

The cover of the magazine 'The Chariton Collector' features a photograph of a white, Gothic Revival style church with a prominent steeple and a smaller dome. In the foreground, a large, dark, rectangular gravestone with a cross on top stands on a textured base. The church is behind a chain-link fence, and the scene is set in a grassy field under a cloudy sky.

THE CHARITON COLLECTOR

**NORTHEAST MISSOURI
HISTORY AND FOLKLORE**

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This, our second issue of *The Chariton Collector*, is a continuation of our efforts to share the highlights of our history projects.

The development of the oral history library at Kirksville Senior High School has become not only an academic project, but a partnership between the subjects of our interviews, the students and the community.

The intensity to which some of the students become involved demonstrates a deep and lasting union with their heritage and the beginnings of a search for their personal identity.

Our hope is that we are providing a means to communicate and therefore strengthen our understanding of the very rich heritage of this place we call home.

Carol Trowbridge

Table of Contents

It All Started with the Irish Immigrants 2
By Bobby Poston

Wart Spookin' 7
By Pam Rogers and Darla Scott

Setting the Woods on Fire 8
By Teresa Hays

The Srnka House 10
By Jill James

Gangster Connections? 12
By Ellen James

The World's 10-Inch Genius 16
By Carla Coy and Shari Hatter

Elliott Schoolhouse 18
By Karla Tade and Darla Casady

Tombstones Tell the Story 20
By Jane Lintner and Renea Scott

Northeast Missouri Folklore 22
The Foreshadow of Death
The Lamp That Went Out
Jesus is Coming

Ghosts in Northeast Missouri 23
By Karla Tade

Figges's Bottle House 24
By Bonnie Bethel and Marilyn Gregory

Cover Photo

Pictured on the front cover is St. Mary's Catholic Church, the story of which begins on Page 2. Photograph by Carol Trowbridge.



It all started with the Irish Immigrants

By Bobby Poston

It stands alone now, towering over the forgotten town of Adair, Missouri, watching decades pass, bringing change and loneliness. The St. Mary's Church is the last of the surviving pioneers and landmarks of Adair. And to someone who has ever attended mass in St. Mary's in earlier years, the feeling is definitely of loneliness.

But Adair has a history dating back before the church that stands now was built. It dates back to the 1840's. The first Catholic settlers in the area were Irish people who fled from Ireland due to the Potato Famine in the 1840's. These Irish people settled in Perry County, Ohio. Later they moved into the Edina, Missouri, area. From here they started moving north and west into the area that is now Adair, located 12 miles east on Highway 11. After the Civil War, an Irish lawyer named Clancy started sending back editorials to the newspapers in Ohio, urging settlers to move to this new area.

The first Catholic service was held in Adair by Father McNamee in 1844. He traveled by horseback from Edina and carried a portable altar with him. The Daniel McGonigle house served as the church until 1869, when the first log cabin church was built. It was at this time they were assigned their first residing priest, Father Ryan, who served until 1880.

Father O'Shea was stationed in Adair in 1880 and it was here he stayed for 26 years. He came from the village of Limerick, Ireland, in a county called Adare, and this was the only parish he served in after arriving in America from Ireland, to start his priesthood in a new country. The twenty-six years he served were called the "Golden Era" of the parish because it was at this time that the present church was built. This church was built on the same design as the church Father O'Shea came from in Ireland. He was a famed fox hunter and had about ten foxhounds around the rectory at Adair.

The cemetery of Adair was laid out in the late 1860's. This land (a total of five acres) was donated by Michael C. Cody, who played an active role in the settlement of Adair. Mr. Cody plotted the village of Adair in 1879, and Thomas J. Dockery surveyed it. The original obituary of Michael Cody reads as follows:

Obituary

Cody—At his home in Adair on October 30, 1901, Michael C. Cody aged 70 years, 5 months, 29 days.

In the death of Mr. Cody, Adair County lost another of its pioneer settlers, one of the men who settled here when the country was almost a wilderness, and one who did his full

share toward making improvements that would invite other settlers to come among them.

Mr. Cody was born in Fairfield County, Ohio, May 1st, 1831. He followed steamboats between St. Louis and New Orleans until 1853, when he went overland to California. In 1855 he returned to Missouri and located in Adair County. For forty-six years he lived on the land, he at the time entered. In 1857 he was married to Mary E. Cook. His wife, four daughters, and four sons survive him. He was a consistent member of the Catholic church, and took an active part in founding the large Catholic settlement around Adair, and in building and improving the church property at that place. He was a good man and a good neighbor. He will be mourned by many outside of his family.

One by one these old fathers are laying down their burdens on the shore of the silent river. The veil is drawn, but we know they have gone to their reward.

The remains were interred in St. Mary's cemetery at Adair, Rev. Fr. O'Shea conducting the services.



This is the tombstone of Michael C. Cody, the plotter of the town of Adair.

The church of present day was built by John Bartwarth of Edina. It was constructed in 1904-1905 at a cost of \$10,000. The lumber was hauled in by railroad to Baring, and from Baring by wagons and buggies to Adair. The church stands on a limestone and brick foundation, and the framework is constructed of pine wood. The original roofing material was wooden shake, but later replaced by asphalt shingles. It has since been replaced by the original wooden shingles. The bell tower is 50 feet in height shaped in a rectangular form. This tower used to stand 90 feet in height but was destroyed in a severe storm many years ago. The bell is located in the northwest tower. The following inscription is found on this bell:

Cast by H. Stuckstede and Co.
St. Louis
To the Blessed Virgin
By the People of
St. Mary's Congregation
Adair, Mo.
May 1891

The interior of this unique church is just that: "unique." The woodwork on the inside is of pine and the floor is of yellow pine, with the wainscoting being of the same material. The inside walls are of galvanized tin, hammered into Florentine design. The stained glass windows are another attraction to St. Mary's since they were made in an old method long since passed into oblivion. The frames in which these windows are set are handmade pine arches. The choir loft is located to the back of the church and is entered by stairs at the side entrance. The loft is supported by four pillars.

Another amazing feature found in this "little country church" is that the lighting fixtures are of Tiffany design. And still the most beautiful attraction in the church is one of the many statues in it. The statue is called "The Sorrowful Mother" and is most impressive due to its rarity. Only three were ever reproduced from the original, which is located in Rome, Italy. This particular statue was donated by Mrs. W.L. Leonard, of Denver, Colorado, in 1904 or 1905. (This lady was an aunt of one of the residents of Adair.) Every one of



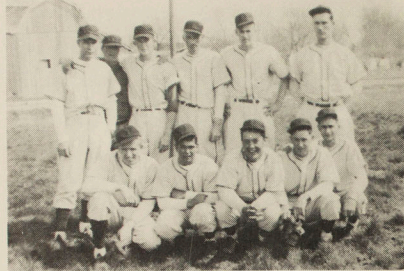
Tiffany light fixtures, rare statues and handmade pine window frames decorated the interior of St. Mary's Catholic Church. The inside walls are of galvanized tin hammered into Florentine design.



It all started with the Irish Immigrants

the statues, windows, etc., were donated by people of the parish.

After the completion of the church the parish enjoyed a time of prosperity and stability for the next ten to fifteen years. It was at this time the town of Adair was at its climax; several commercial establishments had sprung up, the population numbered well over 400, a Catholic school was built, and by now several missions had branched off from St. Mary's including Kirksville and Baring. But when World War I hit, a major recession followed. At this time there was a general out-migration from rural communities and a general decline in the economic health of the nation. St. Mary's was similarly affected by this recession and the parish population began to decline.



The Adair baseball team was organized in the late 1940's. Kneeling, left to right, are Gerald Crow, center field; Kenneth James, third base; Boyd James, catcher; Eddy Cowen, utility man; and Max Richardson, left field. Standing are Buddy Allen, second base; Jack Breen, shortstop; John Poston, first base; Richard Poston, pitcher; and Ray Ambrosia, right field.

The business circle of the 1880's consisted of the following: Dr. J. M. Morah, druggist and physician; Clark Brothers, general store; Poncelot & Co., sawmill; Miss Kate Welch, millinery; N. D. Smith, flouring mill; McClanahan Brothers, game dealers; Charles McGonigle, stock dealer; J. Moran, livery; Michael Moran, shoemaker; Patrick O'Donnell, notary; F. J. Poncelot, wagonmaker; Rogerson and Poncelot, contractors; B. F. Wilson, hoop maker; N. H. Tupper, hotel keeper, and D. W. Clark, postmaster.

Some of the local landowners of Adair and the adjoining area were listed in this following paper clipping:

J. L. Rollison, Peter O'Donnell, Thomas Welch, Richard Barnes, D. Monroe, M. C. Cody, Thomas P. Richardson, B. Ludden, Daniel McGonigle, L. J. Ainsley, J. and R. Zollinger, M. Eagen, Jessie Roscuc, D. Drake, Charles Fisher, A. G. Parker, P. C. Markey, Dan Hall, T. Flynn, M. Quinn, M. Killday, John H. Rainier, Thomas Reardon, J. V. Counson, Eugene Papin, and John Cody.

Of the old settlers, there are only one or two living. It might be said that there was never a more noble set of men and women than resided in the Adair settlement, ever ready to help in sickness and misfortune.

Adair started out as a diocese of St. Louis, then became part of the St. Joseph diocese, then part of the Jefferson City diocese. Father O'Shea rode horseback from Adair to Kirksville and held services in the home of Dr. Quinn until the parish of Kirksville was founded. The original parish extended from Macon County to the Iowa State Line, and from the Chariton River east to the Clark and Lewis County lines and bordered the Edina parish on the southwest.

The coming of the Sante Fe Railroad and the development of the town of Baring, Mo., divided the town of Adair and its parish. The declining agriculture population in Adair was the cause of losing the school in 1925. In 1942 under Father Newman, there were 30 people in the parish. In 1958, St. Mary's became a mission of Mary Immaculate in Kirksville.

Every town has to have a baseball team and Adair wasn't to be left out. In 1947 John and Richard Poston, residents of Adair, organized the first team. The suits were made of wool and the baseball field was located in an open field south of the cemetery. The Adair team visited surrounding towns like Brashear, Hurdland, etc. and also hosted games. The expenses were met by passing a collection basket through the crowd at each home game.

In 1949 the team diminished as a result of the town's population decline.



Located 15 miles east of Kirksville, St. Mary's Catholic Church provides an interesting blend of architectural styles. The church was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

In 1971 Father Buchanan, priest in Kirksville, sent an ultimatum for the survival of St. Mary's Church. The following is one of the paragraphs that appeared in the letter Father Buchanan sent to Adair:

It has become impossible for Kirksville to serve Adair on Sundays for the following reasons:

1. The income in Adair has been steadily dropping for the past four years.
2. There is a need for five masses in Kirksville now. The two priests can serve the five masses and one at Novinger, but can say no more than three apiece on any one day.
3. The income at Adair has become so little that the church cannot be kept in shape for the proper worship of God and the necessary income for the service of the church.
4. There has been a tremendous scarcity of priests which will continue for a long time.

In December 1972, the announcement was made that masses would discontinue for the winter, but were never held

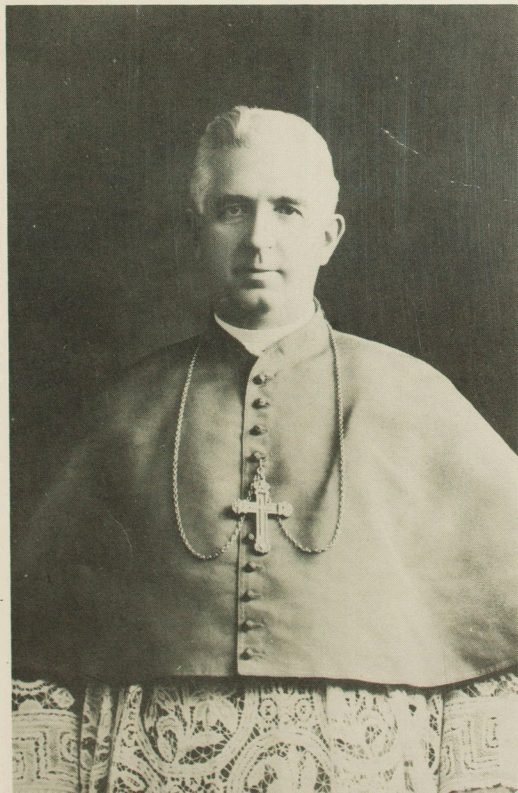
again. At this time the congregation consisted of five couples of retiring age, seven men and women whose mates were deceased or who had never married, and four children. In 1973 the rectory was sold for \$3,000.

On December 16, 1974, St. Mary's Church was placed on the National Register of Historical Places due to its significant architectural design. A nonprofit corporation was formed and received its charter on May 9, 1975, from the State of Missouri under the name of "Friends of St. Mary's Church of Adair, Missouri, Inc."

On July 12, 1976, Bishop Michael McAuliffe of the diocese of Jefferson City deeded the church to the Friends of St. Mary's. If the church is not maintained it will be removed from the National Historic Register and will revert back to the Catholic Diocese.

It has stood too long and has seen too much time pass to let this unique piece of architecture die. It stands now, waiting for the day when its doors will be reopened and services can be held again.

This is one of the earlier priests at St. Mary's Catholic Church. His identity is unknown. Note the style of robes worn by the priests in this time period.

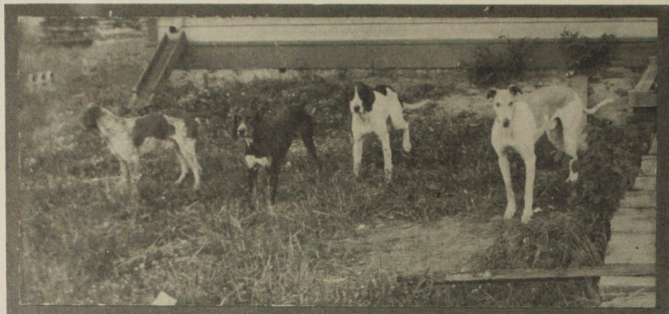


The following is a list of priests stationed in Adair:

1876	Father Daly
1878	Father Madden
1878-1880	Father Ryan
1880-1906	Father O'Shea
1906-1913	Father McGovern
1913	Father Kearful
1914-1919	Father Connolly
1919	Father Vawter
1920-1922	Father McNeil
1923-1925	Father Grace
1925-1929	Father Carew
1930	Father Coughlin
1931	Father Barrett
1932	Father Mallen
1934-1936	Father McEvory
1936-1939	Father Carew (Baring)
1939-1942	Father Donovan
1942-1956	Father Newman
1957	Father O'Rourke (Mission of Kirksville)
1957-1958	Father Aldeman
1958	Father Kenney
	Father Yehle
1962	Father Bobay
	Father Bestgen
	Father Buchanan



It all started with the Irish Immigrants



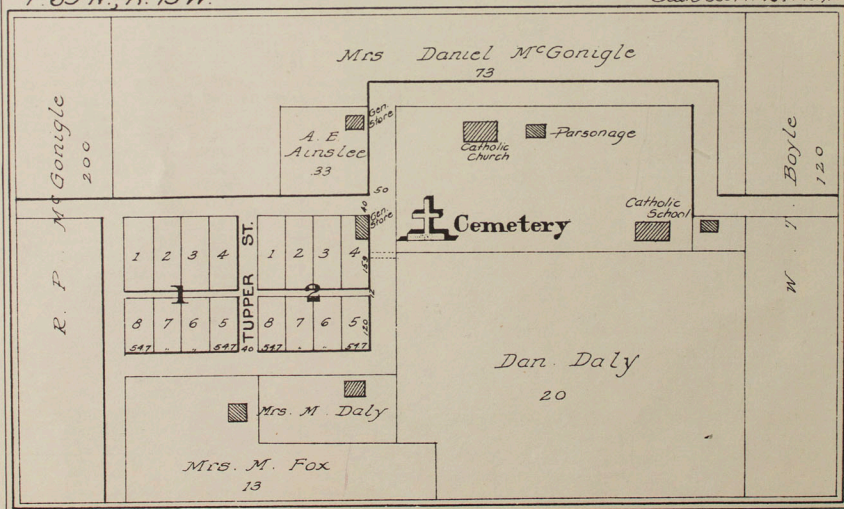
Left, Father O'Shea kept these foxhounds during his years in Adair. He was a famed fox hunter and kept about 10 hounds. The map below is the town plat from an Adair County Atlas showing the location of the church, parsonage and cemetery in relation to the rest of the settlement.

ADAIR

LOCATED IN SECTION 20

T. 63 N., R. 13 W.

Scale 300ft to 1 inch.



WART SPOOKIN'

By Pam Rogers

"I can't take nothin' for it and I don't want 'em to thank me or nothin', or it won't work." Those were the words of my great-uncle, Arthur Steele, trying to explain, without giving away the secret of how it's done, how he "spooks" warts. He says it was "given" to him by an old Indian Chief in Bellfoose, South Dakota, when he was twenty-one years old.

To "just forget it" might be the easiest way to get rid of a wart. Uncle Arthur says he just has to put his finger on it and you have to forget about it and not look at it for three days. After the three days are up, the wart should be gone. Unless, of course, you gave him something for doing it, such as just thanking him. Then the wart will not go away and it will have to be spooked all over.

If Uncle Arthur wants to continue spooking warts he can't tell anyone how it's done. When he feels he's ready to pass it along, he will tell one person and then he will no longer be able to remove warts, but whoever he tells will, until they tell someone else.

He and his wife Lola have been married for thirty-four years, and have one son, Rick, who is thirty. They also have two dogs named Missy and Ringo that stay with them in the house. When you knock on the front door, Ringo jumps up on it and pulls the curtain back to see who's out there. Meanwhile, Missy jumps up on the couch and covers herself up with a blanket and goes to sleep. Uncle Arthur says he's even taken a wart off of Missy!

He says that he's probably spooked about four thousand warts and he gets asked to do it a lot.

His wife, Lola, tells us how he removed a wart from her. She said he put his finger on it and "did whatever it is he does" and in three days it was gone. Lola says they have been married for thirty-four years and he hasn't even told her how he does it! So chances are he won't tell anyone else for quite awhile.

I guess that means you're out of luck if you want to learn how to spook warts, because chances are that anyone who knows how will not tell until they get good and ready. And Arthur Steele is not ready yet!

If you are not so fortunate as to know someone who spooks warts, there are other ways to get rid of them. There is no guarantee that any of them will work, but how will you know until you try? Some are listed below:

- Cut long fingernails and plant them in the ground. Then the wart or warts will go away.
- Put well water on the wart or warts after the water has set out for about one day.
- Put a tea bag on the wart or warts for three days and nights and they will go away.
- Someone can buy your wart by rubbing a penny on it and then returning the penny to the person.
- Rub chalk on the wart.
- Wish a wart away.
- Put a dead black cat in a graveyard at midnight.

Cures compiled by Pam Athon and Paula Murray



Arthur Steele has an unusual talent—the ability to “spook” warts. He is pictured here with his wife, Lola, and their two dogs, Missy and Ringo. Mr. Steele has not only removed a wart from Lola, he even cured Missy of the problem once!

**Interview by
Pam Rogers and
Darla Scott**

Setting the Woods on Fire



**We cast at dawn,
Sit and listen
Sometimes until the full moon glistens.
We may even stay
Till the next mornin's light
And the hounds return with
A victory on high.**

—Unknown

A nice cool night when there's a south breeze with a heavy dew on the ground, is a night when the houndmen can be found in the hills listening to their foxhounds "setting the woods on fire."

Mr. Leland Hays of Kirksville, Missouri is one of those men who has enjoyed the benefits of hunting. He was just eight years old when he got his first foxhound, and at 64, he has had hounds a long time! He was encouraged by Harry Farr who was his first school teacher. This was the same man who gave Leland his hound, hoping that he would take fox hunting up as a hobby, and he did. Leland's mom and dad didn't mind his having hounds as long as he took care of them. He did a fine job of it too. Back around 1924, the "houndmen" fed their dogs cornbread and mush and cracklings. Nowadays they are fed just plain dogfeed out of a can or bag. Mr. Hays does feed his hounds some raw meat, too. This feed does cost, but it makes no difference to a "true foxhunter." Mr. Hays hunted, back then, with many of the "old timers," such as Merl Bragg, Willard Cook, and many, many others.

Leland says a good foxhound has an arched back, good long ears that will reach around to the end of his nose, and one that stands on his toes. A good hound has "good feet" so that its feet do not get sore from running.

There are two grades of hounds, registered, and grade dogs. Registered dogs are those with "birth certificates," as Mr. Hays calls them, showing the dog's past generations from as far back as three to nine or ten generations. They didn't used to register cross-bred dogs, but they do now. In Leland's opinion, neither grade of dog is best, just as long as they "have something between their ears."

Leland recalls the times when they rode hunting on horseback and the hounds simply followed. They didn't have dog boxes or trucks to haul them in so the dogs were trained to follow. They would go straight to the hills, get off their horses, and set and listen to the hounds "setting the woods on fire." The hunters rarely hunted fox back then for an income; it was strictly for "pleasure." The fox furs brought \$2 to \$3 each then. This doesn't buy much now, but back then, as Leland recalls, you could buy a pair of overalls for 98¢, shoes for 98¢, and a sheep-lined jacket and a pair of insulated underwear for 98¢. Even though the money may have

been needed for the family, the hunters didn't kill the fox then because there were only about six in all of Adair County and there was nothing else to hunt because coyotes weren't even here yet. They only migrated in about 10 or 12 years ago.

A foxhorn was used on the hunts too. The horns were made by getting a cow or goat horn, hanging it up to let the core fall out, then shaping a mouthpiece which would be blown into to make a "hollow sound." They were used to call the hounds from the hunt. They are very difficult to blow. Leland says you just have to "get the hang of it."

There are several breeds of dogs. Some of them are Trig, July, Walker and Goodman, just to name a few. Leland's favorite, or his "No. 1 Choice," is the Walker. He says that, in his opinion, they have more strength and durability, and more "common sense," a good mouth, and speed. Leland likes a hound with a "high toned" mouth, and one that can be picked out of a pack of hounds when running. These dogs are favored highly.



Nowadays, foxhounds will run fox, deer, and coyotes. It is said that deer are "pests," and the hunters want their hounds to run either fox or coyote, and Leland says that "if they do run something besides these, I won't own them in the morning." You can tell what the hounds are running by the way they bark, or by the way that the game is running. A coyote runs a big circle, whereas the fox will tend to run a tighter circle. Leland says that for all he knows, the deer "just runs into the blue."

If the hounds get too close to the fox or coyote he runs into a "den." There are quite a few dogs that will not fight the game any longer. Mr. Hays gives the explanation for this as being not because the dogs are no good, but because there isn't any game that will run for a lengthy amount of time. They aren't supposed to destroy the game. It is also said that

a good hound will run anything, even deer, but they will not stay on it too long before they'll come back.

There are several hunting stories that Mr. Hays has told of, of when they were hunting and some funny "incidents" took place. As he recalls, "I gave one of my hunting buddies a sandwich that had liver-cheese on it, and used to there would be a thin slice of paper between every slice of meat when you bought it, so I left the paper on one half and folded my handkerchief and put it on the other half. Finally, after chewing on it for awhile, he said, 'Leland, I can't eat this damn thing, it's too tough.' This other guy, who was also with us, and I were about to die laughing, but he didn't think it was too funny, although it didn't make him mad.

"There were several other times that were rather 'memorable.' Once we were on a big hunt, and we always carried our big black kettle with us so we could 'attempt' to cook and make coffee or something, and anyway, the instant coffee in the jar had just come out and we had a jar of it and it was my turn to make the coffee. Well, instead of just putting two or three teaspoonsful in, I dumped the whole jar in. There wasn't anybody who would attempt to take the first drink because the smell alone was so strong that you couldn't stand to get near it.

"There were times when we did get kind of 'ornery,' like when a friend and I stole chickens out of a guy's peactree. It was right by the window and that's probably what made us 'want' to try and get them because we weren't really all that hungry. Anyway, we got two big White Rock hens, het up some water, dressed the chickens and roasted them. About the time they were done, they guy we stole them off of came down there and ate them with us. We didn't get in trouble though. We just sat there and shook, afraid that he would stop eatin' and say something.

"Then, always, on the road home, we would feed our hounds out of milkcans that were sitting along the road to be picked up by the milkman the next day. We would just knock the lid off the can and pour the milk in it. Those were really good times back then.

"I still hunt today but it's not done the way it used to be. We use trucks and CB radios which make it more convenient to locate and hear the race. A good hunter also enjoys taking good care of his hounds."

A note from Leland: "I think that fox and coyote hunting today with a good pack of hounds is top entertainment for anyone. I also think if more young folks tried it, they would like it. Try it."



HOUND DOG NAMES

The names given hound dogs are colorful and unique. Many are named after their voice, which is one of the most important things about a hound, or named after their behavior, origin, movie or radio stars, or appearance. Here are a few of the more interesting hound dog names.

Southern Screamer—came from down South
Arky—came from Arkansas
Melody Moon—just a name
Dolly—Dolly Partin
Cornliquir—bought at "brewing time"
Moonshine—same as above
Bonnie & Clyde—gangsters
Muttie—was mixed breed (a mutt)
Mousey—would hardly bark
Flame—"set the woods on fire"
Bell—because of voice
Biner—was mostly white (albino)
Ranger—good hunter
Scout—wouldn't ever bark
Shotgun Sam—afraid of gunshot
Shylo—born in a silo

Story by Teresa Hays

The Srnka House

By Jill James

Among all the beautiful houses in Adair County there is one in particular that stands out in my mind. This is the home presently located at 904 E. Harrison, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Al Srnka.

If I had to pick out one definite quality about this house it would have to be the originality of the architecture. No other house in Kirksville even comes close to having the distinct dimensions this house displays so richly.

Another rather unique fact about this house is that it has had only four owners. They are T. J. Dockery, Dr. George A. Still, Dr. and Mrs. Paul Hilton, and the present owners.

The first owner and builder, T. J. Dockery, came to Adair County with his parents in July 1855. On Sept. 26, 1867, he was married to Miss Julia E. Hinder. He owned 2,400 acres of land. He also built and owned several of the most substantial businesses in Kirksville, including the Dockery Hotel, which is still standing. Mr. Dockery also taught school and lived on a farm until 1876; then he was elected County Surveyor. He served eight years as surveyor and Bridge Commissioner, helping with the construction of the Chariton River bridges near Youngstown and Connelssville. For thirty years he was engaged in real estate and abstract business.

The second owner, Dr. George A. Still, married Miss Ardella Dockery, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Dockery, in

1906. In the early 1900's, Miss Dockery inherited her father's home.

During this time there was a fire. The fire destroyed most of the upper level, but was contained before reaching downstairs.

In the late 1930's a Kirksville architect, Irwin Dunbar, remodeled the house to its present appearance. The wrought iron fence that presently surrounds the house is the original. However, a dent was acquired last year from a storm. When Mr. Dockery owned the house the fence extended the complete length of the lot.

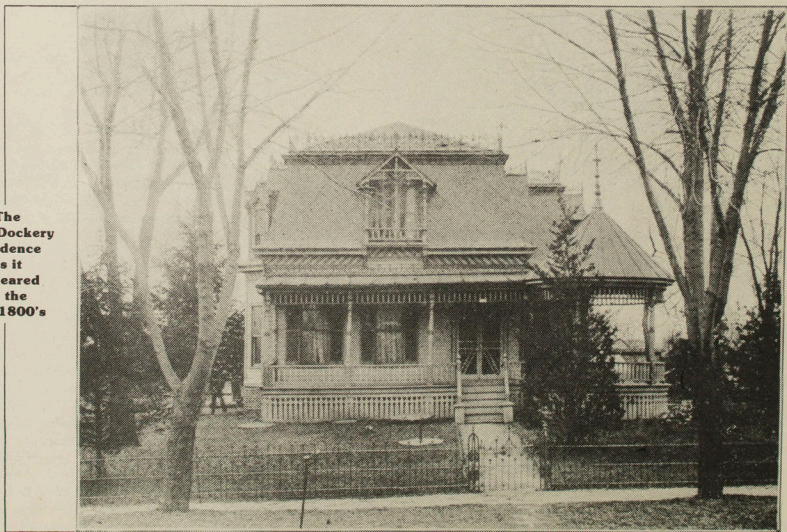
The third owners, Dr. and Mrs. Paul Hilton, lived in the house around the 1960's.

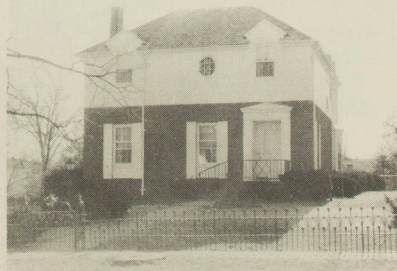
The Srnka house currently consists of nine rooms, four upstairs and five downstairs. All of the upstairs rooms were redone after the fire. Downstairs, however, all of the rooms are original, excluding the kitchen and bathroom.

Modern conveniences have been added to the old house, but many of the original features of interest remain unchanged. In addition to the walnut woodwork and doors, the original stairway and two beautiful bay windows on the east and west sides of the home remain as they were years ago.

The Srnkas and their two sons have occupied the house for nine years.

The
T. J. Dockery
residence
as it
appeared
in the
late 1800's





When Irwin Dunbar remodeled the old Dockery residence, he followed this sketch (top photo) of how the house would look with a facelift. The upstairs rooms were remodeled after a fire, but the downstairs remains the same as it was years ago. Left, the original staircase in the home is an example of the rich walnut finishings found throughout the house. Most of the pictures on the walls are original paintings by John W. Tinsman, a Kirksville artist, displaying the Srnka's avid interest in fine antiques. Above, this is how the Srnka home appears today. The wrought iron fence is part of the original estate.



Gangster Connections?

By Ellen James

As we drove through the trees on the winding, rutted path up to the mansion I couldn't help but wonder how much of what I had heard about this house was true and how much was the product of fertile imagination.

The house, most often called the Gangster Mansion, but sometimes the Archer House or the Haunted House, was built in the late 1930's by Mr. Wilkins K. Archer for a summer home. It was very lavish for the time, and for some odd, much-speculated-at reason, it was built so far into the woods that it was impossible to see from the main road, and nearly inaccessible.

The house is a white, wood-framed ranch style—an unusual architecture for the time. It was built of all quality materials with walnut woodwork and specially cut cypress siding brought in from the South. The plastering inside is



Mrs. Olive Tharp says the rumors of a gangster connection cannot be proven or disproven.

rough Spanish stucco, and the maple floors are laid out in unusual patterns. At the time it was built, the house cost more than \$50,000. Replacement value today would be more than \$200,000.

Olive Tharp, owner of the house, recalls, "The downstairs bath originally had a German silver sink, which was stolen between the time I purchased it (the house) from Ann Archer (Mr. Archer's wife) and the time I moved here." The house was also filled with many antiques, including a baby grand, which Mrs. Tharp still has.

The house has fourteen rooms, three of which are baths. It has two sets of stairs, a front and a back, with two maids' rooms at the head of the back stairs. There are four fireplaces, two made from stone taken from the farm itself. The house has 52 windows and four outside exits. It is a grand and impressive house for any era.

Archer himself is a character swathed in mystery. It is generally thought that his luxurious income was from real estate holdings, one of which was a posh night club in Chicago, but he was also related to the Armour Packing Company family. Some say he was a feed grinder after moving to this area, others say he hauled rock, and there is still another story that he bought a local car dealership. Those that believe that he was a gangster say these operations were a cover for money brought in from bootlegging.

All sorts of rumors circulate about the house

Legend has it that this house was the headquarters for Archer's gangster friends who needed a stopping place between Kansas City and Chicago. Some of the rumored visitors were Al Capone, Pretty Boy Floyd, and Bonnie and Clyde. Many physical characteristics of the house contributed to this theory. Its location, hidden always in the trees on a dead end road, was a suspicious one for such a lavish home. Nearly all the rooms have views in all directions (the better to see if someone is sneaking up on you). There are unusually wide archways, presumably in which to hide.

All sorts of rumors circulate about the house. People today claim that there is a tunnel leading out of the basement of the house. Olive, who has owned the house since 1942, says she has searched and found no such tunnel, but she does say she has had trouble with one of the basement walls collapsing. Variations on a story that Al Capone was shot at the house also circulate. Nothing can be proven, or disproven.



Rumored to be a hideout for gangsters in the late 1930's, the secluded Archer House may hold many fascinating secrets about lifestyles in that time period. Mrs. Olive Tharp now owns the home.

One Kirksville resident tells a story about visiting the house with Archer's son, Don, when they were in high school. The two, along with some other high school friends, were looking unsuccessfully for someplace to play pool when the young Archer offered the use of his own pool table.

The boys drove out to the house, but when they arrived, there were several luxurious cars with out-of-state license plates sitting in the driveway. Don told his friends to wait outside, that he had better see if it was all right with his dad for them to come in. Sounds of a party could be heard from the house. When Don returned, he said they would have to leave, and muttered something like, "I guess I should have known better."

This story is fuel for suspicion, but again, it doesn't prove that Archer was involved in anything illegal.

If it is not certain that the Archer House, in particular, was a haunt for gangsters, it's certain that northeast Missouri in general was one.

Johnny Tomich, lifelong resident of the area, tells stories of several personal experiences with gangsters. He tells of his father awakening him one snowy winter night, in the mid-1920's, when he was in his early teens. There was a well-dressed stranger downstairs looking for someone with horses to pull his car out of the snow.

The Tomich's had a good pair of horses, so Johnny harnessed up the team and drove them out to Highway 63 to where the stranger's car was. The young Johnny was very much impressed with the car, and remembers to this day the expensive Chrysler convertible with side curtains. He was able to pull the car out of the snow, and he pulled it quite a distance to help the stranger avoid any more trouble.

Telling Johnny not to run off, the stranger opened his trunk. He asked Johnny if his father liked nice shirts. Johnny answered that his dad even liked old shirts, so the stranger handed Johnny three boxes to give to his father. The stranger then asked if Johnny's father would drink whiskey. Johnny said yes, he probably would, and if he didn't, the neighbors would. So the stranger gave Johnny a fifth of whiskey for his father.

Then he told Johnny to hold out his hand. Johnny says "He just reached down in his pocket and said 'now this is for you'. He just put his hand out there and said, 'I'll just put it in your hand, and you stick it in your pocket. So I put my hand out there, and he put something in my hand. It was bills, you know, I stuck it in my pocket.'"

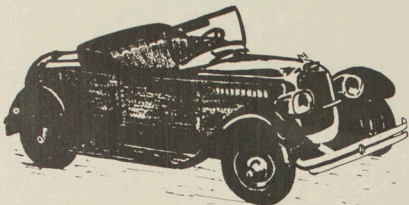
Upon arriving home, Johnny gave his father the whiskey and the three boxes. Each contained two silk shirts. Johnny pulled his own reward out of his pocket. It was a fifty dollar bill.

Soon after this, Johnny was working at the Bee Hive, a popular gathering place which was said to have the best food in town. Johnny was waiting tables when the same stranger came in as a customer. Johnny says he felt an inkling of recognition. "I kept eyeballin' him, I thought he looked familiar." When he finally spoke, he asked Johnny to bring him a meal from the restaurant every day. He left the number of a room in the Travelers Hotel, and Johnny delivered his noon meal every day. Johnny had instructions not to tell anyone about it, and to only bring the meals himself. He did this for about a month, and was paid five dollars a day for it.



Gangster Connections?

Johnny began to pick up information about the man. "Fred Burk was this fella's name an' he was *Public Enemy No. 1!*" Johnny claims that according to *True Detective* magazine he was one of the ten most wanted men in the United States at that time. During this month, Johnny saw the same car he pulled out of the snow sitting in front of the bank on the square. Not long after Mr. Burk told Johnny he would no longer need the meals, the bank was robbed, and the culprits escaped without punishment. Johnny at least "suspicioned" that Burk was involved in the robbery. "He was spottin' these banks, and I figure he was one of 'em."



Shag Grossnickle, sheriff of Adair County from 1949 to 1956 also tells a story about Fred "Killer" Burk. The story was told to him by Morris Parker, an FBI agent who worked in Kirksville.

Parker received an anonymous phone call telling him that the Killer Burk would be hiding out at a certain turnoff from

Highway 6 at a certain time. So Parker went. He pulled off the road and waited, and waited, and waited. Nothing developed, so Parker left.

Not long after, Burk was captured near Green City. While he was in jail, Burk asked Parker if he had ever gone out looking for him following an anonymous call—Parker admitted that he had. Killer Burk just laughed, and said that he had been waiting there at the turnoff hiding behind a hedge. He said that he had had a gun, and intended to take this opportunity to get rid of Parker, but for some reason decided not to.

Johnny tells another interesting story about the gangster involvement in Kirksville. He was still working at the Bee Hive, and he and a co-worker were renting a room together at 315 W. Pierce. One day Johnny's roommate (we'll call him Tom) asked Johnny for a favor. Tom asked Johnny to stay at the Stephenson Hotel for three days, because some special friends were coming to visit. Johnny agreed. Tom said the visitors would pay them well, but he gave Johnny instructions not to come home, and not to tell anyone about the visitors.

Tom was from a small town nearby, and hometown connections had asked him to harbor a carload of outlaws who broke out of a prison in Kansas.

News about the escape crowded the airways, and law enforcement officials believed the escapees were near Kirksville, but no one noticed their touring car parked on Pierce Street. After three days they were gone, and Tom and Johnny were well paid for their trouble.

Johnny's bill at the Stephenson Hotel was paid with money left over. Tom was previously unable to fulfill his dream of attending the American School of Osteopathy on his \$7 a

The Beehive Restaurant as it appeared when it was owned by the Gross Brothers



week salary at the Bee Hive, but the services he provided for the gangsters earned him enough money to put him through the medical school.

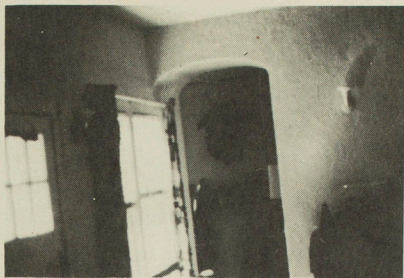
After graduating, Tom moved to the Southwest and started a practice. He is now a very successful doctor, has his own hospital, several ranches, and breeds high-quality cattle. Today he is one of the richest men in that part of the country, due, at least in part, to lending his room to some gangsters for three days.

The Kirksville area is saturated with stories such as this. Some people scoff at the idea of big-time gangsters in Adair County, and many totally reject the possibility that the Archer House was their hideout. There are people who knew them who say the Archers were average, everyday people, and the stories about gangsters were invented to scare away vandals and robbers.

To Olive, who gave us most of our information about the house, there is nothing sinister about the place. She is restoring it, and finishing up some of the things the Archers never did. In fact, she tells us, "It may seem strange to say you can have a love affair with a house, but I have had with this one since I bought it at age 22." She is obviously very fond of what she calls her "country home."

For many years Olive had to be away from the house that was so dear to her, so she wrote this verse to console her when she was lonely for it:

*This is the house I must leave now,
And though I surrender the key—
The loveliest part I keep in my heart
And carry along with me.*

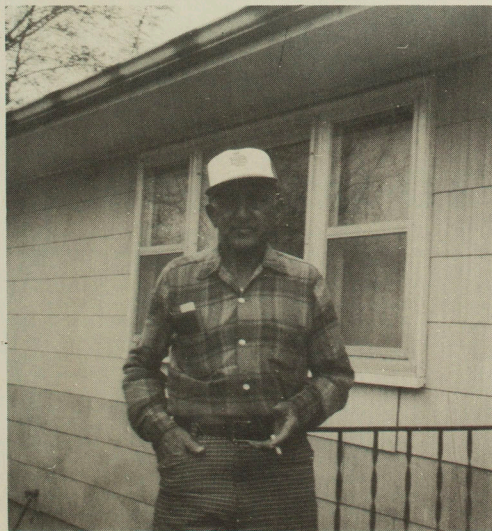


The unusually wide archways, presumably for hiding purposes, provide fuel for gangster rumors.

About the legends surrounding the house, Olive said, "It may or may not have been a gangster mansion, but to me it's a beautiful house placed in a jeweled, peaceful setting of nature at its best. The woods are teeming with wildlife. From my windows I watch the birds, wild turkey and deer.

"If the house could talk, what secrets could it tell? But then, if it could tell the secrets of its past, there would be no more aura of mystery."

In spite of the doubts and the contradictions, the stories and legends live on. Just as it has become impossible to separate the fact from the fiction, it has become impossible to separate this house from the legends that surround it.



Johnny Tomich has had several experiences with gangsters locally. He once assisted Fred Burk, Public Enemy No. 1 at the time, by pulling his car out of the snow. Later Johnny was well paid for taking lunch to Burk every day when he stayed at the Traveler's Hotel, reportedly casing a local bank for a robbery job.





Painting was just one of the many interests of Ivie McGuire. In the background of this picture are a few of the many pieces of china she repaired for others. (Photo by Johnnie Greer.)

The World's 10-Inch Genius

By Carla Coy and Shari Hatter

In doing our research on Ivie McGuire MacCarthy we interviewed Mrs. Edgar Myers, Mrs. Jane Rohueder, Mrs. Mildred Gross, and Mrs. Robert Link. They gave us many helpful stories in the following article.

Kirkville has had many colorful people in its past. One of the most intriguing was Mrs. Ivie McGuire MacCarthy. She was well known in Kirkville for her controversial ideas on life and death and her psychic abilities. She believed in reincarnation.

In other parts of the world she was well known for her miniature bronze sculptures of famous people. Somerset Maugham nicknamed Ivie the "World's 10-Inch Genius" because of these sculptures. Ivie sculpted the Prince of Wales, H. G. Wells, Caruso, Sara Bernhardt, Douglas and Mary Fairbanks, Lady Astor and many other famous person-

alities of the 1920's and 1930's. Mrs. Myers commented, "She lived in the homes of the great and near great when she did these."

Before Ivie was born, her family bought the Kellogg House. They bought it in 1878 and three years later the McGuires moved out. The first year they lived there, they lost 300 hogs to cholera. The second year 600 chickens died of the same disease. The third year their only child at the time, Hubert, died from a heart condition following diphtheria. In 1881, after these tragedies, the McGuires moved to a house located at the corner of Marion and Missouri streets, where Ivie was born. Mrs. Myers said the reason they left the Kellogg House was, "...because they were all superstitious, I guess." (See Chariton Collector, December 1980 issue.)

Ivie was born on June 28, 1881. During her childhood, her father was very wealthy and he saw that Ivie spent much time abroad. A handicap that Ivie had to deal with until she was 17 years old was walking on crutches. She had private

teachers and did not enter school until she was 12, and in 1897, when she was 14 years old, she graduated from Kirksville Senior High School. Ivie then entered the University of Missouri, where she studied designing, theory of painting, art and English. She spent three years there. Later she entered the School of Fine Arts in St. Louis where she studied to be a painter.

Ivie loved to travel and when she left Kirksville, she embarked on a life full of adventure and excitement. She was one of the first women to fly across the English Channel. She took a trip on the Amazon River in the early 1900's and it was during this trip that she met a Brooklyn physician, Dr. MacCarthy, whom she married, in 1906. During her nine years of marriage she started writing because they had no room for her to paint.

When her mother became ill, however, Ivie had to give up writing to sit with her, so she started modeling little figures from clay. Because of her mother's illness, Ivie found her nerves going, so she hired nurses to take care of her mother and became a newspaper woman for the New York Globe. Ivie lived in New York for 33 years.

Many people believe that Ivie invested most of her money in a musical comedy show on Broadway that she had co-authored while in New York. The musical was called "Taza" and when it failed, she lost a fortune.

When Ivie returned to Kirksville in 1944 she didn't have much money. So in order to make a living, Ivie had to do odd jobs around town. She repaired old china and restored antique dolls. Ivie also did paintings of many of the homes in Kirksville.

She also found time to get her B.A. in Art from the Northeast Missouri State Teachers College.

Ivie took up her writing again. Just before she died she was writing a book about the Kellogg House. The book was called "Wigged House." Mrs. Myers tells the reason for the name of the book: "Because they once had a negro working for them and she always called wicked, 'wigged!'" Ivie never finished the book and all the manuscripts were found after she had died, strewn all over the floor of her apartment. Ivie also wrote "Virginia," an operetta; "Drums," a play, and "The Strangest Experience of My Life."

Her belief in reincarnation was probably the most controversial thing about Ivie. Her ideas irritated some, but

others just accepted her as she was. She believed that she had been a snake in Egypt in an earlier life. She also believed she had been born a Roman soldier and that explained her lame leg that plagued her during her childhood.



These bronze statuettes and the painting of a collage (below left) are samples of Ivie's artistic talents.

She seemed to have an uncanny talent for locating lost items. Mrs. Meyers told the following story, an incident which happened to Kirksville bookstore owner, Edna Campbell:

"Edna started to town one morning and she always carried this little satchel thing, a briefcase, sort of a basket. She had all of her things in it to take to the store and on this one occasion she had some very important papers in there. She stopped along the way two or three times and when she got to town she had been in conversation with these various people. She had been in one lady's house; the lady had called her up on the porch and she had gone in. When she got to town, she didn't have her briefcase and she had no idea where it was.

"Well, she started calling these people and nobody had seen it nor could they find it. Well, she was beside herself because some of this had to go to the bank and it had to be taken care of that day. So in desperation she calls Ivie and tells Ivie she has lost these papers and could she help her find them. Well, Ivie called back in a little bit and she said, 'Did you stop at a certain place?' Yes, she had but she had called this place and she had not left them there. 'Well, They're there behind the door.' And they were behind the door." Ivie also found a diamond that a lady had lost.

Her other talents for predicting the future were less popular. Mrs. Rohweder said while Ivie was doing a painting of her house she would say, 'If you'll tell me when your birthday is, I can tell you when you'll die!' Not really wanting to know this information, Mrs. Rohweder was very careful never to disclose her birthdate to Ivie.

Mrs. Myers remembers that Ivie was in Russia during Stalin's funeral. After seeing him in the casket, Ivie said he hadn't died the way everyone had said. Ivie believed he had been stabbed in the back.

On November 6, 1955, Ivie presented her statuettes to the Sojourners Club and they can be seen now at the Sojourners Library. The statuettes are superb and seem to capture the spirits of her subjects.

Ivie died on March 8, 1962, after a fall at home. She was 80 years old. Following Ivie's wishes, there was no viewing of the body and no funeral service. Her body was cremated and the ashes buried in the Forest Cemetery in Kirksville.

Mrs. Meyers sums everything up when she says, "She was, to say the least, one of the most interesting people I've ever known."



Painting by Ivie McGuire, courtesy of Mrs. Elizabeth Link

Elliott Schoolhouse

About ten miles northeast of Kirksville, a white-washed wood building sits off by itself. This building holds many memories, because some years back, children from ages six to fourteen used to gather there in the yard every morning. These children spent the whole day in that building and its name was Elliott Schoolhouse. It was named after the man who donated a tract of land on which the school was built between 1860 and 1865.

Mr. Russell Murfin attended Elliott Schoolhouse from first grade up through eighth grade. He remembers his school days vividly. In 1912, Murfin began first grade. His mother bought the "first reader" for him to start school. A first reader was a text for the first grade. This book was supposed to help teach children how to read. It failed with Murfin, however, for he was an ill child through most of his first year in school. His mother kept him home most of the time and read the first reader to him. Eventually, Murfin memorized the first grade text. "So when I started second grade and went into the second reader I couldn't even read a word. I was standing in the corner, it seemed to me, half the time because I wasn't getting my assignments! The teacher didn't know I didn't know how to read!"

A regular school day started at nine o'clock in the morning and dismissed at four in the afternoon. Classes started with first grade and went on up because the younger kids got restless as the day went on. While the lower grades were in classes, the higher grades studied.

Mr. Murfin tells of his experiences in studying, "We studied while the others were doing their reciting, which was a decided advantage in many ways. However, you had to learn to concentrate on your own material, which was a good thing too. Sometimes we got interested in what was going on in the other groups. It was an advantage in one way and that was, for instance, you would listen in a lot on the grades

ahead of you, so by the time that you got to those grades, you knew a lot about the material, which helped a lot."

There were at most twelve students attending Elliott Schoolhouse at one time. Since there were eight grades for one teacher to teach, the ideal plan was to alternate the fifth and seventh grades and the sixth and eighth grades. Mr. Murfin states, "I recall quite vividly that I advanced from the fifth grade to the eighth grade because I didn't hit it right. You see, if you got promoted from fourth grade and that was the year they were teaching fifth and seventh you were alright, but I happened to be in the alternate group in which I took the sixth grade, then the fifth grade, then the eighth grade, and then the seventh grade."

Elliott Schoolhouse was heated by a wood stove located in a corner. Mr. Murfin recalls, "If you were close to it, you were very comfortable, but if you were off in the corner somewhere, you nearly froze!"

The washpan sat on a stand off to the side and the drinking pail and dipper were located in a back corner. There was a well about fifty yards from the school. Each day, a boy was assigned to fetch a pail of water from the well during the first recess. Then, when the students were thirsty, they drank out of the dipper in the pail.

There was no form of music except the singing of some patriotic song every morning, depending on the teacher. The year after Murfin graduated from Elliott the little school acquired a piano.

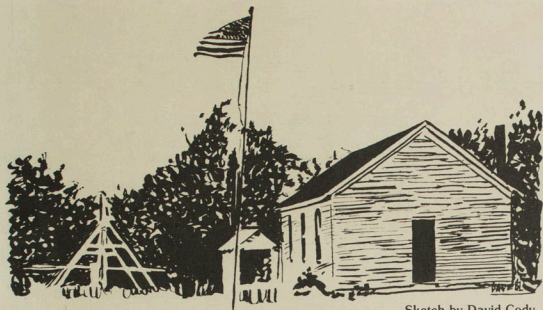
The front of the school had a platform called the rostrum. There were rows of benches upon it and it was a foot higher than the main room. This was where the students recited. When a certain grade was having class, they spent most of their time on the rostrum. The classes did their math problems on the blackboard which was in front of the room behind the rostrum benches.

ELLIOTT SCHOOL #40 1913-1914

Front Row, left to right—Susan Maltby, Garret Eversole, Myron "Mike" Waddill, and Russell Murfin. Second Row—Letha Waddill, Mae Mason, Leta Waddill, Gladys Eversole, Glen Pevehouse, and Lauren Maltby. Third Row—Lola Karner, teacher; Nellie Pevehouse; Lilah Maltby; Alta Mason; and Goldie Pevehouse.

Story by Karla Tade
and Darla Casady





Sketch by David Cody

There was only one way for the children to get to school and that was by their own two feet. Some children walked as many as two miles to school.

Mr. Murfin says, "At recess time, all of us were terrifically hungry since most of us walked all the way from a half mile to two miles. So maybe we'd have our lunch during the recess time and then at noon we would finish it up or maybe save an apple for the last recess.

We didn't have many subjects. The old saying, Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, those were the basics. Then we had spelling and grammar and that was about all we had.

"Then Friday afternoon after the last recess we would have what we called ciphering matches, or spelling matches or geography matches. We would choose up sides and each one would go to the board, in a ciphering match for instance, and the one who got to choose what to do would choose addition, subtraction or what have you, and the one who would win would get a point for his side and whatever team got the most points would win the ciphering match.

"If it was a geography match, we would have to take out our geographies and the teacher would write a city on the board and we would have to find what country that city was in, which was very educating, of course."

When the students learned to spell, they began by spelling each word orally by syllables. When questioned on the spelling of a word, they would say the first syllable and spell it, the second syllable, and spell it, and so on. Mr. Murfin believes that this method was not a good method to go by. When the students began writing their spelling words down, they would go through the spelling of each syllable in their minds while trying to write, which made it increasingly difficult to write with any speed at all.

On discipline and punishment Mr. Murfin comments, "I don't remember anyone ever being whipped in our school during the years I was there. Usually you had to stay in from recess for a period of time. They wouldn't hold you after school because you had to walk so far and it would be dark by the time you got home. But you might have to stay in at noon and not be able to participate in any games or anything for maybe a week, which was pretty rough punishment for kids since they loved the games outside."

One particular incident stands out in Mr. Murfin's mind. "One little boy had been to church the day before—this was a Monday morning—and the poor kid was not overflowing with intelligence, and he had heard the minister talk about Jesus walking on the water. Well, that made a terrific

impression on him. So he began telling about how Jesus walked on the water. Of course, wheels began to turn in the bigger boys' minds. One older boy said, 'Uh, Jim, anybody can walk on the water!' 'Oh, no,' Jim says. 'Yes they can; we'll go up to the pond and show ya.'

"Well, there were two hills that came down toward the pond. The older boy said, 'Now if you'll get up there on top of that hill and run just as hard as you can right out on the water, you can just sail right across.'

"Well, you know what happened. Before he got the brakes on he was clear up to his neck in water. Then he began to yell about it and the older boy said, 'Now look, it could have happened; you just didn't have enough faith.'"

Mr. Murfin tells of another prank: "We didn't have fountain pens, we dipped our pens in an inkwell, and a lot of the girls wore braids. Sometimes it was quite a temptation for some boy who sat behind a girl to dip the end of her braid in the inkwell. You do that very quietly!"

All in all, Elliott Schoolhouse was nothing more than a typical one room schoolhouse in its own time. The little pranks that the kids played on each other broke the normal routine and kept each day from becoming a repeat of the day before. "Kids were just as onery and mischievous then as they are today," Mr. Murfin says. Elliott Schoolhouse is a place in which many memories came about and are now reminisced over and over again.



Mr. Russell Murfin

Dead men tell no tales, but . . .

TOMBSTONES TELL THE STORY

Cemeteries are traditionally thought of as being scary, spooky, dreary or peaceful, but the history, legends and customs found in cemeteries can be very interesting.

Tombstones are, in fact, forms of frozen history. An epitaph, engraving and even the shape of a tombstone can reveal much about a person's hobby, occupation, hopes and dreams.

The engravings found on monuments are symbolic. Here are a few of the more common ones:

Ivy—Memory

Rose—Nativity or Messianic hope

Also Love of Our Lord

Cross—Faith

Rosary—Prayer

Bible—Divine Authorship

Olive—The Grace of Our Lord, Peace

Laurel Wreath—Glory

Grapevine—The Lord and His Followers

Celtic Cross—Cross of Iona

Poppy—Sleep or Consolation

Other symbols are more unique and sometimes reveal more about an individual. Customs surrounding burial have changed through the years. Placing shells on top of the grave was once a tradition, but has almost disappeared.

We found many interesting monuments in our investigation. One of the most unique was a stone in the shape of a chair with only the inscription "Baird." Highland Park Cemetery records list only the person who bought the lot, not the person buried there, and this made our research more difficult. We think this tombstone belongs to Mr. and Mrs. David Baird. David Baird, born in 1833, was a marble cutter and tombstone

dealer. He handled Vermont and Italian marbles chiefly. Did he design and carve this beautiful monument?

In Forest-Llewellyn Cemetery, an elaborate Celtic Cross with an unusual sign in the center sparked our curiosity. This beautiful monument belongs to W. P. Nason, a prominent citizen of Kirksville who died in 1909. Nason, a schoolteacher, came from Kentucky to Kirksville with his friend W. T. Baird. Nason opened a private school at the corner of Florence and Buchanan streets, and later taught at the Normal School until 1887.

His good friend, W. T. Baird, saw to the erection of this beautiful monument.

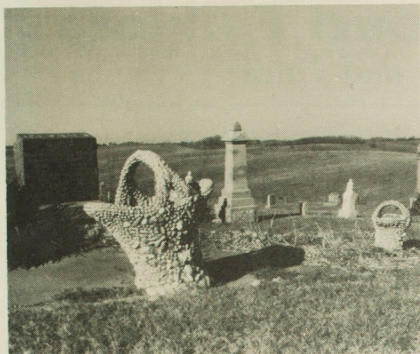
Those elaborate tombstones are almost a thing of the past except for the very wealthy. We talked with Arlo Smith, manager of Carter Memorial in Kirksville. "Tombstones cost about \$750 for the average size. The stones, which are made from granite, take only a day or two to put up and set, but making them could take up to six weeks. You have to order the stone from the quarries in Macon and if they don't have it, the branch orders it from the northern quarries."

Although Carter Memorial has many monument designs from which to choose, Mr. Smith told us that people can and do create their own designs. "Draw what you want and artists will carve it for you...bird dogs, elephants, or even your own picture can be baked in porcelain and placed on the stone."

Vandalism in cemeteries has always been a problem, but during World War II many tombstones were turned over for the lead supports which could then be sold for recycling.

There are many interesting cemeteries in the area, large as well as small, simple, family plots. Each tombstone has a story to tell. By researching some of these stories, we can better understand the history and culture of a community.





Opposite Page: Left, the symbol on this tombstone seems to indicate that Mr.

Clifton had no doubts about where he wished to spend eternity.

Right, the Nason stone features an elaborate Celtic Cross with an unusual symbol in the center. This Page:

Above left, very little information is available to explain the significance of these basket tombstones in the Greentop Cemetery. They were constructed by hand from hundreds and hundreds of sea shells. Above right, the hound and rife which decorate this grave in Forest-Llewellyn Cemetery appear to indicate the deceased man's love for hunting.

Left, this magnificent stone carved from marble in the shape of a thronelike chair may have been designed by a local tombstone dealer, David Baird.

**By Jane Lintner
and Renea Scott**

Northeast Missouri Folklore

Local Legends and Tales



THE FORESHADOW OF DEATH

Over the centuries there have been legends that the howling of dogs signified death. This legend became reality for my mother's family on the night of November 26, 1962.

My grandpa, Henry Clote, had been a successful farmer all his life. His farm was located in Knox County, east of Edina about four miles. While he was engaged in farming, he would get up in the wee hours of the morning, go to the fields till around noon, come home, and then go back in mid-afternoon, and stay till the sun turned in. Henceforth, supper was served late during crop season. He retired from farming in 1961 and moved into Edina to set up permanent residence.

It was on this night, November 26, 1962, that my grandpa, my grandma, their youngest daughter and her husband were seated around the table eating supper. When supper was over my grandpa got up and said, "I can't decide whether to sit in my new recliner, or go to bed." He finally decided he would go to bed, since he wasn't feeling too well. He just thought he was overly tired.

But as he started walking for his room, his two dogs shattered the eerie stillness by howling. It was as if they sensed death and knew something was wrong. This might have changed my grandpa's idea of "just being tired," because the howls certainly captured everyone's attention, and they all knew that howling dogs prefixed death.

As he entered the room he dropped into bed, neglecting to change clothes. The rest of the family followed to see if he was all right. But as they entered his room they noticed his ankles were swollen to an abnormal size and were blood red. He had died of a heart attack and the blood had rushed to his feet.

My grandpa's dogs continued howling on into the night. They couldn't have been howling at the moon because they were on the back porch and it was completely enclosed. They knew their loved master was gone and they, too, mourned his death.

Call it superstition, or coincidence. But it really happened, and I feel there is more than just chance behind the meaning of this.

—By Bobby Poston

THE LAMP THAT WENT OUT

There is a barn about five miles west of Yarrow where an older couple used to live. The man always went out at night to feed the livestock in his barn. Every night he took with him an old oil lamp and every night he would set the lamp on a bench right inside the door. Time after time the lamp would go out. Finally the man got curious, so he decided to dig under the bench. After digging for awhile, the man came across the bones of a man. It is said the man under the bench kept blowing out the lamp so he could rest in peace.



JESUS IS COMING...

Although this story reportedly came over the AP Wire as a news spot about a year ago, in less than six months it was circulating in Kirksville. The location had moved from southern Missouri and Arkansas to Fulton, and girls from Kirksville became the vehicle for the story. This is a fascinating example of how fast and how far stories travel, and how the people in the story become local in order to make it more interesting.

A group of girls from around Kirksville were driving down by Fulton when they decided to pick up a hitchhiker. When they stopped, the man began talking. He said, "Jesus is coming soon. He's coming sooner than you think." After he said this, he turned around and disappeared into thin air.

The girls, naturally shocked, decided to tell the local police about their experience. The police, who had previously been skeptical, admitted that they were beginning to wonder. They had had six reports of similar incidents that day.

GHOSTS IN NORTHEAST MISSOURI

By Karla Tade

The area south of Unionville is known for its many legends and tales of folklore. Most of the older citizens of the community can recall millions of legends and tales that originated through the years. "Once you get him started, my uncle will talk for hours telling story after story," says Scott Collins. Scott's grandparents live south of Unionville where his father grew up. Scott, however did not grow up in Unionville, which was all the more reason for his grandfather and uncles to keep him entertained with tales and legends of the past.

"Most of the stories took place along Highway 129. There was a little one room schoolhouse there called the Lone Star School. Not too far down the road from the Lone Star School is the Pherigo Cemetary. As you go on up Highway 129, you can see eight or nine older houses along the stretch of highway. It's fairly straight for a ways, then it forks to the right. There is a house which sits on this curve. To this day, you can go up 129 and, from a distance of a mile or two, it looks like this house is sitting right in the middle of the highway! Now if you hit it at just the right time of day, (about dusk), there appears to be a light on upstairs." The house is vacant and is now used as a hay storage so it would be very unlikely for anyone to be inside. Many "ghost stories" have originated from this "haunted" house. Some people say the light belongs to a mysterious old man who just disappeared. No one knows if he died or where he went. Now that he's gone, however, many people think he inhabits the house.

together and sent a couple of men out to find them. They found the three men dead in the old, safe, mine.

Here is another legend of death. One time this little boy, about twelve or thirteen years old, died . . . or so they thought. At this time, they didn't do any embalming of the body. So the family of the deceased held the wake in their own home the following evening. The wake was more or less a social occasion for the whole community. Everyone attended the wake to eat and visit. If you were attending a wake, you would view the body first, then begin to visit. At this particular wake, the casket was placed in the living room. Later on in the evening, when everyone was seated in the dining room talking, one boy got up to get something more to eat in the kitchen. By this time, it was dark outside so no light came in through the windows. The only light in the living room was the light which streamed in the doorway from the dining room and cast shadows all around. As the boy passed the living room door, he glanced in and saw someone's shadow on the wall. The boy, who was supposedly dead, was sitting up in his casket.

When she walked into the living room she saw her husband sitting straight up in a hardwood chair holding a gun...

Probably the strangest story of all happened after a middle-aged man and his wife had eaten supper. The wife was finishing the dishes in the kitchen. When she walked into the living room she saw her husband sitting straight up in a hard wood chair holding a gun which was pointed at the door. She didn't know what to think. At first, she thought he was going out of his mind. So she called some of his friends. They got together and decided to try to get the gun away from their friend. While some of them were waiting to rush the front door, some others went in a window in the back of the house. When they made their way to his chair, one man grabbed him by the shoulders and the gun dropped out of his hand. The man fell over on the floor. He was shot himself to death.

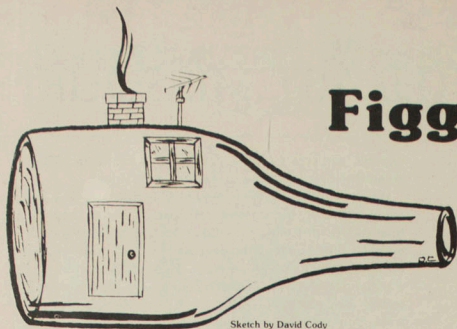
These legends and tales are only a few that have been circulating around the southern part of Putnam County. Many legends, such as the death legends, have been around for many years. There are a lot more tales and stories, however, more stories accumulate each day. The pastime of storytelling seems to grow and grow from generation to generation. It is something that you never get tired of no matter what your age may be. Sometimes the storytellers get just as excited as the listeners! Even though the telling of legends and tales is fun, it also has an educational value. All of these so-called "scary stories" are a part of folklore and a part of the history of that particular area.



Many of the legends are about strange deaths. Although many that are told always get exaggerated and stretched out of proportion, the legends about any kind of death have never been changed. There were a large number of strange deaths that occurred within 10 to 20 years in the Unionville area.

One weird occurrence that happened ended in three deaths. There were three middle-aged brothers who were out coal mining one day. When their work day was over and they were ready to go home, they went down into an older mine to have a look around. This mine was known to be a safe one; there had never been any complications with it.

Meanwhile, the families of these three brothers were beginning to worry about them. The sun went down and still they did not return. Finally, the wives of the three men got



Sketch by David Cody

Figge's Bottle House

By Bonnie Bethel and Marilyn Gregory

How many different ways can you think of for using a bottle? Drinking out of them or storing stuff in them would more than likely be a couple of common uses. In 1926, in the town of Kirksville, Missouri, a man named Mr. Fred Figge had a very unique idea for using his bottles. In fact, we can almost guarantee you that there was never another one in town just like this. He made his house out of bottles.

The house was located on the corner of Missouri and Osteopathy streets, where the Theta Psi Fraternity house is now, and it turned out to be quite a showplace. People came from miles away just to see the place and take pictures of it.

Our information came from Mrs. Della Stewart, who lived right across the street from him when he was building the house. She was able to tell us step by step how and why he built this house.

It was in the year 1926 that Mr. Figge decided to build the house. He was about 50 years old at the time. He decided to build this house because his daughter and son-in-law lived with him in his first house. He didn't get along with the son-in-law very well, so he decided to build himself another house so that he would not have to live with them anymore.

"He bought an old toilet that was a pretty good size. It was a two-holer. He actually lived in this until he was able to get a room finished that was big enough for a bed and an old monkey stove. For cabinets, Mr. Figge nailed orange crates onto the walls."

For a living, Mr. Figge used an old white horse and wagon to haul junk for people. "He junked around all over town with this old horse to haul trash. When he happened to find

a bottle that he liked, he'd pick it up and take it with him. He'd take a nail and drive it into the wall, which was made of old boards he had found, and he'd wire that bottle onto this wall on the outside with an old piece of bailing wire, and just kept going around the house in rows until he got it all covered. There were all different colors of bottles, beautiful ones. A lot of them would be worth a fortune today."

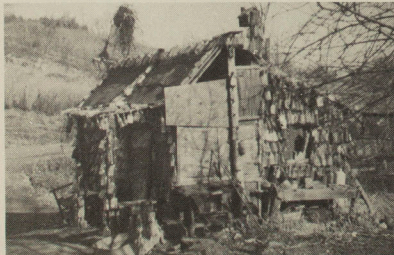
Mrs. Stewart remembered what it was like after the house was totally covered with bottles. "When the wind would blow you'd have to hear it to believe it, but them bottles would kind of crack together, and chime. My land, you could hear it for probably a block. They'd just chatter, beautiful sounds too, because some of them were quite heavy. He had whiskey bottles, and every other kind of bottle you could think of."

Later on he built another structure on the hill behind the bottle house which served as a church for people in that vicinity. Mrs. Stewart recalled attending services there.

After Mr. Figge died, the house was destroyed by kids who would go by and throw rocks to break the bottles, and finally it was torn completely down.

This house was a good example of folk architecture—something built without blueprints or any sort of planning. It was totally taken from Mr. Figge's imagination and he built it with supplies that he had on hand or found. It was a house that you could not only see, but also hear—The Kirksville Bottle House.

Photos Courtesy of Mr. Bill Stoukas



Whenever he found a bottle he liked, Figge wired it to his house, gradually covering it completely.



Mr. Bill Stoukas posed by the bottle house during the time he attended medical school in Kirksville.



FIGGE'S BOTTLE HOUSE

One of the best examples of Kirksville folk architecture, the Bottle House was built 55 years ago by Fred Figge. It was a predecessor to today's recycling movement, since he built it entirely out of materials that had been discarded by others.