burned down in 1935.

The Catholic school which at one time had been quite flourishing with as many as eighty children had dwindled away and closed. Since it had folded and there was an empty building there, the coun-

## Ninety-one Years

by Cora Crass Dotson

Ninety-one times the wheel has turned,  
In this exciting game called life,  
Much joy you've had along the way,  
No doubt your share of strife.

With ninety-one turns of the wheel,  
Many changes we have had,  
Please tell me what do you think . . .  
Have the changes been good or bad?

From rag carpets to deep-pile rugs,  
Hoop skirts, bonnets and crinoline,  
Also days of weaving and carding wool,  
Tell me, how do they compare with "39"?

From featherbeds and cabins in the hills,  
Today we have mansions and unpaid bills,  
Then the girls were quaint and fair,  
And now they paint and bob their hair.

You remember strolls down a shady lane,  
Now it is hustle, bustle, worry and — go.  
The world today is not the same,  
With the automobiles and the radio.

From country doctors to specialists,  
Great highways and machines that fly,  
Oh, the plans, hopes and dreams,  
In these ninety-one years gone by!

And so we spin the old wheel of Fate,  
At times there is joy and sometimes sorrow,  
But we keep walking to the rainbows end,  
Hoping to find the pot of gold tomorrow.

So here is my bouquet to ninety-one years,  
You know me not — that does not matter,  
Happy Birthday to you, and many more,  
And only roses in your path I would scatter.

ty rented or used it so the school could continue.

When the government took over, all the public schools in the community — the Potts School, the White Church School, and the Boatman School anyway — burnt down. All these schools were built with small flues and had little box stoves until the government took over and put in heavier stoves to radiate more heat and the flues wouldn't carry the heat and the



schoolhouses all over the country burned up.

*Before telling us about her own family, Cora recalled more about the village of White Church itself.*

You wouldn't believe it, but there was two blacksmith shops, a barber shop, and the Dosses had a big store. My dad built that store. He was a farmer, but he did a lot of carpentry work. He built several structures in the White Church area, including a six-room house for the Hunters when they moved there in 1905.

The old original post office was on the corner of the Aaron Burroughs place. There was a Robinson that had it and had a store too. C.E. Kimberlin was a clerk there. He used to give us kids "chewing gum" and it was nothing but parafin sweetened.

That whole area was first known as Peace Valley. Conrad Dryer first established a post office at Peace Valley in 1876. Then as the community grew they had a White Church post office which opened in 1889 and closed in 1915.

*Cora continued the story of her family.*

I don't have a picture of the original house where Momma was raised in from ten years on, but it

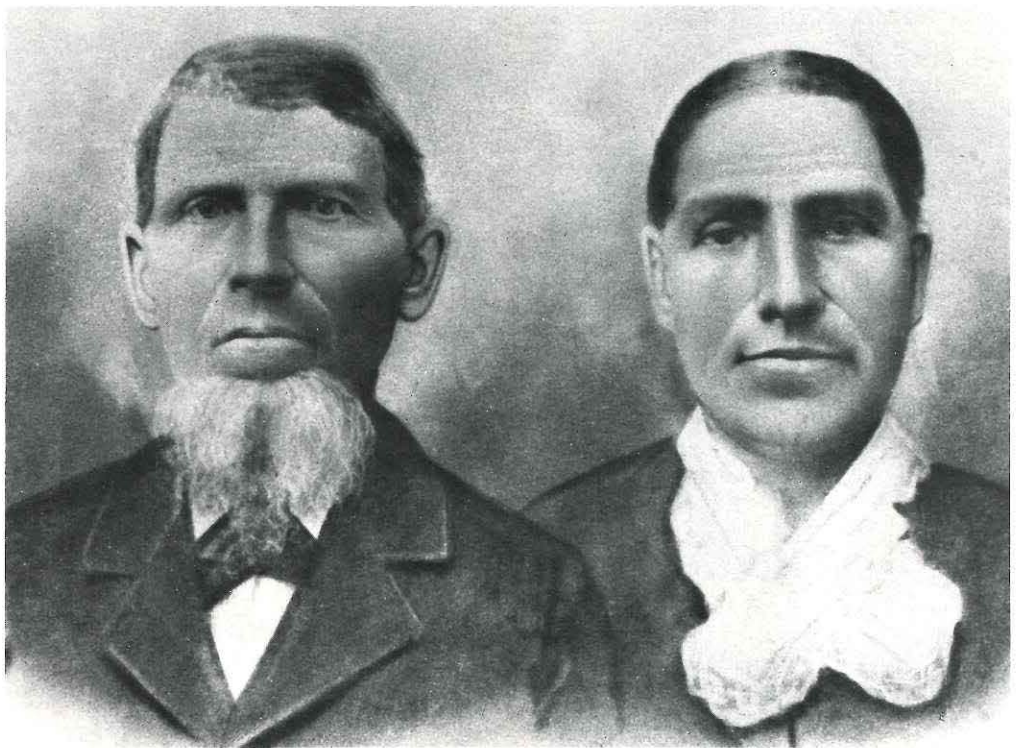


**This house built in 1890, is the house Cora was born in at White Church.**

was all log. Then Grandpa and Grandma built a new house in 1897, but it's gone too. The original homestead was kept in the family until 1955; Al Eldringhoff lives there now.

Momma was raised in White Church, but while visiting relatives in Rhineland, Missouri as a young woman she met my father, John Crass. (He was born in 1863 to Wilhelm and Gertrude Crass.) They were married at St. Martin's Church in Starkenburg, Missouri on

July 30 1889. My sister Anna was born while they were still living in the Rhineland-Starkenburg area, but my parents moved to White Church before I was born on December 17, 1891. Mother bore eight children, but two died in infancy so there were six of us who lived to adulthood — Anna, me, Otto, Hugo, Martin, and Eva. *The Gazette asked Cora, who knows a few German phrases, if her family spoke German while she was growing up.*



**Above left: the 1889 wedding portrait of Cora's parents, John and Emma Theissen Crass. Above right: Cora's grandparents, Wilhelm and Gertrude Crass.**



My parents could speak German, but they didn't. I learned a little from my Grandpa Theissen. The sisters at the Catholic School taught everything, but I was just little and didn't take German. [*Cora only attended catholic school a few years, then it closed, and she went to public school.*]

My grandpa took a German newspaper from St. Louis and when he got so he couldn't see I struggled along so I could kind of tell him what words there was; I read the weather report to him.

Grandma died when I was five, but I knew Grandpa up until when he passed away in 1919. I don't know why they let me live with Grandpa so much — just one less mouth to feed I guess. We just lived a quarter of a mile apart and I run back and forth between our house and his, I just picked up on the German more than the others.

*Did the German families observe any German customs at White Church?*

The Bosses had a gander pulling once, but there weren't many German traditions carried on here. We didn't have Saint Nicholas at Christmas — everyone here practiced old Santa Claus. But we did have a Christmas tree and a creche — a crib — imported from Germany at the Church. The first priest, Father Waeltermann, had that brought here, but they don't



Cora's 1913 graduation photo.



Gerhard and Sophia Scholten Theissen and their son Adolph. This was the second home the Theissen's built in White Church. They moved in before the house was finished in the fall of 1897. Sophia Theissen died the following February.

have that same one any more. It fell apart after awhile.

At Easter time we built traditional German bonfires, and we distributed palms. We made little crosses out of the palms and braided them too.

*Cora ended up working in Washington, D.C. during World War I as a typist and stenographer. What circumstances led to such a transition?*

My momma died in 1908 when I was sixteen, and we were orphans — had to paddle our own canoe, and I was sick so much. I was in St. John's Hospital for three months after my mother died, and I saw a little of the outside world and that sparked my ambition. I always wanted an education, but I hadn't been able to go to school. I never got through the eighth grade — I was several years out of school when I went back and got my diploma. Then I wanted to go to business college. One of my dad's brothers was a lawyer in Vancouver, Washington, and he knew our family could use some assistance. He'd gotten a hold of a scholarship and he sent me that and paid my transportation to Washington state. I went to Holmes Business College in Portland, Oregon. I went there in the fall of 1916.

Then I got sick and had to go

back home. After that I went to Springfield, Missouri and studied about a month to renew my typing skills and then I got a job there, but I wasn't satisfied with that job. It didn't contain the stuff I wanted to do. It was a pants factory and during the war they made pants for the government. The pants were all numbered, and I put all those numbers in a little book and kept track — nothing more monotonous than that. I also worked evenings as a typist for Col. R.P. Dickerson (Dickerson Park Zoo in Springfield is named for him). He was organizing "the National Loyalty League" at the time. I remember he used to lead a lion around on a leash on the streets of Springfield.

Eventually, I sneaked off and took the civil service examination and got an appointment to Washington D.C. in 1918; I worked in the war department there. I was three years in Washington — two years in the war department and then I went to work for the Southern Railway.

While I was there they said they wanted a couple of girls from the office to get their pictures taken. I didn't know what it was for, but I thought it would be a good time to get a good photograph for my family.

Shortly after that, I lost my voice and had to have my tonsils removed, then I came home again.



So I didn't get to see the results of the pictures that were taken until later when I saw in the paper that those pictures were for the very first Miss America contest ever held. And I knew the first Miss America, Margaret Gorman, who was picked for the honor in 1921.

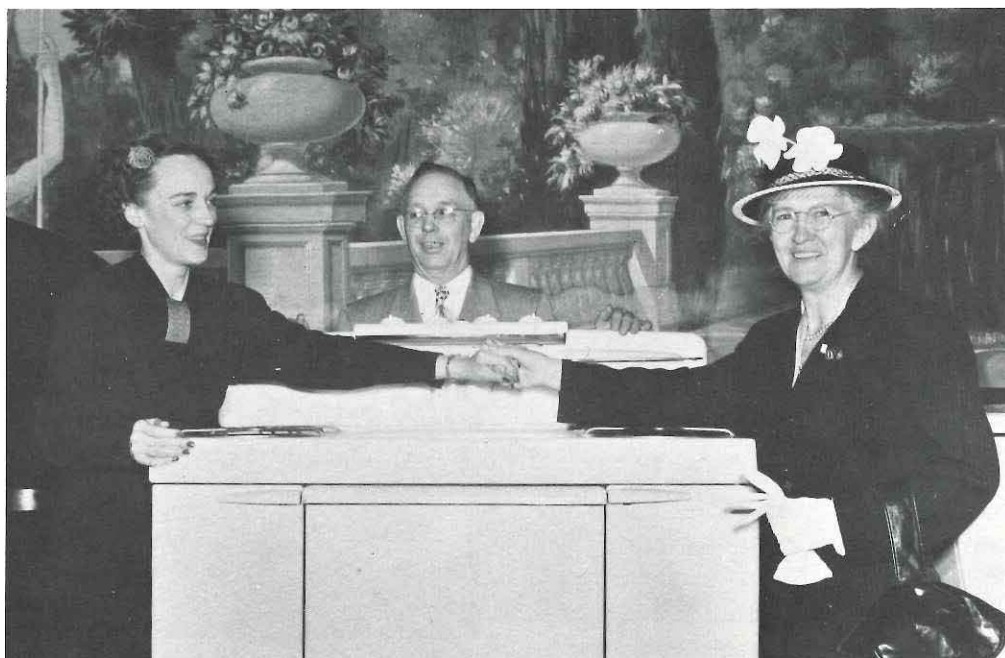


Cora's 1920 "Miss America" picture.

While I was recuperating at home once again, I met my husband C.H. "Harry" Dotson. We were married January 1, 1922 in Springfield. After our marriage, he was shipped on a job to Elgin, Kansas with a construction firm, and we were in different parts of Kansas for four years until we returned to my family's original homestead permanently in 1926. We built our house there and lived in it until Mr. Dotson passed away in '54. Then I bought a lot here and came to town in 1955.

When I was on the farm canning fruit and vegetables I won prizes at fairs. I've got boxes of ribbons. At the Empire Fair in Springfield I always won blue ribbons and here too. I was the champion canner in Howell County!

I won \$12.00 in prize money the first year they had the new fair-



Jean Kappell, KWTO *Dial* editor; George Wise, Maytag representative; and Cora accepting the Maytag range she won in the KWTO essay contest in 1950. While visiting KWTO Cora met Chet Atkins, Mother Mabelle Carter and family, and received (a surprise) kiss from Johnny Olsen.

grounds up north of town and I was so appreciative I donated half of it back to the fairgrounds. [Cora also saved her prize money and purchased a typewriter.]

*What year did you win the KWTO essay contest?*

In 1950. KWTO put out this little magazine and one month they announced this essay contest and I entered and won. There were 2,668 entries.

My prize was a \$270 Maytag dutch oven gas range, and I was put up at the Kentwood Arms—the hotel in Springfield—for three days, and made an appearance on Johnny Olsen's

"Ladies Be Seated" program at the Shrine Mosque. It was kind of like "Queen for a Day."

*Here is Cora's winning essay. She completed the sentence, "I like to listen to KWTO because . . ."*

"You sing the song of the Ozark hills; present a well-balanced program of news, business, farm, home and religion. KWTO entertainers are tops—they reach for the stars, but have not lost the common touch. I turn a dial and my 'neighbors' have come to visit!"

*Cora definitely has a flair for writing. Her accomplishments include putting together two books of original poetry. In 1982 Cora com-*

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*piled some of the poems she had written over the years in Footprints. Supplement to Footprints soon followed. The Gazette asked Cora how she got interested in poetry.*

At White Church I organized a community club — the S.O.S. Club. It was during the Depression (1932), and I was bored and needed an outlet. I had no access to anybody. I just lived on the farm, but I like a little liveliness, so I got a bunch of post cards, and I sent out several invitations to ladies in the community. I wrote on the note that I wanted them to come over; they'd be surprised. There were twenty ladies came over to my house, and they all brought a dish [of food].

Wool that year was worth *eight cents* a pound. I had a lot of it, and Harry said he wouldn't haul it to town for that. My mother told me they used to pick wool, and I didn't have any way to card it, so I had a neighbor wash it. But that didn't get rid of the little sticks and briars and things.

Anyway, when everyone got to my house I gave each one a clean sack and had a big bag of wool on a sheet in the middle of the room. We picked that wool and in the bottom of the bag was a prize. At the end of the day whoever had the most dirt (they had picked the most wool) they won the prize — it was a wool picking contest. We had a wonderful time laughing and talking about everything. I still have the comforter that I put that wool in — used it like batting.

After that we met every month at someone's house and became the "Society of Service." We elected officers, and I was the correspondent. Every month I wrote up a little article and put in the paper. I wrote the "S.O.S. Notes" until the club folded up during the war. I told what the club did and wrote a lot of little poems that I put in the write-up, so that's how I got started.

*The greatest tragedy of Cora's life happened during World War II. Her only son, Joseph C. Dotson, did not return from the war. She told of*



**Cora was a charter member of the Blue Bird Garden Club which originated in the late 1950s. Some of the members of the club are shown above: Mabel Hesselton, Cora Dotson, Rosa Collins, Mrs. Paul Thompson, Sadie McCallon, Rhoda Briscoe, Margaret Deshazo, and Helen Ramseur.**

*a visit from the man who was apparently the last person to see Joseph alive.*

The ship my son was on in the war was sunk. My son kept a boy afloat after the ship went down, and after thirty-five years that boy came to see me. After being in the water for many hours, this man



**One year old Joseph Clark Dotson, 1923.**

drifted to shore, but my son was never seen again. Joe should have made it because this man says he was not at all panicky and was in good shape. I'll never know exactly what happened, but Joe did not come home.

*Cora has seen and done many things in her life, and her many friends are now encouraging her to write the story of her life. At home now after several stays in the hospital and in nursing homes, Cora is turning her thoughts toward this project, and in the meantime keeps up with writing daily in her diary.*

*To close our interview with Cora, we leave our readers with one of her poems.*

#### PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord, we greet you in the morning,  
With a smile upon our face,  
We thank you at noontime,  
For the food our tables grace,  
Then when evening shadows  
lengthen,  
And all is quiet and still,  
We kneel and ask forgiveness,  
And with Peace our hearts do fill.

G





## German Royalty Living in Howell County?

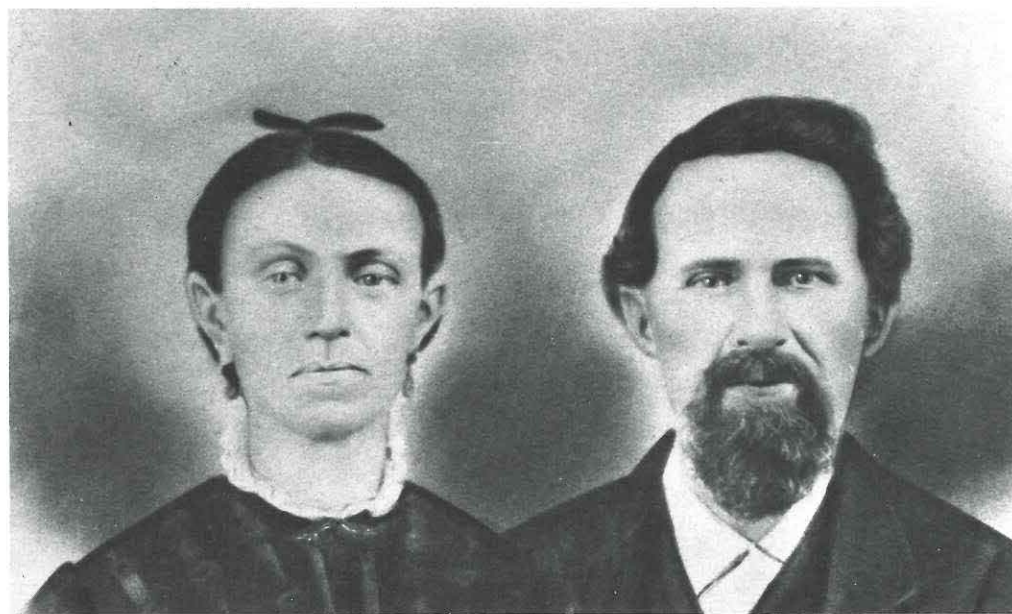
by Norman Peters

Very few Americans can prove family connections and claim a family crest from the old country. Yet, there is a person living in Howell County who can.

In the fall of 1856 a family by the name of Scholten came to Missouri and settled in Montgomery County in an area called Rhineland. In comparison with the other struggling German settlers the Scholtens were rich. They brought with them large trunks of clothes, a piano, books, framed pictures, and money! They also brought the family silverware that was engraved with a family crest. This wealth belonged to the wife's side of the family, or so the story goes. Johann Heinrich Scholten's wife was Hendrina von Elsberg and it was the von Elsberg family crest that was on the silverware.

Cora Dotson is Engelbert von Elsberg's great, great, great granddaughter. Her grandmother, Sophia Scholten Theissen, was the daughter of Johann Heinrich Scholten and Hendrina Von Elsberg.

Engelbert von Elsberg was born March 25, 1738 in Grietherbusch, near the Rhine River in Germany. When he was nineteen he married Aleida Bauhuis in the local parish church. It is the christening of Engelbert and Aleida's son, Johann Heinrich von Elsberg, that begins



Cora's grandparents, Gerhard and Sophia Scholten Theissen.

the story that reveals the social and political position of the von Elsberg family. The godfather of Johann Heinrich was Richard Bartels, Canon at St. Victor Cathedral in Xanten, Germany.

It must be remembered that the church, not the state, was most powerful during this time. A Canon was not a parish priest, but rather a church dignitary assigned to a cathedral or to a church college. The fact that Johann Heinrich's godfather was a Canon would indicate a position of some influence for the von Elsberg family.

More light is thrown on the family's position when Johann Heinrich married Aleida Bartels on the 19th of June 1798. This marriage was celebrated by none other than the Canon of the Willibrordi Church College in Wesel, Germany. The Canon was Theodor von Elsberg,

the brother of the groom. This marriage is also interesting because the Canon had to obtain prior dispensation due to blood relationship to the third and fourth degrees. The fact that this marriage was celebrated by a Canon and that he was able to receive a double dispensation, no easy matter, again indicates a position of influence for the von Elsberg family.

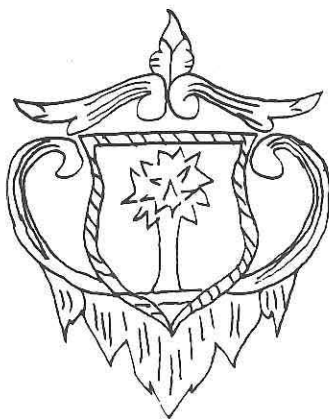
Johann Heinrich and Aleida's daughter, Hendrina von Elsberg, married Johann Heinrich Scholten in 1820 and it was they who brought the von Elsberg family silverware to the United States in 1856.

During the Civil War many of the Scholten family keepsakes, including the von Elsberg silverware, were packed and taken to Hermann, Missouri to be sent to St. Louis for safekeeping. Unfortunately, a Confederate raid on Hermann took place at this time and the railroad station house, where the keepsakes were awaiting shipment, was burned. Only one piece of the silverware was saved. This was a spoon kept by Mother Scholten in her purse with which to give medicine to the children.

This single spoon was passed down in the family to Cora Dotson's grandmother, to her mother, and then to Mrs. Dotson. This spoon, even after more than two hundred years, still shines with the von Elsberg family crest on its handle!

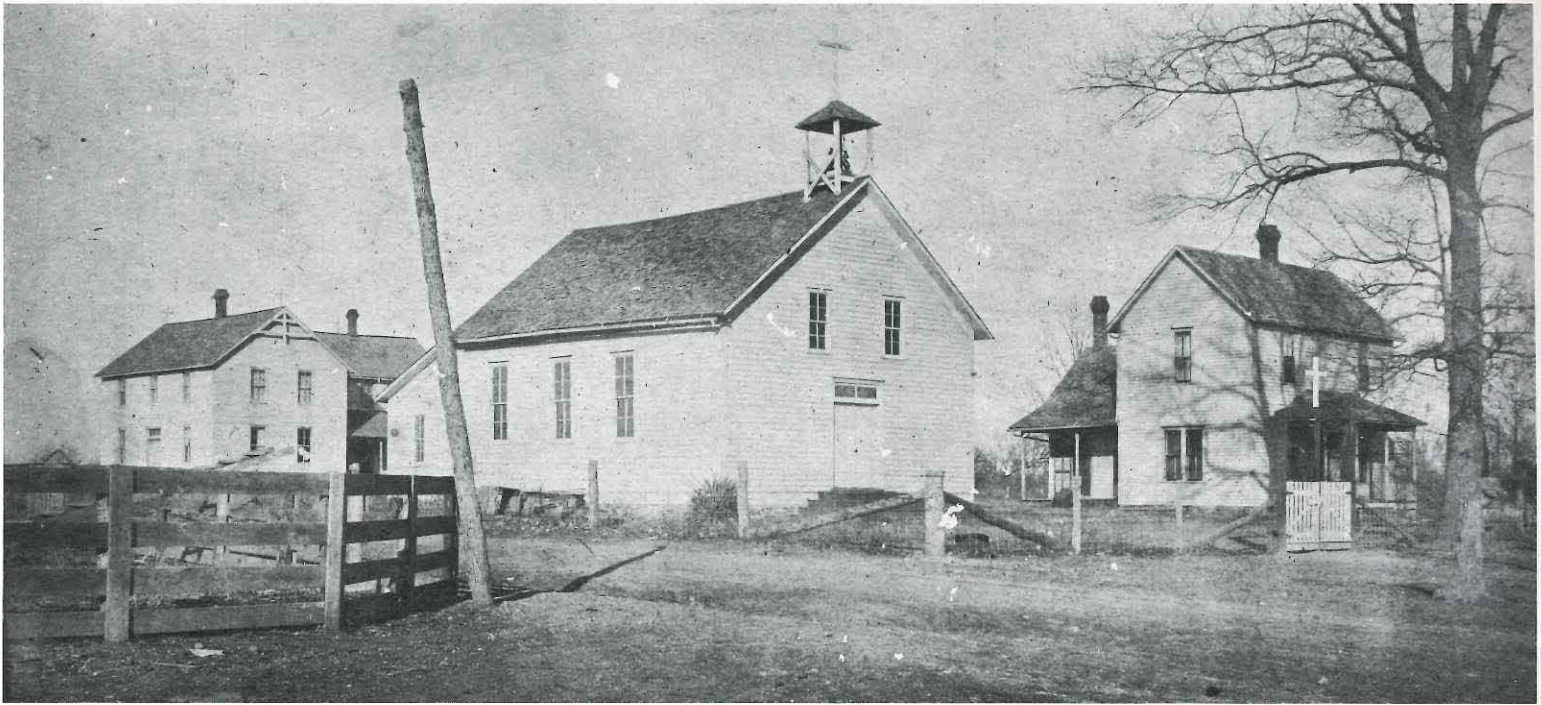


Above are Cora and her brothers and sisters. Front row: Cora, Eva (Davis), and Anna (Eldringhoff). Back row: Martin, Otto, and Hugo. At right is the von Elsberg crest which appears on the family spoon.



E V E





The original St. Joseph's Church dedicated in 1886. Taken in 1908, this picture shows the school at left and rectory at right. The second church was built on the same spot.

Excerpts from  
**Memoirs of St. Joseph's Parish  
 White Church, Missouri**

by Cora Crass Dotson

*In 1969 Cora undertook the task of writing the history of St. Joseph's Parish in White Church. She did a great deal of research in county and church records to fill in her personal knowledge and memories of the church. The result was her book, Memoirs. Following are excerpts from the book and from interviews with Cora.*

My grandfather Gerhard Theissen was the first Catholic settler to move to White Church in 1875. During the Civil War while serving in the home guard, he came through this area fighting the bushwhackers. He thought it might be a good place to settle for Grandma's health. (The settlers in the Missouri River bottoms were plagued by chills and fever.) He came here and secured the homestead rights to a 160 acre farm.

Grandpa Theissen communicated with the other members of St. Martin's Parish at Starkenburg, Missouri (near Rhineland) and they finally came here, too. Many came from Gasconade County — the Hermann area. They were some of the German settlers who landed in New Orleans. (My grandfather arrived in 1846 on the ship the Providence.) Then they came up the

Mississippi to St. Louis and scattered around.

Checking records at the court house, I learned that Francis Peters came to Howell County in 1887, Joseph Eldringhoff in 1878, Frank X. Schneider in 1875, Vincent Nolte in 1876, and Henry Stein in 1878. Other names of early settlers I remember are: Welbert, Denzel, Schroeder, McManemin, Hunt, Boss, Hoey, Dunn, Rode, Kim Dowling, O'Leary, Robey, Dolsing, Welbel, Roehr, Ward, Seiberling, Fitzgerald, O'Hanlon, and Hendrix, [Obviously, Germans weren't the only people to settle in White Church.] White Church was a settlement before my grandparents came here. The Sam Henry and Joe Tucker families were among the ones already living in the area.

In the early days before the church was built, Mass was celebrated in the homes of Francis

Peters, Joseph Eldringhoff, and perhaps others. To Francis Peters, Sr., affectionately known as "Uncle Frank," must go most of the credit for building St. Joseph's. It was he who donated ten acres for the original church and cemetery. With courage and enthusiasm, a small frame church was built by the devout Catholics at White Church. From official sources we have March 25, 1886 as the day when the Reverend Henry Muehlsiepen of the Archdiocese of St. Louis officiated at the Dedication Ceremonies.

This building served the community for half a century, and when it was torn down we had mixed feelings of sadness and joy. Walls do not talk, but in retrospect we see happiness written on faces as a bride and groom stood before the altar, or a baby was baptized, and we also see tears when we





*Seated: Charlene Briscoe, Margaret Keister, Santa Claus. Standing: Clara Zell Cherry  
Peggy Odom, Barbara Gunter, Marilyn Fields, Terri Stephens, Brenda Jewell, Newt Brill.*

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and were welcomed with much joy. They were Sister Alexis Harrington, Sister Helen Kuhn, and Sister Mary Kelly. Sister Helen was soon made superior and endeared herself to the people, with her sincerity and gentle manner. Since nuns are rotated periodically, there were several others to serve there through the years.

This school operated without interruption for almost twenty years with marked success, but time changes everything they say. Young people left during the war years; some did not come back. Farm income could not compete with jobs available in town and the pendulum began to swing away from White Church. There seemed to be a ferment of unrest and a tendency to move where the lights were brighter and conditions more convenient.

Father Sylvester Bauer came to White Church in 1952, and proved to be a regular dynamo of energy. He seemed to be here, there, and everywhere at the same time. A recreational hall was built at St. Joseph's and he worked as a full time hand. With mud on his shoes and cement under his fingernails, he looked no different than the other workmen.

A Mission Center was organized through his influence. New churches were built at Willow Springs, Thayer, Eminence, Mtn. View, and Gainesville. Several priests were

domiciled at White Church, and were rotated in serving these parishes; among them were Bosco, Westrich, Stanton, Hirtz, and Stolzer. Father Orf was assistant pastor for a while and later became the first resident priest in Willow Springs, in 1955. Father Bauer left White Church in 1956 to supervise the expanded building project at West Plains where the new Parochial School was under construction.

And now we gently turn the pages in our book of memories and close the journal in 1956 on St. Joseph's Parochial school at White Church. The final audit was made when the building was sold for salvage August 13, 1958. The parish is now reduced to the status of a Mission with Father Robert L. Landewe of Sacred Heart parish, Willow Springs in charge of the spiritual needs of its little flock of seventy-five souls. Services are held there every Sunday and also on special feast days. *[This was in 1969. Currently, Father Patrick Carroll, pastor at Sacred Heart Church in Willow Springs, ministers to the needs at St. Joseph's. The congregation has grown to forty-eight families and services are held there each Sunday and Wednesday. Father Carroll says St. Joseph's is a very busy place, and all of the members are quite active in the various programs and*

*organizations within the Church.]*

This is my story of St. Joseph's parish. Call it a "Swan Song" if you will, but reading between the lines maybe you can glimpse a few footprints on the sands of time. A fitting closing might be:

Not until the loom is silent  
and the shuttle cease to fly,  
Shall God unfold the reason  
and explain the reason why;  
The dark threads are needful  
in the weaver's skillful hand,  
As the threads of gold and  
silver in the pattern He has planned!



Cora Crass Dotson in 1958



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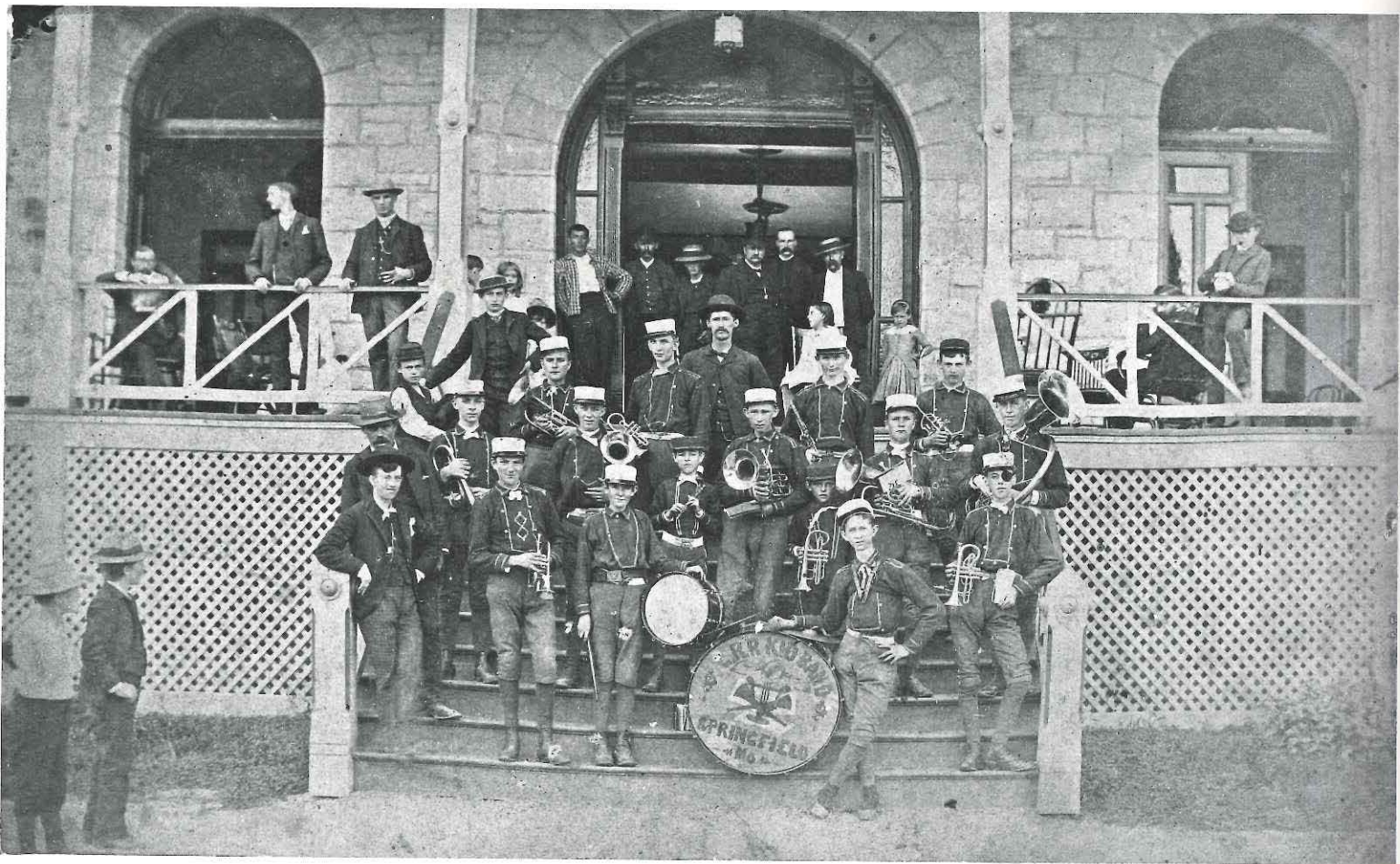
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This picture of the Gulf Railroad Kid Band, which is about 100 years old, was probably taken at Eureka Springs or Ft. Smith, Arkansas. Front row: At left, Arch Hollenbeck, cornet; Emmett Farley, snare drum; far right (wearing eye patch), Ollie Hall. Read about another group from Springfield below.

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## OZARK MOUNTAIN DAREDEVILS

Music filled the air in Cabool, Missouri on the Fourth of July this year, and people from miles around flocked to Jaycees Park to have a listen. The makers of the music were the Ozark Mountain Daredevils, a Springfield-based group which is internationally known. The crowd, estimated at 1200, would have stayed all day to hear more from the Daredevils, but had to be content with an afternoon in the park; the band was scheduled to appear in Kansas City that night and in Canada the next day.

The Ozark Mountain Daredevils get around a lot to spread their unique sound across the country, but just how did they end up in Cabool, Missouri?

A year ago, according to a letter from Jaycee Laura Mosca, there were only a half-dozen active members in the Cabool Jaycees. The women's organization, the Jaycee Boosters, had dissolved completely because membership was low. The men voted unanimously to allow women into the Cabool Jaycees as active, equal members in an effort to build up the membership. Apparently, the strategy worked.

The membership rolls increased and before long everyone was looking for a major project to undertake. What last winter's drawing board produced was a concert that is rare in these parts — the appearance of a big name group. (The legendary W.C. Handy and his band did come at Colonel Torrey's beckoning to Fruitville to perform, but that was many years ago.)

Even though the effort took a great deal of time, energy, and money the Jaycees are looking forward to more such concerts in the future; their goal is to make it an annual event and to provide other musical entertainment for the community throughout the year with other lesser-known groups performing from time to time.

If they're able to build their musical program like they've built up their organization, they should have no problem reaching their goal. The group which was barely hanging on a year ago now has thirty-five active members.





# Evergreen Church & Cemetery Community Cornerstones

As the two present-day photographs on this page show, Evergreen Church was built in 1921 and Evergreen Cemetery was founded in 1858. Some of the cemetery is visible at right in the photo above.

Peter Lamons and his wife arrived in Howell County in 1857. They brought with them their ten children, including several who were already married with families of their own. The beautiful wilderness and the few settlers here must have been a welcome change from the many tensions the Lamons were feeling in their previous home in Morgan County, Alabama. Even though the War Between the States did not erupt until 1861, already the stage was being set and sides were being taken. As Union sympathizers, the Lamons felt compelled to move on to raise their children in a new and untroubled place.

For several months the Lamons family probably thought they had found the serenity they longed for. Even though their days were filled with hard work on the 160 acres they homesteaded in southern Howell County, the family was together and thoughts of war were likely pushed to the backs of their minds.

Peace, however, was not meant to reign. In 1858, while Peter Lamons was on a business trip to Alabama, the eleventh Lamons child was stillborn. Two of the older Lamons boys, John and Tom, laid the infant to rest near the family home.

Shortly after the death of the Lamons child, travellers came

through the area with a sick baby and camped at a nearby spring. The child died and the Lamons kindly offered to let the strangers bury the baby by their own child.

Seeing the need for a community cemetery, Peter Lamons deeded land to be used with the understanding that anyone who needed a plot could be buried there without cost, a policy which still stands at Evergreen Cemetery.

Just as the Lamons family was getting well-established in Missouri, the inevitable happened; war broke out between the Union and the Confederacy and the lives of millions, including the Lamons, were shattered.

Peter Lamons and all of his sons except the youngest, who was only eight years old, served in the Union Army. The women and children of the family fled to Rolla during the war years to escape the bushwhackers so common in this part of the country. After the war the family did reunite and manage to reshape their lives in Howell County, but many of the memories of their new home were not happy ones.

Peter Lamons died on the family homestead in 1882 and went to his final rest in the cemetery he founded.

Land has been added to the cemetery several times since its beginning. Additional acreage was



acquired first from J.S. and Rebecca A. Lamons in 1888. Then, in 1919, Peter and Ida Minks sold three acres to Howell County to be used as a "public cemetery or burying ground," and finally, in 1925, J.C. and Eva Putnam sold another acre to Evergreen for the sum of fifty dollars.

The cemetery which started as a family burial site has over the years turned into one of the largest rural cemeteries in Howell County. Named for the many evergreen trees in the area at the time, the cemetery is well-kept and quite beautiful. (Several large evergreens still stand tall and proud in the cemetery and on old homesteads around the area.)



Several families have five generations buried in the Evergreen Cemetery; Briscoe, Crow, Gundy, Lamons, and Parker are such families. Others who have at least three generations buried there are: Cromer, Davis, Dold, Eades, Hall, Harris, Ingalsbe, Lambe, Pond, Riley, and White to name a few. Throughout the years the members of these families and many others have contributed to the upkeep of Evergreen through donations and hard work.

It was this characteristic hard work and determination that led the people of the community to build a church just north of the cemetery. On July 10, 1921 the "Subscription List" of Evergreen Church states, "The undersigned hereby subscribe the amounts set opposite our names for the purpose of the erection of a concrete house of worship to be built at Evergreen Cemetery, under the direction of W.T. Parker, John Parker, and P.J. Lamons who are Trustees of said cemetery in Howell County, Missouri, and who with their successors shall have control of said house, in the same way and manner they shall control said cemetery."

For many years large crowds gathered at Evergreen on Memorial Day to decorate the graves. There was dinner on the ground at noon and a service and musical program later in the day.

While the cemetery remained fairly small, it wasn't too difficult to get the grounds in shape and keep them that way during the summer. But as more and more graves were



A work day at Evergreen in 1936.

added, and descendants moved away, it became too much work for the ones who were left to keep it attractive. There were three trustees, one elected annually, who did what they could, but the issue became a growing concern for everyone.

It was the women of the community who at first provided the solution. The Orchard Grove Extension Club was organized January 9, 1941. (Orchard Grove School, built in 1895, was in the district adjacent to Evergreen on the west.) During World War II the club disbanded due to gas rationing, family members enlisting in the service, wartime jobs, and other things that adversely affected the group.

Even though members could not keep up with all of the duties of an extension club, they still wanted some kind of organization. It was on May 29, 1947 that the S.E.W. Club was organized at Orchard Grove School. Although the club

has undergone name changes over the years, it is still going strong and is now known as the Evergreen Lend-a-Hand Club. Louise Ingalsbe is president.

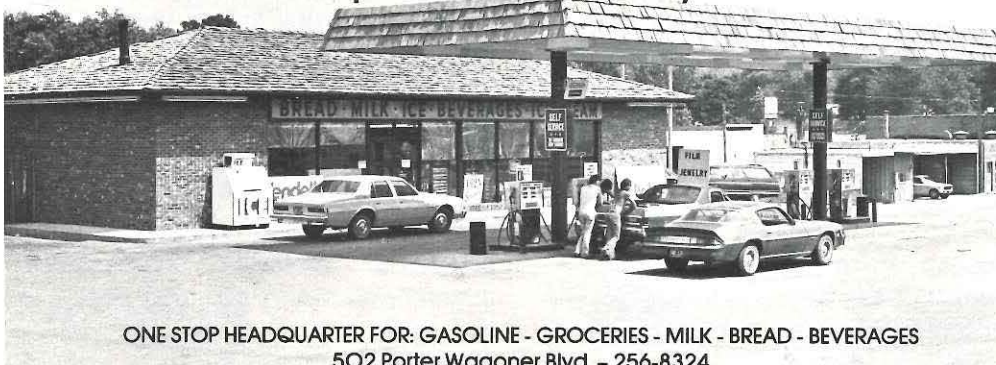
In 1951 the club gained approval from the trustees of Evergreen to sponsor care of the cemetery. Through donations and fund raisers the club purchased a saw and a power mower and other tools for the upkeep of the grounds. In 1953 Hubert Crow was hired as caretaker for the cemetery and also served as trustee along with Dave Crow, Sr. and Mott Davis.

During this time the club was also making improvements on the church building. They painted and cleaned, bought a piano, and paid the Reverend Neal Jantz to wire the building for electricity. (Five dollars was his fee.)

The club continued with the upkeep of the cemetery for twenty years, hiring caretakers (including Charlie Nelson who served for

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many years), and organizing work days. Finally in 1971 a trust fund was established. Various auctions and other fund raisers have built up the trust fund to ensure continual care of the cemetery. Faye Shannon is secretary of the trust fund; she receives and deposits donations. Marjorie Heinicke, who is treasurer, releases interest from the fund to pay the cost of keeping up the cemetery and grounds. John Lambe is the current caretaker, and the trustees are Earl "Red" Hall, Morgan Whitsell, and Mott Davis. The Evergreen Club has its own treasury and uses its funds mainly for care and upkeep on the church building.

From small beginnings as a family burial ground to a larger role in the community, Evergreen has spanned over 125 years of Howell County history, and with constant care and concern from the many descendants of people buried there, it will continue as a Howell County landmark forever.

G

A plat of Evergreen Cemetery, donated by Pauline Pond, is on display at the South Central Missouri Genealogical Library.

*Thanks to Pauline Pond who loaned the Gazette the Evergreen scrapbook which she has compiled over the years. In it was much of the information used in this article including a history by Eva Lamons Davis, granddaughter of Peter Lamons; a story of the centennial celebration at Evergreen in the May 22, 1958 Quill written by Allene Chapin; and recent history by Pauline Pond. Thanks also to Goldie Crow Freel who provided additional information.*



Members of the S.E.W. club at the Alvin and Clarica Hunsperger home on April 20, 1950. From left: Lucille Crouch, Ava Parker, Zelfhia Newcomb, Anna Blackstock, Clarica Hunsperger, Katie Brauer, Pauline Crow, Pauline Pond, and Daisy Gundy.



Above: A work day in 1951. Below: Evergreen today.



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(Continued from page 16.)

going with him.' He gave me the big out. There was another umpire, Jocko Conlan, who always liked me pretty well. So he ran up, and he saw it was going to be a big rhubarb and he grabbed me and said, 'Preacher, don't get into this, you've got too much to lose.' And I said, 'Jocko, I'm done throwed out, so I'm going to get my money's worth.' He said, 'Well, you just wait til this is all over.' He called Pee Wee Reese, the captain, and said, 'Keep Preach out of this and when it's all over tell him to go back to the mound and start pitching.' Well, it lasted 45 minutes. The players even came from our dug-out into it. When it was all over I went back to pitching. Jocko called the other umpire over after the rhubarb and evidently said, 'Well, nobody saw you throw Roe out, and he didn't do enough to be throwed out, and he's got too much to lose.' So they left me in there.

Campanella was hitting .343, and after he got throwed out in the fourth inning, his turn at bat came

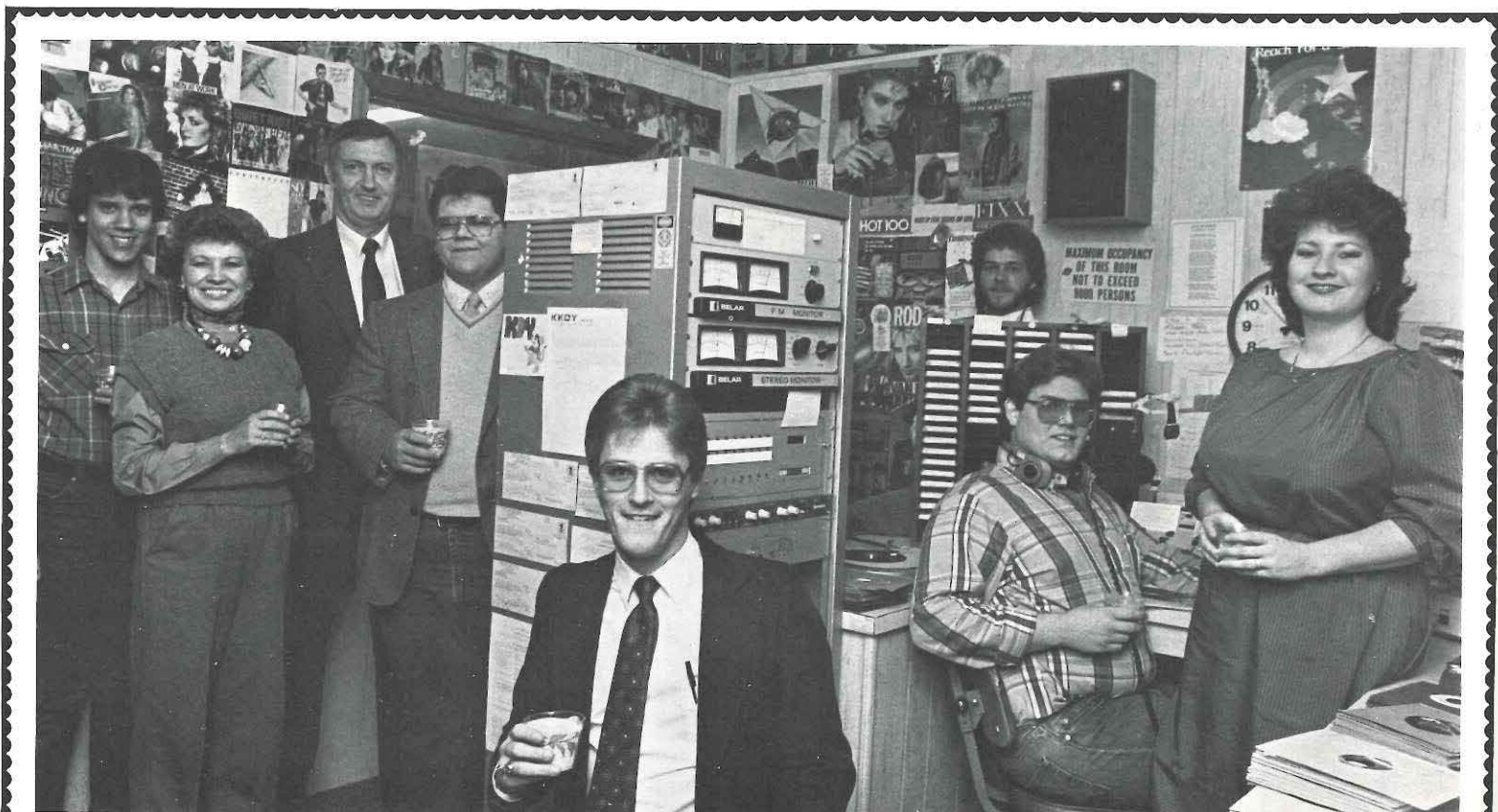
three times with a man on third and less than two outs. And we didn't get them in. If old Campy hadn't got throwed out, there'd have been a little different game on that one. But that's over; that's the way it happened. You can't go back and do it over.

G: You went to the all-star game in 1951. How many other all-star teams were you on?

P: I was on four all-star teams. One year during the war, when I was with Pittsburgh, I was chosen. Then they called the game off because of blackouts and travel. But they did pick the team and that was in 1945. The only year I ever pitched in it was the year it was in Brooklyn in 1951. I pitched the ninth inning. Ewell Blackwell pitched the eighth inning. We'd had a rough game — the National League got beat that year, and they'd used a lot of pitchers. Ewell said, 'Well, Preach, me and you are the only ones left down here, and we're not going to get to pitch.' But they called him in the eighth and me in



the ninth, and that was the only two innings that we got three up and three down. Me and him gloated a little about that. [chuckles]



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1952 World Series souvenirs from the scrapbook of Edna Ducker. Several of Preacher's friends and relatives attended the series which the Dodgers lost seven games to the Yankees.

G: How many World Series were you in?

P: After I was there [in Brooklyn] we went to three World Series, '49, '52, and '53, and we lost all three of them. Then in '55 they won. So I sent them a telegram and said, 'See what happened when you got rid of me?'

This boy who won three games and won the last game, Johnny Podres, he came up as a youngster,

and I felt about halfway responsible for teaching him to pitch. We played the Yankees every year, and you could look on the books and there was no way they could beat us, but they did every year. I started a game each year, and I won two out of three in Series play.

G: Bill Virdon, for example, has made a whole new career out of managing. Did you ever consider coaching or managing?

P: Yes, I considered it. But by the time I retired, I had two boys. One was fourteen and one was eight, and I figured I needed to be with my family more. Managing in those days paid — if you were a major league manager — \$20,000-\$50,000 a year, and if you were a coach, you'd get \$8,000-\$10,000 a year. No more money than you could make out of it, I didn't figure it was worth it. Because I knew to be a big league manager, you've got to go through the training, the minors again. I was offered a AA team to manage or a position as a pitching coach in AAA if I wanted to get back into baseball. Maybe in later years I could have

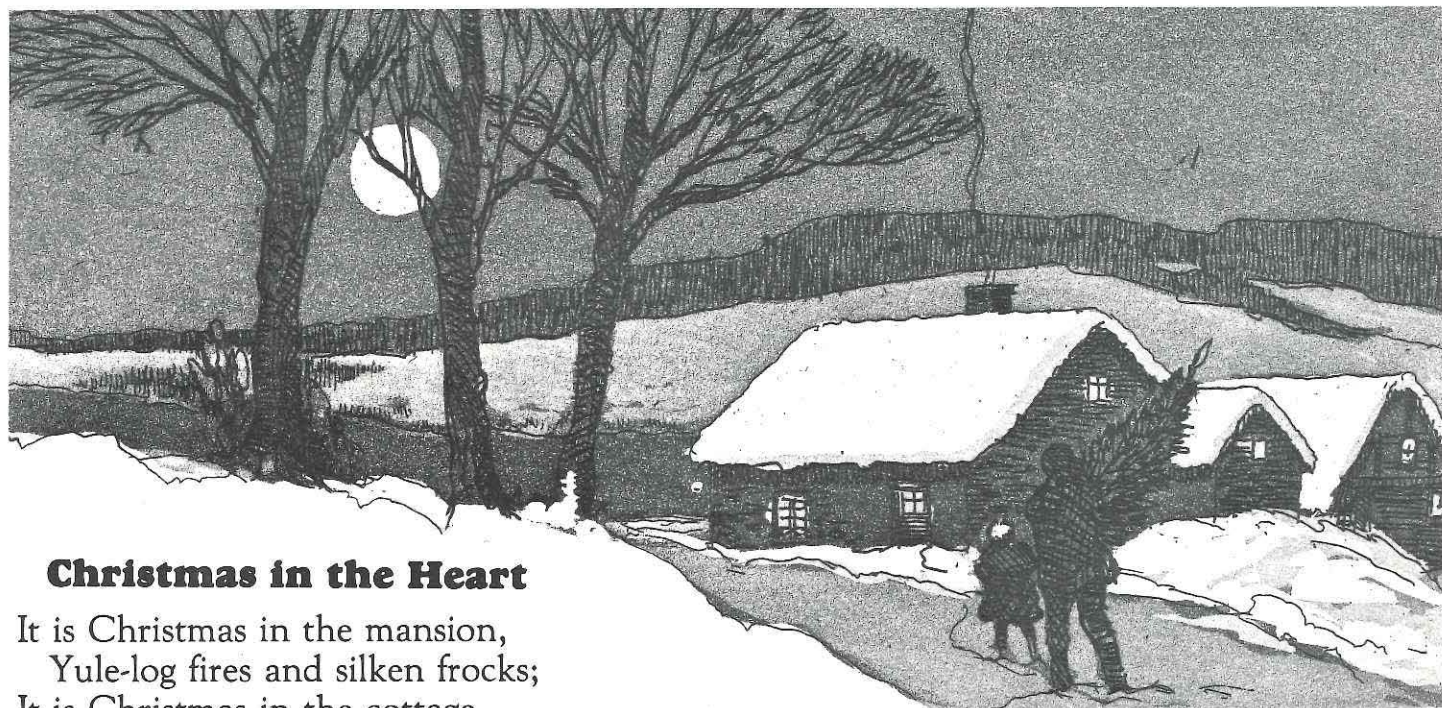
gotten back to the majors, but the two jobs offered to me paid \$8,000-\$9,000 a year.

My wife and I decided when we were through with baseball, we'd be through with it and we'd come on back home. When you go to coming in the house, and the kids say, 'Mommy, who's that man?' It's time to start thinking about staying home.

G: I mentioned Bill Virdon. He was just starting into the majors when you quit in '55. Was there any overlap in your careers?

P: No, I don't think I ever saw Bill play in the majors. One fall I came back to Salem, Arkansas where I used to play a game every year. They'd put some lights down there and the bank loaned the money for the lights if I'd promise to pitch a game every fall when I came home until they were paid for. [Preacher pitched for eight years in the fall at Salem. As a result of his generosity in not accepting payment for his efforts, the ball park in Salem was named after him.]

We'd take a bunch out of West



### Christmas in the Heart

It is Christmas in the mansion,  
Yule-log fires and silken frocks;  
It is Christmas in the cottage,  
Mother's filling little socks.  
It is Christmas on the highway,  
In the thronging, busy mart;  
But the dearest, truest Christmas  
Is Christmas in the heart.

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From left: Preacher Roe, Bill Virdon, John Cordell, Ted Gullic, and Fred Nimmo. At the time of the photo, Mr. Nimmo was the owner of Sass Jewelry. The other gentlemen are West Plains's claims to baseball fame. This photo was evidently taken at a Chamber of Commerce luncheon probably honoring Bill Virdon for being named Rookie of the Year in 1955. Does anyone remember this occasion?

Plains and Salem and pick up just an amateur team around here. I'd be the only professional there, and we'd play a team like out of Melbourne. And of course they used what money we made to pay on the lights.

One year we got there and John Cordell, who was alive then, had taken a boy with him. I didn't know him from Adam, but he played centerfield. Somebody hit one off me. The centerfielder, of course with great ease, caught it. I asked John who he was he said it was Bill Virdon. He was playing in class B ball that year; it was his first year. I wasn't a bit surprised when I did see him come on up.

*Always strongly opinionated about baseball in general (Preacher was featured in an article in the National Observer, companion paper of the Wall Street Journal, in 1963 telling his point of view and predicting the outcome of the World Series that year between the Los*

*Angeles Dodgers and the New York Yankees), Preacher shares his feelings on present-day baseball.*

G: You played in the days before million dollar a year contracts. Has all of this money changed baseball?

P: A little bit. You see, when we played they could tell us — if I wanted to play an exhibition basketball game here in the winter time, I had to get permission. When I taught school and coached, I had to have permission to do that from my team. Now there are so many things going on and players don't have to do anything but get their lawyer.

When we played there were only sixteen teams in the majors in both leagues, and if we didn't produce, they'd go down to a AAA league and get somebody to replace you and you had no say in it. Now then, if a man comes up and stays a couple of years, he can get his lawyer and they can't send him down.

Just put yourself in a ball player's shoes. If you were out there just making a living and you were trying to go, you'd just bust yourself to get this ball that's hit at you. But if you were already a millionaire and was making a million a year and there was nothing they could do about it whether you caught that ball or not, do you think you'd do as good to go get it? Now there's some that aren't that way, but there's a lot of them that are.

Before I go any further, let me say that I don't begrudge a ball player all the money he can get — I don't blame him. They're not worth it, and they shouldn't be getting it, but it's not the ball player's fault, it's the management's fault. The management is crazy to give it to them. No man is worth \$1.8 million a year to play baseball, and then don't put out for it. If they're going to get it, let them put out for it. Well, I'll say Steve Garvey, he'll go for it. Pete Rose will — they're





-courtesy Harding University

Preacher and his wife Mozee display the plaque announcing Preacher's induction into the NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics) in St. Joseph, Missouri, May 27, 1976. Preacher was also inducted into the Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame.

playing because of their pride, and they put it all out. I could name a few more, but I can name you a bunch of them that's not, too. That's what makes me think that it is wrong, the big change in it. Not that they're getting the big money, but it's just that they're not putting out after they get it. They've taken over the game where they can't be made to hustle.

Like I said there were only sixteen major league teams and there were a lot of players for those positions and you played because you loved it. You really had to work hard. If you didn't, you just didn't last.

G: Money is only one of the changes in baseball. Another is the conditions under which you played; how has all of that changed?

P: There's only one field still in use for major league games that I played on. The Chicago Cubs play at Wrigley Field. And I hope it lasts forever because it's so beautiful. Then it was the prettiest field — with the brick wall and the ivy. And they would change the sand on the infield occasionally, and they'd use different colors of sand. It was just

outstanding. No lights there — it was all daytime.

But it's improved, you can't deny it. It's wonderful. It's a good game. It's fast. I don't think we were any better than players now, and I don't think they're any better than we were. I think it's still a good game, but it is a different type of

Pee Wee Reese (left) and Duke Snider (right) with Preacher shortly before his retirement.



game. Now they're going for speed. They've got a lively ball and a smaller strike zone, but I love it. I watch the games ever chance I get on TV, even though I don't travel much.

G: When you think back over your career, what do you remember as the best part of baseball?

P: The best part of my being in baseball was just being in baseball at that time. Baseball at that time was, to me, a great thing. It had for years had kind of a bad name, and they had started trying to clean up the game and make it respectable. And I was part of that. That and being a Brooklyn Dodger and knowing all of the great guys I knew; there were some great guys there. Frankly, I'm proud of the fact that I was on the ground floor of the black men coming into the game, because it was the beginning of an era.

But just look at all the kids that tried to play and never did make it. I just have to think the Lord was good to me to make me able to play. Then that I got the chance to play, and that I was picked after I got the chance. So I can be thankful for much, but generally just that I was able to be a major leaguer.

G



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(Continued from page 5.)

### Pottersville Praises

Enjoyed the "Pottersville Issue" with pictures of my father Gale, my Aunt Helen, and my grandfather Wash Johns. And second time around, Jim Proffitt (and all those other Proffitts!). Take my money, I'm hooked.

Lately I've been doing a little in the area of California Mojave Desert history. If you know of anyone whose family came to California via the 35th Parallel Route in 1860-1890 from Arizona let me know. This route, "The Old Government Road," was missed by the freeways and the railroads so it is still lying there in the sun. Hitch up your wagon (or jeep) and come on out!

Neal Jones  
Oxnard, California

I'm renewing my subscription as I want to be sure of getting each issue of the *Gazette*. I have enjoyed each of them, especially the last one, with the articles about my hometown, Pottersville. Thanks for a wonderful magazine.

Yours for good reading,  
Opal McElmurry  
Pottersville

I sure enjoy the *West Plains Gazette*. I am from the Essary and Deckard families in Missouri. I haven't read much about them in the *Gazette*, but they were probably not close to your area.

I have a distant relative who is also into genealogy and family history. She has Tabor "connections," so I would like to send her Number Twenty-five.

Best regards,  
Evelyn Essary Davis  
Clyde, Texas

### Our Readers Suggest . . .

Would you please do an article on the old Ferguson School located in Sisson Township? I started first grade there in 1924. Miss Elsie Lynch was my teacher. The next year Martha Gilliam was the teacher.

The school was torn down several years ago, but I'm sure there are many still around who attended this school.

I read every article, even the advertisements in the *Gazette*. It takes me home! Keep up the good work.

Lelia Hever Sharp  
Lebanon, Missouri

[We have no pictures of Ferguson School, but would include one in a future issue if someone has one to loan us.]

Here's a story suggestion: the rural schools of Howell County as they were from the early 1900s up to the time of reorganization. Maybe pictures of as many as you can secure and the names and pictures of the people who served as County Superintendent of all these many one-room rural schools. At one time there was around 118 one-room rural schools in Howell County. The philosophy behind their location would be interesting.

Clarence Renfro  
West Plains

You're doing great! Articles and pictures of Willow Springs are very interesting — more would be appreciated. Articles on the railroads and aviation in Howell County would also be interesting.

Don E. Tate  
Jonesburg, Missouri

How about the National Guard company. It was a fixture in West Plains for many years and served on the Mexican border in WWI and so forth. During the 1920s Bob Mullins, Charles Bohrer, Dave Hogan, Leon Pace, and Guy Buck served as commanders. Since so many from West Plains and the surrounding area served in its ranks a story might prove of interest.

Richard W. Simons  
Cornwall, Connecticut

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Regarding articles in future issues, I would like to see the 1930s decade of people, places, and events written up. Maybe you could put something together on the singing conventions in People's Park; believe this was touched on when Speck Rhodes was featured.

Pictures of Washington Avenue, the Davis Theatre on West Main, in other words, nostalgia of the 30s — the way it was!

Robert Atkins  
Brea, California

[The Gazette would love to have pictures from the era you mention — especially one of any of the theatres, but so far we've had no luck in locating such photos. Remember, even "snapshots" are fine as long as they are good and clear. We can enlarge or reduce a picture to any size we need.]

### Follow-ups

Thanks for the spiffy designer graphics used to enhance my Gazette correspondence. The title art you gave my earthquake essay on page 20 of issue Number 25 is so terminal-looking I got scared all over again.

Now I need a good laugh. Please send Number 24 to Kenneth Saber, of Watertown, New York. In a few months it will be 50

years since we ignorant young punks picked an apple harvest in Wenatchee, Washington during the Great Depression . . . at 4' a lug . . . and lucky to get that . . .

From a helpful postmaster in Watertown, I recently obtained Ken's current address, after all this time! It will be fun — if my picker pal remembers me — to surprise him with my "Uneasy Rider" essay in Number 24. (Hopefully he'll ask for other back issues — thus saving me a lot of scribbling to explain my wandering years since Wenatchee.)

Assuming you'll stand by your offer on page 7 of Number 25 Gazette, I hope you (or readers) can help me get in touch with Harry Brown; Catherine Burkhart (long married in Illinois, I believe); Noel Crick; Marshall Morgan; Mark Magnet; the Sample brothers (who lived with "old lady Sample" down the hill from Gebert's terraced home on Locust Street. The brothers preferred to read rather than roam with me, so I wonder if they turned into crazies.); and Harry White, son of the Reverend Harry White.

I don't roam so much any more, but my mind does. I almost forgot to mention your important "Earthquake Preparedness" and interview following my New Madrid Fault account (pages 25-27). Therein I found only one other fault. Folks living in and around New Madrid should have been urged to protect their homes with quake insurance. I remembered to say in Number 25 that in the long haul (*the longer the haul the better!*) that earthquakes and volcanoes are good for us; but I forgot to say insurance and apples are also salubrious.

Herman Quick  
11848 Mayfield Ave.  
Brentwood Heights  
Los Angeles, CA 90049

[Sorry Herman, we can't help you this time around — none of the folks you mention are in our subscription files. Maybe some of our readers can help.]

*After leaving White Church Sister Mary Kelly, one of the Daughters of Charity who taught at the White Church Catholic School in the 1930s, corresponded with Mr. Floyd Shoemaker, secretary of the State Historical Society of Missouri, regarding White Church. The following excerpt about Christmas at White Church was recorded in a letter dated April 21, 1941.*

-courtesy of the State Historical Society of Missouri

We read of the stories of Bethlehem but Christmas midnight Mass and the singing of the Christmas carols the year of 1937, was as near Bethlehem as could ever be in this whole country. A never-to-be-forgotten night. A beautiful moonlight casting its soft mellow rays upon the little village; the country folks coming along the road in groups, the children running ahead of them, their shadows dancing in the moonlight as all hasten onward to the stone church filling its capacity above measure; while the sheep silently graze in the fields across the village road. It was truly inspiring. The newly organized mixed choir sang the carols and the Mass composed by Father Cloud, especially arranged for Christmas: the children of the primary grade sang three carols all their own. The "Gloria in Excelsis Deo" of that great night was not less heard in heaven than was the very first: "Glory to God in the Highest."



Another Gazette and more memories. I just had to write and tell you the picture of the office in the Reed-Harlin Company is so good. The unidentified one is Helen Luna. Would you believe just as I was writing this the phone rang and it was Helen Luna calling to chat a few minutes. She lives in Memphis. I told her about the picture.

It was not known as Wood and Reed, but my grandfather, J.R. Reed, had a store in Gainesville, Missouri with his uncle named Wood.

Thanks for another great edition of the Gazette — I love them and have every copy.

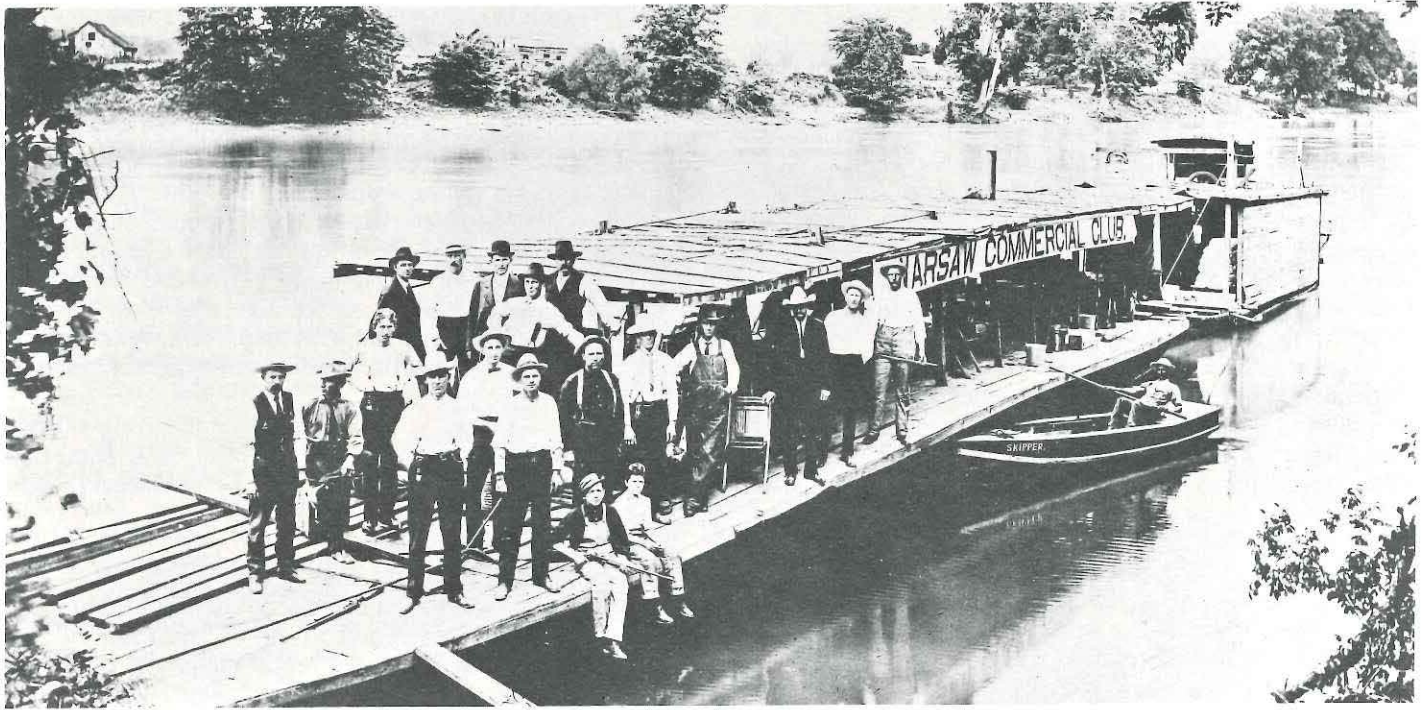
Mrs. J.E. Hard  
West Plains

P.S. The picture on the last page of the last Gazette shows the Maxwell dealership. There is a little boy sitting on the fender of one of the cars; did you know that's Dail Allen?

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This picture was taken in 1912 at the boat landing in Linn Creek. The Commercial Club made trips to many communities along the Osage River as a business venture and to thank the people for their continued trading with businesses in Warsaw.

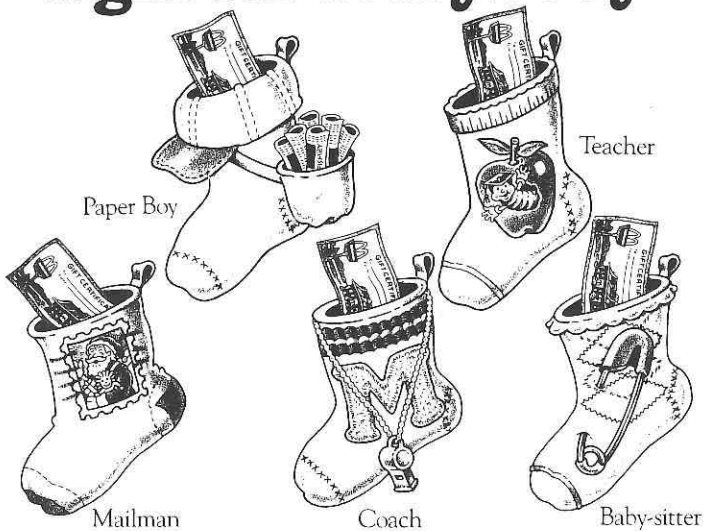
Now, Warsaw was a rail terminal on the Missouri Pacific Railroad and practically all freight shipments to that area were consigned to Warsaw by rail, and the English Brothers (Warsaw) made the continuing deliveries by barge, up and down the river. Warsaw also had several large businesses both wholesale and retail which shipped merchandise to the area. This picture was one of the barges converted to a passenger boat for the trips.

When the Bagnell Dam was built the Osage and its tributaries formed Lake of the Ozarks. By that time highways were being built and the trucking industry began to take over so both rail and barge deliveries eventually began to wither and die. Incidentally the boat landing where the picture was taken is now deep in the lake. Linn Creek and many other towns along the river were re-located to higher ground.

You may recognize one of the boat passengers — I am the fifteen-year-old guy with feet dangling over the side (not the one with the rifle). The tall man second from right was my father, his Honor, the Mayor of Warsaw.

Dick Shadburne

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## Merry Christmas from all of us



John Gid & Cherry Morrison  
with granddaughter Megan Stauffer

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In the #24 edition of the *Gazette* Herman Quick writes about his journeys bumming on the railroad systems of our country. Now I have not had the vast experience that Herman has had but still have had my travels too.

When I was fifteen I had an uncle Charley Crockett who lived in Thayer. He was an engineer for the Kansas City, Fort Scott & Memphis Railroad and frequently I caught the local freight and went to Thayer to ride around on the switch engine with uncle Charley. Later on I took several trips up Springfield way. I wasn't mad at any one but just wanted to do my thing, so when a freight stopped for water in West Plains I found myself a place to ride and sometimes was gone for several days. I was always broke but managed to get a meal now and then. One trip I shall not forget a boy by the name of Bell told me he had a letter from his uncle in Oklahoma City who was a foreman in a glass factory and they had a hard time getting employees to stay on the job account of the extreme heat. I asked if I could get a job and the answer was yes but Bell told me he didn't have any money and I was in the same fix so I says lets just catch a freight train and bum our way.

The next freight that stopped we got on and I told Bell at Springfield we would get off at the Junction as the freights went over to North Springfield and we would walk up Water St. to the passenger Depot and maybe catch a passenger train.

When we arrived at the passenger station a train was loading passengers so we walked up on the opposite side of the train and hid out in the dark (as it was after dark) and as soon as the conductor hollered all aboard we ran over and climbed on the front of the engine. That was a bad mistake as it was early fall and a bit cool riding there.

Away out in the country the train stopped for water and the engineer got down with his oilcan and torch and started to oil around and when he crossed in front of the engine he spotted us and asked 'Where in this world did you kids get on?' I told him Springfield. He said well here is where you get off. Don't you know if we had hit a cow or horse you would be killed. Now never get on the front of an engine again.

We walked back on the fireman's side in the dark and I told Bell, 'When the fireman drops that tank hook we'll get on just behind the engine.' And we did.

Now I told Bell that up ahead was a town called Monnett and I was told the Railroad Bulls (police) were really tough so I told him to get off as soon as I did and we would walk away from the track about three blocks then turn left and go about four blocks, then return to the track. But if we are stopped by any bulls I told Bell to keep his mouth closed and let me do the talking and I would act like a country bumpkin and we may fool them.

Four blocks later our luck ran out and up loomed two bulls. They started to ask questions and Bell loudmouthed off and got tough. It was pitch dark and I was kicking his shin to get him to shut up, but he was really running off at the mouth, and I knew it, and you guessed it — we landed in the slammer. They put us in separate cells and gave us each two heavy wool blankets and there was a large coal burning heater in the hallway so we had a warm sleep.

Next morning they came and got Bell first and I told him I would meet him at the stockyards just west of town. Finally after about a half hour they came after me and took me up before the Justice of the Peace. He was a kind old man and gave me a lecture about bumming around and I should go back home so with my fingers crossed behind my back I promised to go home.

He also told me to stay away from Bell as he was a tough nut and we would get into every slammer in any town we went to.

I walked out to the stockyard and there Bell sat on a cross tie. I walked up and kicked his rear and said, you big blabber mouth, if you had kept still we might just be in Oklahoma City now but they know we are headed west and will be watching so we will haft to get so far out the train will be going too fast for us to get on. Well Bell started to cry saying he was homesick and wanted to go back home.

I told him it was the best idea he ever had and I would go back with him past Springfield. So arriving in Springfield we got off at

the west junction and walked down the track to the depot. Up on College street was a chili joint and it was about two o'clock in the morning and we hadn't had a bite of food since leaving home so we went into the place and I asked the man on duty if he had any job we could do to get a bite to eat. He started to give us a lecture about bums, and I said we want work and started out but he told us to come back and he would give us a bowl of chili.

We walked down Water Street to the junction and waited for a freight going south and about four o'clock we caught one going our way and I got off at Mountain Grove and started walking south intending to walk to Rockbridge where my Grandfather John Edwards lived. I stayed with them for a week then walked back to Mountain Grove thirty miles and caught a freight home.

Sincerely,  
J. L. (Jim) Edwards  
Modesto, California

Received the Spring 1984 issue of the *Gazette*, which I enjoyed very much, but wanted to correct an identification on page 11 under a picture of the Endicott store. The Endicott that you characterize as Jim Endicott's brother-in-law is really his half-brother. Both sons of Samuel Endicott. John's mother was Mary George and Jim's was Elizabeth Dent. My grandmother's mother, Mary Lucretia Endicott, was a niece of the two gentlemen.

Dolores Hibbert  
Napa, California



Back row: Bud Jones, Jim Morgan, Willie Anderson, Earl Doolt, Prof. Harvey Webb (Coach), Mark Springer, Henry Gilruth. Front row: Jim Ellis, Earl Evans, Claude Shock, R. Galloway, Fritz Neimem, Will Cochran.

Herewith a picture of the West Plains College football team in 1901 of which my father was a member. The names of the players are on the accompanying sheet. An inquiry was made about this in the Number 24 issue on page 22.

Dorothy Mantz Walt's letter also made mention of the Fife and Drum Corps connected with Col. Torrey's bid for the U.S. Senate. This is found on page 73 of issue Number 23. The other two members were Sam Winkleblack, snare drum and Joe Trimble, bass drum. I substituted once or twice on the drums when one of the others was unable to attend.

George N. Morgan  
Perryville, Missouri



First row: Dan McMurtrey, Bob McGoldrick, Orva Walker, Hubert Hopkins, Harry McGoldrick, Richard Trump, and Nolan Proffitt. 2nd row: Ivone Riley, Lois Riley, John Harris, John McCrory, Virgil Melons, and Pauline McKee (Brookshier). 3rd row: Grace Davis, Dale Cole, Winsted Wright, Edna Hopkins, and Mary Gatewood. Fourth row: Edith Sukow (Harris), Hazel Oldfield (Thomas), Zeta Harris (Lowe), Mildred Bise (McGoldrick), Mrs. Baily, Nadene Harrison (Cox), Austin Hamilton, and Hazel Trump. Fifth row: Grace West, Mildred Patillo (Amyx), Sylvia Gatewood, Beulah Pattillo (Davis), Fern Hopkins, O.V. Langston, and Tyler Wilson.



The Pottersville school group picture shown on page 47 of *Gazette* Number 25 includes O.V. Langston, but all you can see is the top of his head! The group photos on this page include O.V. and several of his other classmates not shown in the other school group.



Front row: Ina Pentecost, Dale Cole, Pauline McKee. Back row: Corbet Tabor, O.V. Langston, and Nolan Proffitt.

On page 50 of *Gazette* #25 is a picture of the Langston family. One of the sons pictured was inadvertently left out of the identification. On the front row, second from right is Roy C. Langston, Roy's son, Lyle, brought the omission to our attention.



### HERE WE GROW AGAIN!

In 1985 Aid Hardware will be 100 years old. One of the ways we're celebrating is by establishing our first "branch" store in Willow Springs. The picture at left was taken earlier this year at our grand opening.

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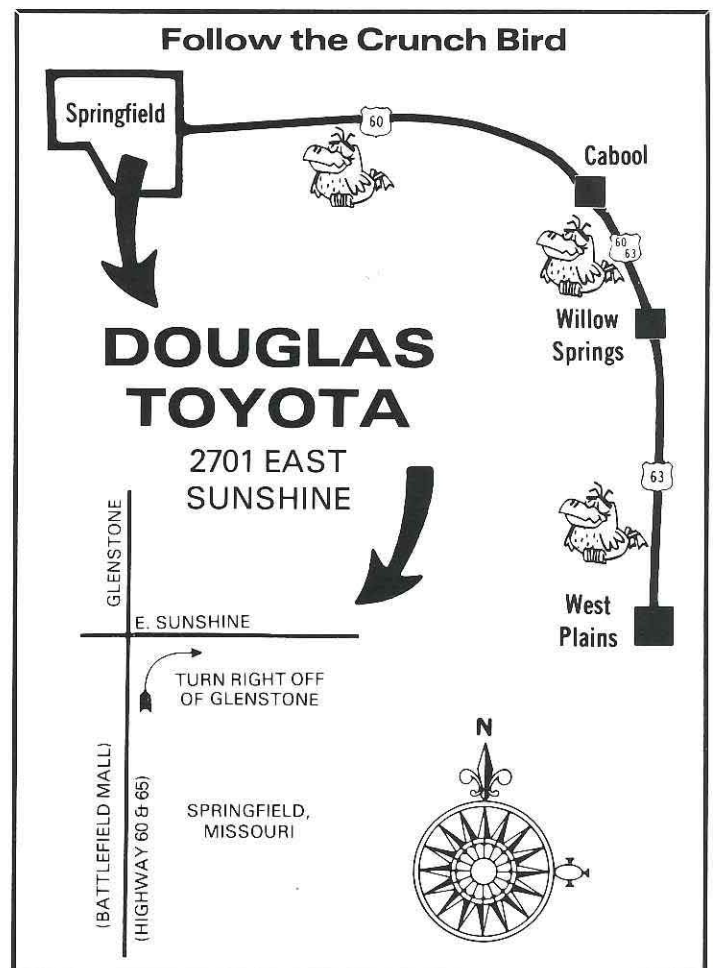
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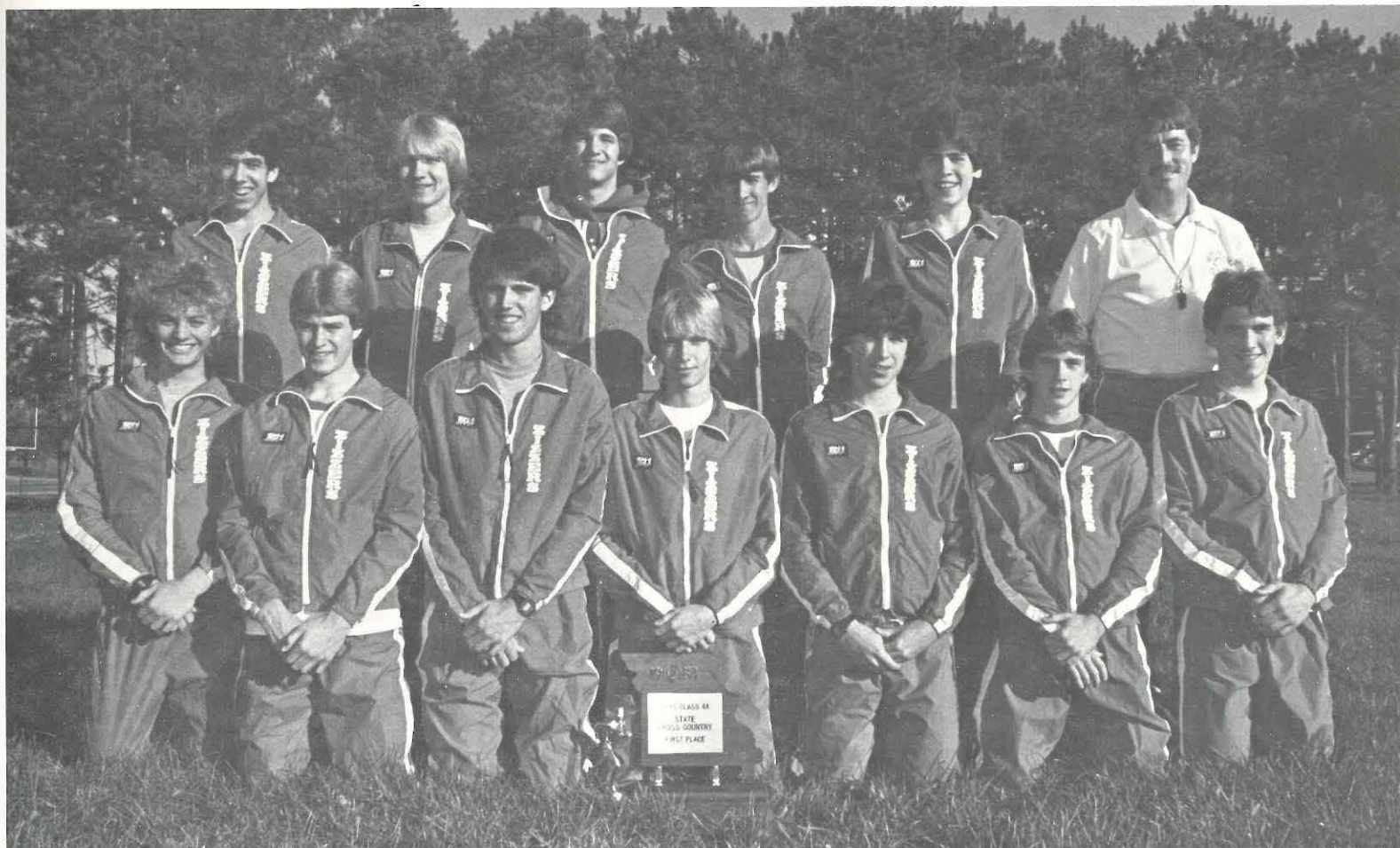


photo by Bob Fleming

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Front row from left: Art Bentley, Derek Hacke, Tim Waggoner, Jon Hatley, Mark Stasney, Paul Cross, Tim Cross.  
 Back row: Mark McElmurry, Marvin Hatley, Peter Kraft, Roy Longnecker, Lee Allen, Coach Joe Bill Dixon.

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