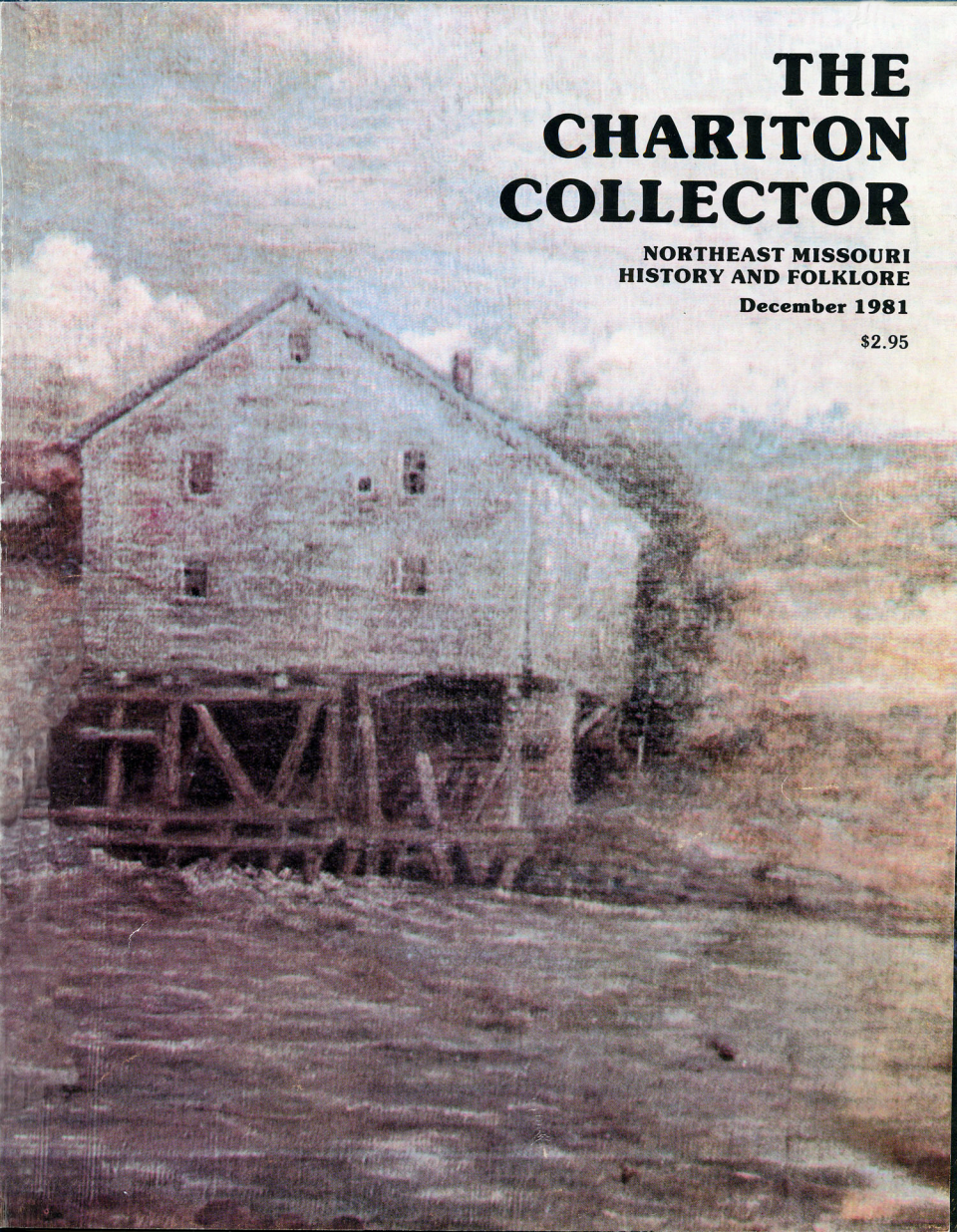


THE CHARITON COLLECTOR

NORTHEAST MISSOURI
HISTORY AND FOLKLORE

December 1981

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Cover Photo

A picture of the old mill at Yarrow, painted by local artist John W. Tinsman, is featured on the front and back cover of this issue. The story on Tinsman begins on Page 2. (Photo of painting by Ray Jagger)

Special Thanks

The *Chariton Collector* wishes to thank all those people who have shared their time and memories with us. Without them this publication would be impossible. Thanks for providing the "human touch" to Northeast Missouri History.

A special thanks to the members of the Adair County Historical Society and to Mrs. Odessa Ofstad, librarian of the Special Collections Library at Northeast Missouri State University, for their patience, assistance and interest in our project.



The W. P. Hall Circus, based in Lancaster in the early 1900s, is featured on Pages 18-23.

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The *Chariton Collector* is published by the Local History Class at Kirksville Senior High School. This special class attempts to preserve the history and folklore of Northeast Missouri.

A man of many hats

John W. Tinsman

By rights John W. Tinsman should be one of the best remembered men in Adair County. Within the 57 years since his death in 1924, however, his identity has become relatively obscure. Tinsman, a unique and interesting man, was a businessman, politician, artist and humorist.

Mrs. Helen Rieger became interested in him and his artistic works while employed as curator for the Violette Museum at Northeast Missouri State University in Kirksville. "I found him very interesting because when I thought of him I thought of not one man but several because of the various things he was interested in," Mrs. Rieger commented.

Tinsman, the son of Martin and Susan (Coppas) Tinsman, was born July 31, 1842, in Harmony, Butler County, Penn. Thirteen years later he moved to Adair County with his

mother and four other children (J. A., Mary A., Fannie and Sarah). In 1860, young Tinsman graduated from a log school house on the banks of the Chariton River. The following year, at the outbreak of the Civil War, he enlisted in Company H, Seventh Missouri Cavalry, and participated in campaigns throughout Mississippi, Kansas, Arkansas and Texas. According to Mrs. Rieger, "Mr. Tinsman was either a first or second lieutenant in the Federal Army." At the termination of his initial commitment he re-enlisted and became a chief bugler in the Union Army.

Following his discharge from the Army, Tinsman returned to Kirksville and in November 1865 married Miss Dora Pannabaker, daughter of one of the most prominent families in Adair County at that time. The Tinsmans were parents of two sons and two daughters: Fred, Cliff, Flossie and Ida. Tragedy struck the Tinsman household in 1887 with the death of his wife, Dora, and later his 22-year-old daughter Ida.

The Businessman

Tinsman's business career began at the close of the Civil War when he returned to Kirksville and began the manufacturing of woolen goods with his father-in-law. After five years in this venture, he found it less than profitable. He quit the woolen business and became the owner of a saw and grist mill which he operated until 1875. That same year the great flood destroyed the mill and many of his personal possessions.

After losing his life-long savings he turned to other interests and once again began a new occupation. Tinsman had always been a talented artist as a youngster, and at this point in his life he used that talent to establish yet another new business. He opened an Art Studio and Photographic Gallery over McGovern's Store (now the Odd Fellows Lodge) on the west side of the square in Kirksville. Here he painted more than 3,000 scenic backgrounds that were sold to photographers all over the United States.

In 1895 Tinsman became General Manager for the Chicago Portrait Company and managed five western states including Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, California and Utah. As Mrs. Rieger recalls, "They made enlargements of photographs. The enlargements were life-size and they looked more like charcoal drawings than enlargements of photographs. There were a number of people in Kirksville that had them and if you got two enlargements, you got a premium and several of the premiums I have seen." After four years with this company he accumulated a small fortune and retired from this business.

Tinsman's last accountable business venture was in 1900 when he and one of his sons became interested in the Illinois Sewing Machine Company at Rockford, Ill. His involvement with that company lasted until 1904.



Story by J. S. Srnka

The Politician

John W. Tinsman was a strong Republican who cast his first presidential vote for Abraham Lincoln while in the Union Army in Little Rock, Ark. In 1892 Tinsman was elected mayor of Kirksville and was so successful that at the end of his term he was re-elected to that office.

1ST ELECTION RESULTS 1892

	1st Ward	2nd Ward
TINSMAN	157	184
PIERCE	106	104

2ND ELECTION RESULTS 1893

	1st Ward	2nd Ward	3rd Ward	4th Ward
PORTER	91	51	88	84
TINSMAN	99	68	90	120

Tinsman was able to accomplish a great deal during his short administration. He was responsible for a new water system, macadamized streets (a surface packed with a layer of small broken stone on an earthen road bed), new sidewalks and numerous other public improvements. Tinsman, a popular politician, was elected State Representative and was a member of the Missouri 45th General Assembly which met in 1909-1910.

The Artist

Another interest of John W. Tinsman was, of course, his painting. A niece of Tinsman wrote in a letter, "Mother said that when he was a small boy he used to paint pictures with keal (I don't know how to spell it, but something he found among the rocks around the rivers), anyway, he was always painting during any spare time he had."

Examples of his art are scattered throughout northeast Missouri; Tinsman was an accomplished painter. Dr. George A. Still, a prominent Kirksville doctor and art collector, said in 1919, "Few people know that in our own midst is an artist whose works have hung in the Paris Salon, one of whose sunsets was reproduced and sold to the extent of twenty thousand dollars by a color lithogramure company."

In an interview, Dr. P. O. Selby, Dean Emeritus of NMSU and Adair County Historian, said Tinsman studied at the Museum of Fine Arts in St. Louis and at the Chicago Art Institute. It was while he was employed by the Chicago Portrait Company that he studied painting at the Chicago Art Institute.

According to an article published in the "American Art News," Volume 3, Number 5, March 11, 1905, "John W. Tinsman, formerly a business man of Chicago, has now given up business definitely, proposes to devote himself to art, and has gone to Paris for study. He has already made some effective studies of the coast of California, his sunset scenes being especially good." He spent the following year studying painting in Paris and at the art capitals of Italy.

When Tinsman returned from Europe, he built a studio near Youngstown on a high bluff overlooking the Chariton River; he affectionately called it "Idylwild."

Mrs. George L. Scriven knew Tinsman when she was a schoolgirl in Youngstown. As she recalls her impressions of Idylwild, "There was a huge stone fireplace; it was one big room and resembled a cabin. There was one room, and it was just covered with pictures."



Tinsman's Studio

964315



Seascapes such as the one above were among Tinsman's most popular subjects. He was also noted for his sunsets and scenes painted while he studied art in Paris. Dr. George A. Still commented in 1919 that few people in the area realized such a renowned artist lived in their midst.



Tinsman was a generous man and had a good rapport with children. According to Mrs. Scriven, "On the last day of school Mr. Tinsman invited the school children to Idylwild for a picnic. I lived on the other side of the river in a village. That day the river was up and I didn't get to go. He had promised all the girls would get a painting. Later that summer my parents and I went to Idylwild and he gave me a painting. It turned out that I was the only girl to receive a painting."

Tinsman was known for his landscapes of the Chariton hills; however, he also painted about nine portraits. One of his more interesting portraits was one that he did for the Knights of Pythias. It was a portrait of Pythagoras, who was the ruling spirit of the Knights. Mrs. Rieger remembers, "The portrait was to be of his brother, as well as Pythagoras. I thought that there couldn't have been a man as ugly as that. One time I happened to stumble on a picture of his brother, who didn't have a beard, but the eyes, the nose and the facial structure of the portrait are exactly that of his brother."

In 1919 Dr. Still hosted an art exhibit and sale in his home

(presently the Srnka house). This function was held for the benefit of the Adair County Soldiers Memorial Fund to erect a monument in the Argonne Woods. Dr. Still "handpicked" a collection of paintings for the occasion. Two pictures by Tinsman were included, "The Isle of Capri" and "Street Scene in Venice." Dr. Still had this to say about Tinsman's work: "Mr. Tinsman's sale paintings are many times more valuable than the price asked. They are real paintings by a real artist."

In 1924, one year before his death, Tinsman gave his entire collection of approximately 171 paintings to the Violette-Robinson Historical Collection. According to Mrs. Rieger, "He donated it with a clause. If it was not exhibited it should be returned to his heirs." The Jan. 30, 1924, issue of "The Teachers College Index" states, "The collection consists of seventy-four landscapes, mostly scenes near 'Idylwild,' Tinsman's Studio in the Chariton hills; fifty-four sea views; fifteen European scenes, mostly of Venice and the Bay of Naples; nine portraits and a portrait of Mr. Tinsman painted by Earl Musick, a former Teachers College Student, now an art student in Chicago; five cartoons; and thirteen



This painting of Pythagoras, done for the Knights of Pythias, was one of Tinsman's few portraits. Tinsman used his brother, J. A. Tinsman (pictured above), as the model for the portrait.

miscellaneous paintings." In 1965 one of his heirs discovered the paintings were not being exhibited and asked that they be returned to him. The university did return what was left of the collection. Some of Tinsman's paintings not included in the above collection are still privately owned.

The Humorist

The book, "The Youngstown Council," written by Tinsman and copyrighted in 1921, is a good example of Tinsman's sense of humor. Dr. Selby recalled that "Mr. Tinsman often referred to himself as the Mayor of Youngstown." The fictitious events about which Tinsman wrote may provide some insight into the small-town politics of Youngstown and the trials and tribulations of its "sister city," Kirksville. Here are two passages from that book:

"How The Glue Factory Plan Fell Through" — The Town Council met last night in the blacksmith shop to consider a factory proposition from a feller in Kansas City, the town hall having been previously rented by the nightwatch for a dance. After the Council was called to order by the mayor, the feller from Kansas City made the following statement:

"I have just as good a little glue factory as ever curled smoke

out of a chimney in Kansas City, but I am hampered for want of space. What I want is to git out where I can have plenty of room and good air. All I ask is for the town to donate a site and subscribe ninety-five dollars to put up a suitable shed to commence operations. After which I will give work to a right smart chance of folks in your community. I am ready to move just as soon as the site is deeded and the money subscribed.

"I might just add that Kirksville is trying hard to secure this factory."

After the feller set down, the Mayor hit the box with the hammer and said, Well, boys, what are you going to do. The councilman from the ward next the river got up and made a concise statement, to-wit, as follows: He enlarged on our great advantages with the river right at our doors. He said it's surely high time the people of Youngstown reached out after some of the good things that were offered and clinched the argument by saying he would head the subscription list with five dollars, after which he set down and the Mayor hit the box with the hammer.

Then the Councilman from the ward next the stock pens arose in a quiet and dignified manner and said:

"I am dimetrically opposed to a glue factory. We have one of the best towns in Adair county. Our people are seeking for refinement and culture rather than wealth. They like the smell of



Above, this angle of Idylwild shows the steep bluff upon which it was built (photo courtesy of Mrs. George Scriven). Right, Tinsman in Colorado in front of scenery not unlike the kind he painted for studios.



growing corn, new-made hay and clover blossoms, then why in Sam Hill should we contaminate the town with the smell of glue. If Kirksville wanted the factory let them have it—they are in the habit of snapping up everything that comes along regardless of smell or quality. Anyway the smell of glue would be no worse than the smell of drug stores, besides the factory could utilize the many empty bottles found in the alleys and stairways to bottle up liquid glue thereby starting a permanent industry for Kirksville."

At this juncture his honor hit the box hard calling the members to order, saying, we can't tolerate any insinuations against our sister city, the Athens of North Missouri, the seat of learning and the town of churches. So the member from the ward near the stock pens set down.

The feller from Kansas City seemed displeased with the turn things had taken and proceeded to light his pipe with a clouded brow. After a short pause the member from the ward near Young's barn got up and said he was greatly surprised that a member of the council should get up and throw cold water on our first great enterprise on account of the smell, when said member's residence joined the stock pens of the I. & St. L. R. R. and further said I fully acquiesce with the stand taken by the member of the ward next the river.

At this point the Mayor motioned the nightwatch with whom he held a whispered conference. It afterwards developed that his honor did not quite understand what acquiesc meant, but as soon as he did he hit the box with the hammer and said, all right, we will proceed with the business.

The member who acquiesced then set down. At this juncture of the proceedings the gasoline engine in the adjoining building commenced to grind feed whereupon the member from the ward near the deepo moved that the Factory proposition be layed over till the next regular meeting. The motion carried Sina Di after which the Mayor hit the box with the hammer and declared the Council adjourned. City Clerk.

Here is another passage from "The Youngstown Council:—"

Visiting Tinsman's Studio — Last Tuesday was set by the Mayor and Council of Youngstown to visit Tinsman's Studio. The artist having given them a cordial invitation, saying never mind silk hats and tuxedo coats as the affair will be informal and be sure to bring along the City Clerk to write up the trip. So promptly at ten a.m. the Mayor and Council went up the steep Bluff and landed in front of the Studio. The Mayor was out of breath saying what in Sam Hill ever made you build way up here on this sand stone cliff. Well answered the artist one thing was to be out of the way of the backwater, after Kirksville builds their big power dam, but come in and make yourselves at home said the artist.

After a few moments for a refreshment and passing of Virginia Cheroots the crowd began to size up the works of art produced

by the artist while in Rome last winter. The mayor remarked, ain't some of your pictures rather red. Yes, said the artist those are Sun Sets. The Scene was red when I painted them late in the evening. Finally his honor fetched up in front of a painting and said what do you call this. That said Tinsman is the Ruins of the Roman Aqueduct built under the reign of Claudius. What do they use it for said the Mayor? The artist explained that about eighteen hundred years ago when Rome was at its best, the prohibitionists commenced to get in their work and caused all of the Breweries to be moved out about forty miles into the mountains. The Aqueduct was built to run the beer back to Rome as they had no rail roads those days and they couldn't have found teams enough in all the country to have hauled it in. Well said his honor, I'll be Gosh Dinged. But said the artist it turned out bad for Rome in the long run for under the Reign of Nero the City imagined they had to drink all the Beer that was run through and over that Aqueduct. Just as it is today. Some towns that have gone dry imagine they must drink all the whiskey and beer that is shipped in just because it's bottled up...

The member from near the stock pens here remarked consulting his watch. If I am not at home for meals, my wife creates discord and the Mayor said well boys, we had better go too and remarked Tinsman we have had a good time and I would like to spend a whole day with you. Come over and attend the council meeting sometime. His honor was heard to remark later on to look at that man Tinsman when you meet him you wouldn't think he knew anything. But from the way he paints and what he knows about the Roman Aqueduct he sure has been going some. City Clerk.

John W. Tinsman was indeed a unique and interesting man.

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See next page for Youngstown cartoons by Tinsman.

YOUNGSTOWN

By David Cody and James Sells

Youngstown's history dates back to the late 1850s when George Young and his family moved there in 1859. Young purchased some of his land, located five miles south of Novinger, under the Swamp Act and the remaining 510 acres under the Homestead Act for \$1.25 per acre.

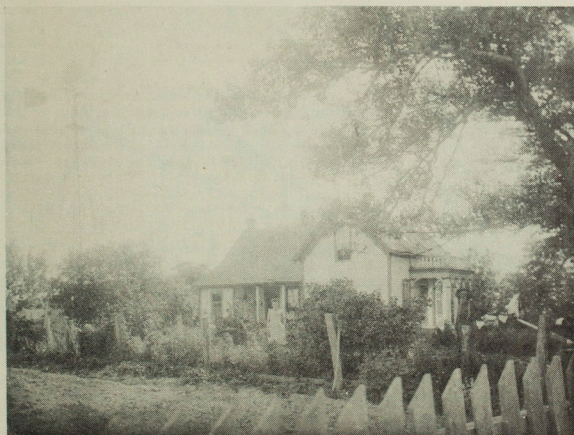
Young founded the town when the I and St. Louis railroad was built in 1904. There were two very productive mines in the area: Midland Camp No. 4 and the Artic I mine. The Artic I camp kept all miners working at a steady pace for it

yielded 500 tons of coal per day.

These mines brought a lot of activity to the small community of Youngstown and the settlement soon became the trading center for the area. Most of Youngstown's residents were miners.

Although the mines have long since closed and the population has dwindled, there are still fond memories of old Youngstown.

Mrs. Herman Current, now a resident of Kirksville, lived in Youngstown until she graduated from eighth grade at Sloan's Point School. Her father, Henry Hediger, ran one of the



George Young, the founder of Youngstown, posed in front of his home for this photo. Young started the town in the late 1850s, and two productive mines there made it a trading center for the area. Most of the residents were miners.



MEMBER FROM NEAR
THE STOCK PENS



MEMBER FROM NEXT
THE RIVER



HIS HONOR, THE MAYOR



MEMBER FROM WARD
NEAR DEPO



MEMBER FROM NEAR
YOUNG'S BARN

Members of the Youngstown City Council as depicted by artist John W. Tinsman in his book, "The Youngstown Council," copyright 1921. Excerpts from the book are included in the feature on Tinsman beginning on Page 2 of this issue.

town's general stores (Harry Balch ran the other general store), was the town's postmaster and was owner of an implement store all in the same building. "I can still remember working in the grocery store when I was just tall enough to see over the counter," Mrs. Current recalled. "The miners would flock into the store on pay day and load up with groceries.

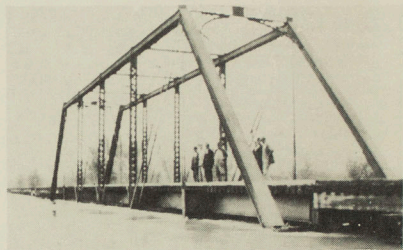
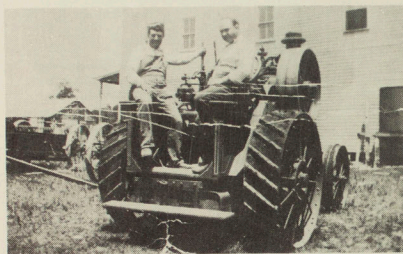
"The upstairs part of our store was used as the town's dance hall, but my father had to stop renting it out because of some problems with liquor."

One of the special things Mrs. Current remembers was the annual Fourth of July celebration. "My dad operated a horse-drawn merry-go-round which added to the excitement of the event. The townspeople would look forward to that all year."

The general store proprietors also cut and stored ice for the town. "The ice house was a little wooden shack where they stored all of the ice collected from the river. They would cut the ice blocks out of the river. Then they hooked the ice blocks to strong rope to our horse. They would tug the horse a bit and pull the ice out of the river. When they got all the ice they needed, they would cover it with sawdust.

"There was a lot of fishing on the river, too," Mrs. Current said. "I knew one fellow who would fish using a live box. He would catch a bunch and sell them to the townspeople. I've tried to find fish today that tasted that good, but back then there was no pollution and the fish tasted better."

The children around Youngstown attended Sloan's Point School and Mrs. Current walked a mile-and-a-half to school every day. The old school house is still standing and presently occupied. The big white building can be seen from Forest Lake at Thousand Hills State Park on the west side near the dam.



Left, John Henry Hediger and "Shorty" Collins in front of the General Merchandise Store in Youngstown. Right, this photo of the railroad bridge over the Chariton River was taken when the river was at flood stage.



Left, the Harry Balch General Store, which operated from 1900 to 1937. In front of the store is Harry, Irene and Hazel Balch. Above, Henry Hediger on the porch of the Henry Hediger General Merchandise Store and Post Office.

The Panther Hunt

Many people in northeast Missouri claim they have seen panthers or have heard their awesome screams. Tangible proof of the big cat's existence in this area is not available, but the stories persist.

On one hand, conservation agent Bill Otten tells us there might be some big cats in southern Missouri, but there aren't any around here. On the other hand, Clarence Lipper once dug up what appeared to be a panther paw print some years back and turned the print over to the Adair County Court House. A few months later the print was on display in the window of Montgomery Ward and he has never seen it since.

The facts say no panthers live here but the idea that this fascinating and mysterious animal could be hiding out in the forests of northeast Missouri intrigues us. So, if you have any information or stories about the existence of panthers in this area, please contact *The Chariton Collector*.

The term "panther" is a name loosely used for certain members of the cat family. It is given to the leopard, a native of Asia and Africa, and also to the puma of North America, also known as the cougar or mountain lion. It is the latter term we are interested in, and the word panther will be used instead of mountain lion.

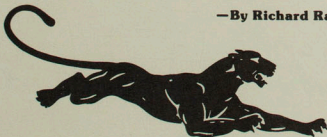
The panther once lived throughout the forests of the United States and southern Canada. When settlers moved in, the animal was driven from large areas. Early settlers called the animal "mountain lion" because of its resemblance to a female lion. Especially in the eastern states it was known as the panther.

The color of the panther varies from grey or tawny (a reddish or yellowish color) to the mysterious solid black. A full-grown animal may be five feet long or more, not counting the tail which is two to three feet long. It may weigh anywhere from 80 to 260 pounds and can cover 20 feet in one bound. A leap as far as 40 feet has been recorded. Panthers have been known to leap upwards to a height of 15 feet and drop to the ground from a height of 60 feet.

Many people think the panther is highly dangerous, yet surveys show that attacks on human beings are rare. It may have gained its undeserved reputation of ferocity from its blood-curdling scream and its habit of stalking people. Some naturalists believe panthers stalk people because of curiosity.

Two stories of close encounters with panthers follow.

—By Richard Ralston



THOSE SCREAMING CREATURES

"This is the story of a panther I seen when I was a boy back on the farm out west of Kirksville. One night we were working on my little brother's car. He had blown the motor in it and we were working on it in the garage. It was around 11:00 or 11:30 one night when we heard this awful screaming noise down behind the garage ... down, about one-quarter of a mile there in a ditch. We didn't think a whole lot about it, so we went ahead working on the car.

Very shortly, we heard another one. It was getting closer. We got concerned then, so we moved into the house and got

ahold of Dad and he came out there. By that time it had got pretty close up there to the hen house, just south of the house, and let out another scream. Our dogs took to the front porch because they were scared to death. We were, too, but this thing finally quit and left that night.

The next morning I got up to go get the cattle in, to do the milking, but strangely enough, the cattle were right up against the fence, just bawlin' and a carryin' on, trying to get through the fence. When I opened the gate, they just made a run for the barn. I couldn't figure out what was making them act this way. I looked down in a tree right east of the barn, and here was this great big black animal. I guess it was a panther.

I walked out there about 20 or 30 feet and hollered to Dad, and when I did, it piled right out of the tree and went on down the creek, and that was the last time I ever seen it. However, the neighbor down the road seen it there beside his barn a couple of weeks later when he had a similar accident happen. He actually got a shot at the panther. We checked the tracks out over in the creek the next morning from where our place was and it was a very large track, much larger than a dog, and definitely one which I've never seen around here before. The animal was, basically, one which is not in the state of Missouri. Since then there have been a lot of reports of seeing black panthers, though.

One evening we were out coon hunting out around Sherry, Mo. Our dogs went running something and very shortly we heard a thing let out a scream there. The dogs came back to us and we picked them up and headed on home for the night.

I don't know for sure whether there are panthers in the state of Missouri. They definitely have been seen and it's been pretty well confirmed that black panthers are what these screaming creatures are."

—By Clyde Findling
as told to
Terry Findling

A CLOSE ENCOUNTER

This is the story of my great-grandfather's close encounter with a panther. It happened one night when he was coming home from the timber around Goldsberry, Mo., located in northwest Macon County. He was riding his horse and as he stopped at a gate and got off to open it the horse began to act a little spooky. When he got back on the horse, it bolted and ran. A few yards down the road and beyond the gate stood a large tree with big branches hanging over the road. As they went under the tree, my great-grandfather felt something go by him but wasn't sure what it was.

After arriving home, he put the horse in the barn and as it was dark didn't check the horse until the next morning. What he saw puzzled him - the horse had long scratches down his hip which, on close inspection, seemed to be claw marks. When the veterinarian came out to check on the horse the next day, he said the wounds were definitely cat scratches ... probably from a panther.

—By Richard Ralston
From an interview with
Otha E. Ralston, Jr.



MISS PHRADIE WELLS

as she appeared in the role of Brunnhilde in Wagner's "Die Valkyrie" at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City.

Phradie Wells

"I've never known anybody to accomplish what she did who was as humble about it as she was. She had a beautiful humility," said Mrs. Edgar (Kathryn) Myers, a close friend of Miss Phradie Wells, a former resident of Kirksville and a soprano in the Metropolitan Grand Opera from 1923 to 1936.

"I think that people around here didn't know about her very much, until she passed away.

"There are many things I could tell you about her that I found interesting, things that I might tell you or show you so that you could see her, the kind of person that she was. I've never had a friend like her, ever."

Phradie Wells was born April 27, 1893, in Economy, Mo., in Macon County, which is located east of Atlanta, Mo. She was the daughter of William R. and Laura Wells. She came to Kirksville at the age of 15 or 16 with her parents, who left the farm to educate their children. She received her high school education in Kirksville.

Phradie thought it was "pretty silly" when Oscar Saenger said she was good enough for the Metropolitan.

Mrs. Myers first met Phradie in 1915 while she was involved in the music department at the Normal School. At this time Phradie was the director of the First Baptist Church Choir and she asked Mrs. Myers to participate in the choir, thus beginning a long and rewarding friendship for both. Phradie directed the choir for many years.

During her education at the Normal School, Phradie quit for a while and taught to earn enough money to further her education. She taught at a country school east of Kirksville called Radical Ridge. The school house stood where Dr. Harry Still now lives.

After graduating from the Normal School, her first good position was as supervisor of music in the Chillicothe, Mo., schools. She also served as director of dramatic music in the Chillicothe High School from 1918 to 1921.

Once Phradie was asked to give a concert in Chillicothe. Her accompanist in Kirksville at the time was Eva Englehart, who taught music and gave piano lessons. Eva had accompanied her several times previously when she was home.

Phradie, Mrs. Myers and Eva were on their way to Chillicothe for the concert, and they had traveled almost 100 miles when Eva said, "Phradie, I forgot the music, I forgot to bring it. I just don't have it."

"Forgot the music?" Phradie asked.

"Yes," she said, "but I think I can play it."

Phradie had enough confidence in her that they went through that concert without one mistake.

After she had taught in Chillicothe for a couple of years she decided to go to the city to take voice lessons. Mr. Gebhart, her teacher on the Normal School campus, had told her she had possibilities and she should work with a

good teacher, one in the city. He recommended she go to Chicago, Ill., and study with Oscar Saenger. Saenger was a very fine voice teacher who lived in New York, but came to Chicago during the summer to teach voice. Thus she decided she would go to Chicago one summer and study with Saenger.

After he heard her sing, Saenger told her that if she would come to New York, he could get her into the Metropolitan Grand Opera within a year, which she thought was "pretty silly."

During the time she was in Chicago studying with Saenger, Phradie was asked to go to Denver, Colo., to be the supervisor of music in all of the schools in Denver. Arthur Threlkeld had taken the superintendency of the Denver schools and he had recommended her.

At this point she didn't know what to do. She came back from Chicago and went to Mrs. Myers' house one afternoon and said, "What should I do, Kathryn? Should I go to New York? I haven't any money really. Or should I take this wonderful position out in Denver?" Mrs. Myers suggested she go to New York.

Phradie sold the coupe she owned, and with what money she had she went to New York, giving up the job in Denver.

While in New York she roomed with a woman who was a family friend. She had a chance to audition for a solo job in a Presbyterian Church in South Orange, N.J. After completing the audition, they hired her to sing a solo each Sunday for which she was paid \$25, a vast sum of money to her. This money she earned singing each Sunday took care of her room rent and part of her board. She sang in the church as soloist for 13 years.

She saw in a New York newspaper an advertisement from an Italian boy who wanted to exchange Italian lessons for English lessons, so she answered the ad. After completing a year of Italian lessons she could speak it and sing it well from only the lessons she received from this boy.

Later she started studying again with Saenger in New York and within nine months she was singing in Carnegie Hall.

"She made quite an impression on the music people who heard her," Mrs. Myers said.

Giulio Gatti-Casazza, the director/conductor of the Metropolitan Grand Opera, heard her and asked her to come for an audition, which she thought was "pretty funny." Nevertheless she went, saying she wasn't the least bit nervous about it because she thought it wouldn't amount to anything, anyway. So she sang for him and in two or three days he called her back for a second audition. She went back and sang for him the second time and in three or four days he called her and told her he would like to have her on the Metropolitan roster. She had been in New York less than a year when this happened.

She performed with the Metropolitan Grand Opera for 13 years and sang some very important roles, more than she

By Annette Greer

ever told anyone. Phradie often sang in the Sunday evening concerts at the Met.

Phradie's talent and character was well respected in opera circles. Mrs. R. E. Valentine recalls hearing her in quartettes with famous singers such as Elizabeth Rethberg, Lawrence Tibbett, Ezio Pinza and Gincomo Lauri Volpi.

While in New York Phradie wrote a letter to Mrs. Myers saying, "I wish you and Mother would get me a gallon of sorghum and send it to me. I want to have a Missouri dinner for Galli Curci and two or three other personalities in the opera company."

She served navy beans, corn bread and the sorghum molasses. But she never told anyone about these things, that she had entertained Galli Curci in her apartment. She would not think of it; it would sound as if she might be bragging

and that was not in her make-up at all. She was a very unusual, wonderful woman, Mrs. Myers said.

One day Mr. Gatti-Cassazza called her into his office and said, "Miss Wells, I called you in to tell you that you are a very high type American lady, one of the finest I've ever known." She told this to Mrs. Myers.

Phradie had been with the Metropolitan for 13 or 14 years when Gatti-Cassazza died suddenly. The man who took over the opera after Gatti-Cassazza was Herbert Witherspoon. Witherspoon fired everyone on the roster for no reason, wiping the slate clean of American singers. He then hired all European singers. Witherspoon lived only a short time after that.

The next person who took over the Metropolitan was Edward Johnson. Phradie was never invited back.

"She was a person who never pushed herself. I think she could have gotten back on the roster if she had tried, but she didn't, Mrs. Myers said.

Once or twice she sang on the program for the President of the United States and was entertained in the White House once, but she would never share accounts of these events with anyone.

In the 1930s she went abroad and studied in Florence, Italy, for one summer. While on board the ship enroute to Europe, she wrote letters home which told of wonderful things that happened to her. She gave a ship concert for charity. She had ovations and received many bouquets of flowers, and ate at the captain's table during the voyage.

When she was no longer with the Metropolitan, she stayed in New York for a while and did some radio work and a great deal of church singing. Then she accepted a position as head of music in the Randolph Macon College in Lynchburg, Va., and was there for approximately three years.

During one summer that Phradie was home she went to Mrs. Myers' home for dinner with Mr. and Mrs. John L. Biggerstaff. Biggerstaff was head of the music department at the Normal School.

In the course of the evening he said to her, "Have you ever thought about coming back to the campus to teach?" She said no, but she didn't like Lynchburg. She got upset with the people there over the way they talked about Abraham Lincoln. She didn't like it and she didn't want to be there any longer.

She had also considered coming back to Kirksville because her mother was ill and she felt that she should be with her.

After traveling back to the east Phradie received a letter from Biggerstaff asking her if she would consider coming back. She named a price she thought he perhaps would not meet, but he did. She came back to the Kirksville campus to teach and to take care of her mother and father until they passed away.

During her time at the Normal School she directed many operas.

"I never was able to understand why, when the time came that she could no longer sing her high B's and C's without flattening, that she quit singing," Mrs. Myers said. "Her middle register was beautiful, and it could be called a middle register because she could sing a high G and A beautifully.

"She never did sing any more after she retired from the teachers college. I tried to get her to do solo work. I tried to get her to sing in the choir, but she wouldn't," Mrs. Myers said.

Various photos proved how versatile Phradie could appear in performances.



Phradie never married, but there was a man in New York who had a big estate out on Long Island, and he proposed to her. He was very much in love with her, but it was in the beginning of her opera career. He was a very wealthy man and didn't want her to continue her singing. She was not in love with him enough to give up her career for him, so she refused to marry him.

There was another man in New York who proposed to her. He was very wealthy, but had no occupation. This man lived only off of his income, and Phradie also refused him.

Phradie told Mrs. Myers that she could never marry anybody who didn't work, who didn't have some aim in life, something to do. She just couldn't do that.

Phradie was a Wagnerian soprano and she sang in the Wagnerian operas.

She had been in the Metropolitan Grand Opera probably just a few months when Tiffany's, the jewelry store in New York at the time, came out with a new jewel called a floating opal which was to be worn around the neck. They presented Phradie with one of these opals and a New York paper ran a front-page article about two new gems in New York, Phradie being one and the floating opal the other. A picture of her with the opal accompanied the story.

"Phradie let me wear the floating opal for about two years and then I gave it back to her," Mrs. Myers said.

A couple of years before she passed away Phradie told Mrs. Myers she had lost the floating opal. Several times since that she would tell her she had lost it.

"It was a beautiful gem and of course meant a great deal to her because of Tiffany's having given it to her and all of the story that was woven around it," Mrs. Myers said.

"When I dismantled the house I decided that I was going to find that opal if I didn't find anything else. I went through piece by piece in her dressing table, every little sack, every little box, just anything. And I found that opal, in a little tiny box. She hadn't looked thoroughly enough for it," Mrs. Myers said. "I gave it to her nephew, Jimmy Wells."

While dismantling Phradie's house, Mrs. Myers found many scrapbooks, articles and many other things that no one had ever known about. She also found one of her costumes that had been locked away in a closet, but it was not in good condition.

"When I dismantled her house after she passed away, in a trunk in the basement I found many New York papers that told of the important roles that she sang that we had never known about in Kirksville. I don't

know why we didn't know, but we didn't. The papers lauded her and they said such marvelous things about her," Mrs. Myers said.

Phradie died Sunday morning, June 1, 1980, in the St. Lukes Hospital in Kansas City where she had been a patient for five days.

"Now these are the kind of friends we were with each other. We knew that neither one would do anything to the other purposely or deliberately; we were just on that kind of a friendship basis. It was just wonderful. She was quite a little older than I, but she took me under her wing when I came here to school. She was a very wonderful person.

"It hurt me terribly to know that in her last days she was not well and she became a recluse," Mrs. Myers concluded. "She didn't want to see people, she didn't like to go places, and she just stayed at home."





LICKSKILLET

Six miles east of Graysville, Mo., on the Chariton River in Putnam County, there is a "place" called Lickskillet. This place was a part of the coal mining boom in northeast Missouri during the early 1900s.

The name Lickskillet lives only in the memories of the people. Officially, it was known on the map as Mapleton, but the residents were said to be so poor that they lived mostly on fried onions and cow weed and had to lick the bottom of the skillet to survive. So for more than 70 years the unofficial name of Lickskillet took precedence over Mapleton. No matter what the map said, it was, and still is, Lickskillet.

To our knowledge, there is only one Lickskillet in northeast Missouri, but the name was not an uncommon one in the state. Many of the poorer and more isolated areas had this label attached to them. At one time, Missouri sported more than seven Lickskillets.

In an interview with Jack and Madie Rowland, former residents of the area, we found out what a place called Lickskillet was like.

The railroad came to Lickskillet in 1901 and the main business became carrying coal, mining coal on the slope mines and making props for the railroad. There were three stores in Lickskillet during the early 1900s. They were run by Bill Ramsey, Coleman Fowler and the Rowland Mining Company, the latter being located on the north hillside.

It is difficult to talk about Lickskillet without mentioning the local landmark, Sally Mountain. Sally Mountain stands at the edge of Lickskillet. "This landmark was named for an old lady, Sally Mosley, who lived on the east side of the road in an old log cabin shack called the Sally House," Jack said.

"It was an awful steep hill," Jack said, "and back in the early days a Model T couldn't pull it.

"When Model T's first came out there wasn't one in 25 that could pull that hill. The gas was gravity-fed and had no pumps to pull the gas to the motor. As a result, the car would stall on the trip up the hill. The driver then had two choices. He could back up the hill or have a passenger remove a cushion and blow air into the tank to force the gas to the carburetor.

"I don't know what the census would have been," Jack said, "but there were houses all along the north hillside, but most of the people lived in Lickskillet."

Coal was hauled by horse-drawn wagons. Jack remembers, "The wagons would pull along side the boxcars and the haulers would shovel the coal in, and the 'chunkers' were hired to shovel the coal to the back of the cars."

Jack's uncle, Noah Robbins, drove an old grey mare and hauled coal from the slope mines down to the railroad. He would pull five or six cars down the hill at a time. "One day, he started down the hill and didn't get his cars spragued (They would put sticks on the wheels to stop them from turning). The old grey mare went to running and she went right off into the car with five or six loads of coal falling on top of her and killed her.

"Once a day the train made a trip to Sedan, Iowa, and back (Sedan is 10 miles north of Livonia, Mo.). The train was primarily a freight train, although there was a caboose for the passengers. It turned around on the Y and brought supplies back."

"That was the official business during the week. But on the weekends the popular unofficial business began. Jack said, "There used to be a boxcar that set off the road by the railroad tracks and on Saturdays and Sundays this was known as the 'gambler's hideout.' I was a good-sized boy when just droves of people would come to gamble. They would come from Livonia, Worthington and everywhere else to gamble."



Jack and Madie Rowland, former owners of the Rowland Mining Company, described what it was like to live in Lickskillet back in the days when horse-drawn carriages were more common than Model T's. (Photo by James Ray)

Bootlegging was also common. "The Blind Tiger," a house located near the Chariton River Bridge, bootlegged the whiskey brought in from Unionville.

Although the place was one of bootlegging and gambling, the participants were not without feelings. One Unionville man remembers that one day a woman started down Sally Mountain leading her cow. The cow fell and broke its neck. Well, all the gamblers were sorry for the woman and said so, but one said that he was "sorry five dollars—How about the rest of you?" By sunrise, they had a cow bought for the family.

By James Ray

The first car around Lickskillet must have been a frightening thing to behold. Jack's wife, Madie, remembers it very well. "Simon Oliver owned the only car around and the folks called it the White Steamer. Pappy told us to get off the road if that old White Steamer came by because it ain't got no eyes—it can't see you. When it came down the road, me and mom took for the ditch and went toward the brush until the car passed. There wasn't but one car around and we were all scared to death of it!"

There were two schools in the area—Mapleton or Button School (the elementary school) and a school the kids called Hoog College (pronounced "hog"), located two miles from Sally Mountain.

Jack said, "I went to Hoog College. The old building had leaned until they cut some white oak poles and propped it up on the north side to keep it from falling any further. We had old wooden seats made out of two-by-sixes from the saw mill. The black board was just a board with a black streak painted across one end of it. The school didn't have any coal to heat the school house unless a miner's kid went there and his folks would donate a ton ever once in a while. When they didn't have coal, the teacher would dismiss two of the bigger boys and they would find stumps and twigs to keep the fire going."

July 4th was usually a day for celebration. When Jack was a kid, he remembered such a celebration near Lickskillet on FF Highway. "They had an old grey mare that pulled a merry-go-round. Bill Ramsey ran that. For the older folks, a feller ran a taxi service from FF to the Blind Tiger in Lickskillet where they were bootleggin' whiskey. He had a two-seated surrey and he would charge 25 cents a trip and if four or five went, he would charge a nickle or dime."

But those were special occasions. Most of the time they created their own entertainment. Dances were held in their homes. "For entertainment, the children would make a ball or ride brush down," Jack said. Riding brush down was accomplished by two or three holding limber sprouts down while another one sat on it. Then they would turn it loose.

Nature has reclaimed Lickskillet now. Jack said, "About all there is now to Lickskillet is a good fishing place. The train died out in 1940 and then the stores went out, then the mines and the people who were left went to trucking."



Sally Mountain may not be a mountain by western standards, but it certainly is one of the steepest climbs in northeast Missouri. (Photo by James Ray)



This bridge is one of the few man-made landmarks still existing around the Lickskillet area.

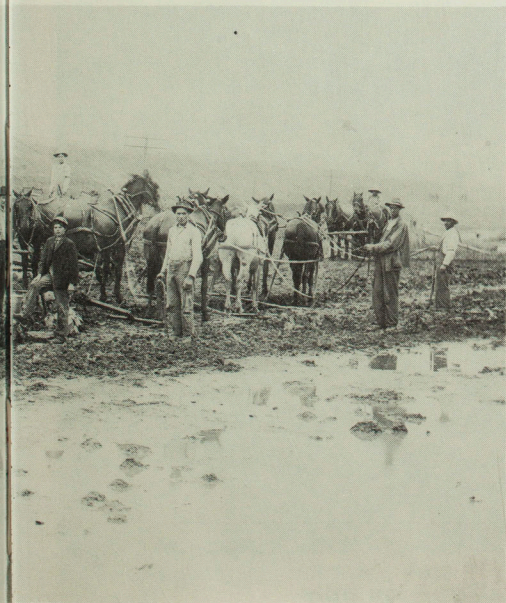
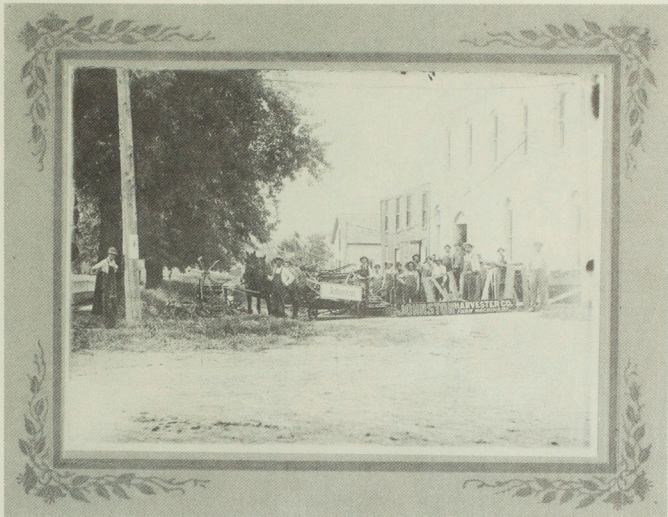
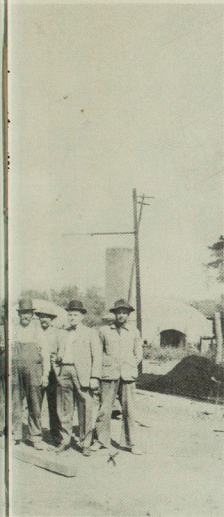


Reprinted in April 1937, this postcard shows the Trammel family, some of the residents of Lickskillet.

Scenes from the Past

Brick factories provided employment for many people in the early 1900s. Pictured in the top left photo are some of the employees of a brick factory in Des Moines, Iowa, in 1914. The top right photo was taken at the Johnston Harvester Co., a frequent gathering place for those in need of farm machinery and parts. Below left: A man afraid of hard work and long hours would not last long working for the railroad. William "Bill" Poston, second from the left, is shown with a railroad crew at Baring, Mo., during the late 1800s. This crew had the job of all excavation before the tracks of the Santa Fe were laid. Below right: The dress style of these immigrants shows the European customs brought with them to America. This photograph was taken in Adair County during the early 1900s.







William P. Hall and son Billy



By Bobby Poston

Some called him "Diamond Billy," others "Horse King of the World," and still others "Animal King of the World." But to the town of Lancaster, Mo., he was Colonel William Preston Hall. And to the generations to follow, he grew to be known as "quite a legend" and "quite a memory." When he first started into the brokering of horses, little did he know that he would make the peaceful town of Lancaster world famous, for this is where W.P. Hall's circus career all started.

Russell Wheeler helped provide invaluable information in the completion of the history of the W.P. Hall Circus. Also the Schuyler County Historical Society and Duane Montgomery contributed information to this article.

Young Businessman

Billy P. Hall was born near Downing, Mo., on Feb. 29, 1864. When he was 12 years old, his parents died, so this forced him to work for a farmer at \$1 a month. Duane told us that Billy hauled mine props from up around Martinstown into Lancaster as another source of income. "One time Billy

was coming from Martinstown with a load and his old wagon broke a wheel. By putting his crafty mind to work, he got out, cut a pole, and chained it to the front of the wagon, and extended it back in the place of the wheel. This served as a drag to get him into Lancaster," Duane said.

Hall saved his money, and with it, bought Nigger, a coal-black horse. At the age of 15 he went to Lancaster, to the Stretch Livery Barn, and asked if he could work in the barn to board Nigger.

By the time he was 18, Hall was buying and selling horses steadily, and it was at this time he got his first break. Russell told us, "A man by the name of Meng, from Philadelphia, was in Lancaster, and seeing Billy was a natural expert at horse buying, approached him with this deal: 'If you will buy good horses and ship them back to us in Philadelphia we will pay you good.'"

Horse Sense

There are tricks to every business, and Hall knew all of them. When he would take a load of horses to the auction in Lancaster and a horse would fail to bring his set price, what would he do? It sure wasn't give up. No sir. He would get some of his crew together, send them to his barn with this particular horse, clip its tail and mane a little shorter, and run it back through the auction block. And it usually worked.

One of the ways Billy got the animals he wanted was to go out and buy directly from the farmers. He would drive down dirt roads and if he saw a horse he liked, he would stop, get out and examine the animal, and if it was what he wanted, try and find the owner, so he could set up a deal. John Poston remembered meeting Billy on one of these trips.

John said, "I was just a young boy when Billy came up to the house. We lived southeast of Adair, Mo. Billy had managed to get his car stuck, and how he did that I'll never know, because it was in July, and it was mighty dry. Anyway, he wanted me to bring one of our horses down and

Russell Wheeler used to lead horses to the stockyard for Hall. Since he spent a lot of time around Hall's office and barns in the early 1920s, he grew to know him quite well.



COMING SOON
THE GREAT
Wm. P. HALL
SHOWS
COLOSSAL CIRCUS
DOUBLE MENAGERIE
ELEVATED AND REAL ROMAN HIPPODROME

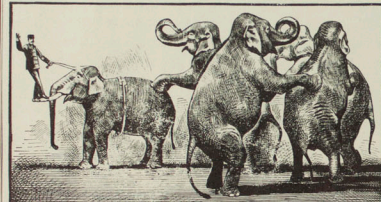


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pull his car to the main road. Well, I was too small to put the harness on the horse, and my dad he was in the fields farming, and Billy, well he wouldn't be bothered with helping me, so it was up to me.

"All of a sudden Billy came up with the ingenious idea of taking a rope and tying it to a knot in the horse's tail. So, thinking he knew what he was talking about, I took a rope and tied it to the horse's tail. I must have pulled that cock-eyed car a half a mile. But at the end of the line, Hall gave me 25 cents for my efforts. Let me tell you that was the first money I had had for a long time, but I would have traded it all, in replacement for the thrashing I got when my dad heard what had taken place."

Hall's First Sale Barns

In 1895 Hall opened a sale barn in Richmond, Va., with his brother, Lou Hall, managing it. Here he dealt for a year and returned to Lancaster to open another sale barn. It was at this time that the European Market was open to Billy so he bought a sale barn in Capetown, South Africa, to make his dealings more convenient. Here again Lou Hall stayed in Africa and served as his brother's connection.

When the Boer War broke out in 1899, the English called on Hall and set up a deal with him to supply them with horses, which Hall did until the war's end in 1902. The war was between the English and South African Republic. With the huge amount of horses needed, naturally it made Hall a rich man. Back in Missouri, he acquired the name of Colonel Billy.

It is hard to imagine how any one man with no formal education could handle such a consistent business. His wife taught him how to read and sign his name to business contracts. He kept no formal business records because, although his reading ability was limited, his mind was sharp as a needle. Russell said, "He had a photographic memory."

Once a fine gentleman came down from Bloomfield, Iowa, with a load of horses and wanted to sell them to Billy. One of the horses had a flaw in his left side, so Billy didn't want that one. About three years later this gentleman from Bloomfield sold the horse to a man in Springfield, Mo. In turn the man from Springfield brought this horse, along with some others for sale to Colonel Hall. Immediately he recognized it and said, "I've seen this horse before, and didn't want him, and I don't want him now."

The Ottumwa Daily Review stated, "In Corydon, Iowa, Billy Hall bought from the farmers as they came to offer their horses, one and two at a time, 326 head in six hours."

Animal Lover

Hall truly loved the animals he dealt with. He may have been a hurried man, having no time to wait for someone to get his horses together to sell, but there was always a special place in Hall's life for God's animals. Every morning he could be seen strolling down the main street of Lancaster with all the stray dogs in town tagging at his heels. They knew if they followed him down to the meat market, they would get a free meal. This showed just how much he loved animals. One thing is for sure, you never wanted to be mean to any animal if Hall was around, because he wouldn't have anything to do with you if you were.

Hall's elaborate circus showbill advertised "the greatest performers on earth."

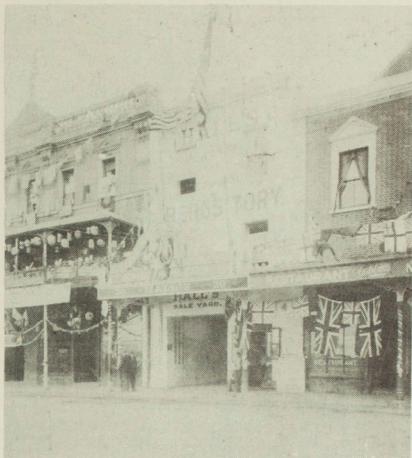
What really got Hall interested in the circus business was when he was in Europe buying horses. The European circuses were very detailed and this left a great impression on Billy. So he thought, why not bring this type of entertainment back to the United States? It wasn't until several years later, however, that Billy compiled a circus under his name.

The Circus

In 1904 Hall's latent circus dreams started to materialize. On Sept. 3 that year, Hall purchased the Nickle Plate Circus, known as the W.H. Harris Circus. Then on Sept. 16 he purchased the Walter Main Circus. He combined the accessories from both and formed them into the W.P. Hall Circus.

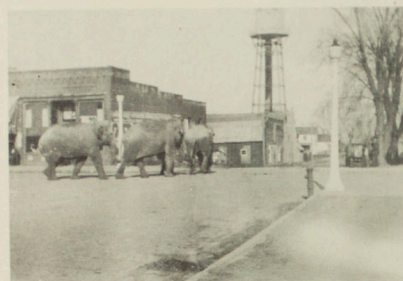
With his silk hat as his trademark, Hall's Circus opened May 6, 1905, in Lancaster. It was on the road until August 1905 when it was brought back to Lancaster and disbanded. This was the only time a circus was on the road under the name of W.P. Hall. The rest of the equipment and animals were sold to other circuses. His circus career on the road was over, but now he was to go back into business of supplying equipment for other circuses.

Hall's Sale Barn in Capetown, South Africa (above), was operated by his brother Lou. By 1895 Hall was active in the European market, shipping hundreds of horses and mules to Hamburg, Germany, and London, England. In 1900 he shipped an average of four carloads each day. Below, Hall used beautiful circus wagons to parade his performers every morning.





The yard of W. P. Hall's home in Lancaster was often full of exotic animals and their trainers.



Hall was more impressed with his elephants than any of the other animals he owned. At the peak of his elephant dealings he had one of the largest herds in the country. The photo above shows three of his elephants, including "Tommy Ding" and "Boo," parading the square of Lancaster. Right, elephants practicing tricks in Midwest barnyards would probably be considered an unusual sight, but Hall made it a common occurrence around Lancaster in his time.



Hall's method for selling merchandise was a well-planned operation. If a circus needed elephants, he would sell them to this particular circus on time. But if they defaulted in paying for the animals, not only did he take back his elephants, but he repossessed the whole circus. And since a contract was signed at each deal, everything was legal. This was how Hall came to acquire so many circuses and his famed wealth.

Hall's office was in one of the old Yankee Robinson show cars. This car had a section at the back set up so he and his buddies could spend some of their time doing what they liked to do: gamble. In the front were his office quarters. He had an oak stove, two rockers and one long bench down the side. This bench is where the loafers sat. By the door was the phone. He quoted prices right over the phone, using no price guides, just his remarkable memory. Hall had a railroad siding at the west end of Lancaster. This was to harbor his coaches and box cars. His barns were built with two levels. The ground level housed wagons, tools, harnesses, etc., and the basement held the wild animals, as well as serving as a training arena.

When the World's Fair came to St. Louis in 1904, Hall was again called on to supply horses for it. This was to provide a re-enactment of the Boer War as one of the fair's attractions.

Elephant Tales

Of all the animals acquired, the elephants he bought impressed him the most. He bought his first two elephants, Duke & Mary, in 1904. By the time he was at the peak of his elephant dealings, he had acquired one of the largest single herds of elephants in the United States. In 1908 Hall imported 36 head of elephants from overseas. The inexperience of hauling elephants was sure to take its toll; by the time the shipment reached Lancaster only five survived. The rest had died of mishandling.

In all the years Hall was in the circus business, only two

times did elephants die while under his ownership. One had to be shot, and the other got sick and laid down. Once it got down, it could not be raised, even with the workers' help, so it, too, died. The carcasses were buried in the grazing fields, under enormous manure piles.

The last load of elephants he bought was eight head from a fellow in Los Angeles. Little did Hall know that he and his crew would face a tremendous challenge at unloading this last load. Russell's brother, Guy, along with Bert McClain and Hall, was helping unload the elephants in Lancaster. Guy wanted to put a set of hobbles on the lead elephant so he would set a slow pace for the rest of the elephants.

But Bert said, "Oh, no that won't be necessary." As soon as the first male elephant came out of the car, however, it started to stampe. This elephant was mad. Billy tried everything possible to secure the elephant, but it was useless. Finally, they had to shoot it near Exline, Iowa.

For Sale: One Circus, Complete

In May 1932, Billy decided to turn some of his holdings into cash. Since the Great Depression had a firm grip on the economy, everyone was in need of money. He ran a billboard reading: "For Sale: elephants, cat animals, bears, camels, railroad cars, wagons, cages, canvas, seats, etc. Will sell cheaply for cash. W.P. Hall, Lancaster, Missouri."

On June 30, 1932, Billy died of cancer at the age of 68. He had seen his circus dreams blossom, and now they had withered and were over.

But from 1932 to 1938, Bert McClain, along with Mrs. Hall, attempted to sell the remaining merchandise. By 1938 the W.P. Hall Circus was completely sold off. But the impression Billy left on Lancaster and the rest of the world by bringing laughter, with every circus he brought to town, would not be forgotten.



Hall was active in the European market in the late 1890s, and specialized in horses and mules. From 1895 to 1900, Hall made more than 30 trips to Europe with the animals. It was on these trips that Hall developed his interest in the circus business.



Top photo, the W. P. Hall home in Lancaster is now a museum owned by the Schuyler County Historical Society. Left, elephants pulling fancy carts full of fancy ladies were also a common sight in northeast Missouri. Hall decided to turn some of his holdings into cash when the Great Depression hit, so he put all of his animals and circus equipment up for sale. He died shortly after, and relatives continued to sell the remaining merchandise for the next six years.





Syrup for the Tapping

By Mark McIntyre and Chris Collop

As we were driving down behind the dam of Forest Lake on an old shale road, we looked off toward the old Chariton River. We saw several hundred trees with one-gallon milk jugs hanging on them.

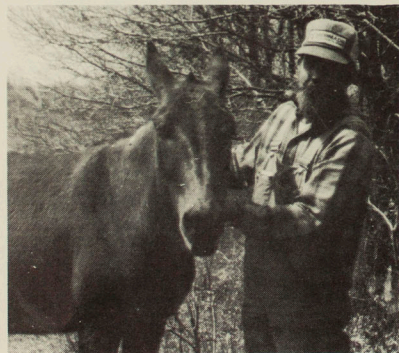
We drove on down the road about another quarter of a mile and saw a contraption that had the appearance of a still. For a moment we thought we were back in the times of Prohibition. We could imagine what people would think when they saw it. They would probably wonder who the crazy man was that would put a still right along a public road. Well, the man isn't crazy nor is the contraption z still. It's just Etzel Sanders' cooker-evaporator, which he uses for his maple syrup operation.

Etzel has been making maple syrup most of his life. When he was a boy, his mother would say, "Etzel, you better get out there and tap the trees; the sap's running!" He would use a hollowed-out elderberry twig for the tube, allowing the sap to flow into a bucket. To evaporate his sap he would put it in a metal bucket on the family's wood-burning cook stove.

Etzel has considerably improved and modernized his operation since he was a boy. Today he uses an empty 12-gauge shotgun shell for the tube and he uses a water tank from an old steam engine for the evaporator.

Etzel says selecting the tree is the easiest part of making maple syrup. Any species of maple will do; however, some work better than others. Neither the age nor the size of the tree makes any difference. The tapping process does not harm the tree, either.

To tap the tree, Etzel drills a $\frac{3}{4}$ " hole into the tree about chest high, four inches back. As many as four or five holes



Etzel Sanders doesn't buy his maple syrup at grocery stores; instead he manufactures it himself. His companion in this photo is his mule Jake.

may be bored into the tree depending upon its size. An empty 12-gauge shotgun shell (with the metal end cut off) serves as the tube for the sap to flow through. Etzel hammers the tube into the hole until about an inch is left outside the tree.

To catch the sap, Etzel cuts out a gallon milk jug, as shown in the photograph, and then nails it to the tree.

The sap looks and tastes like water. It usually begins to flow during late February and continues through March. The sap is colorless and it is only during the cooking process that it begins to change and take on the rich brown color associated with maple syrup.

When the jug is full, Etzel unscrews the cap on the jug, which allows the sap to fall into a bucket. He then covers the bucket with a lid and loads it into his truck to haul to the cooker-evaporator.

The sap usually contains from two to three percent sugar but can contain as much as 10 percent sugar depending upon the quality of the tree. The cooking process evaporates the water and miraculously changes the color of the sap. The reason for the color change is that there is less water in the sap to hide its color.

Before pouring the sap into the pan, a clean cloth is stretched across the top of the bucket to keep any debris out of the syrup. Cooking the sap is the most tedious part of making maple syrup; however, it does allow one to catch up on all the gossip.

The stove part of the cooker was made from the water tank on an old steam engine. It has been lined with firebricks.

A hot fire is built in the stove so that the sap will come to a boil. The top of the stove has been cut away so that the bottom of the pan is in direct contact with the flames.

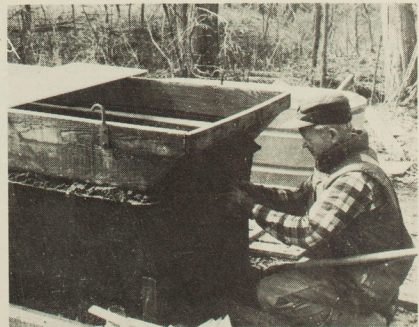
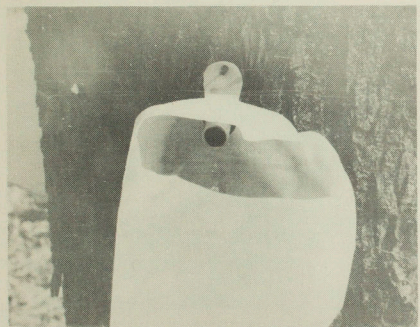
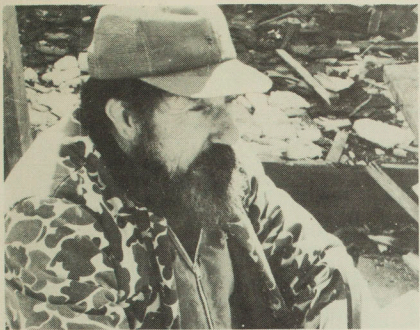
The pan is constructed of a stainless steel bottom with two by eights for the sides. It has the appearance of a john boat. The reason for the stainless steel bottom is to keep the fire from burning through and the syrup from sticking. Also the stainless steel is very clean.

The sap is cooked for about a day to reach syrup consistency. If it is desired, it can be cooked longer to reach the sugar stage. But remember, the longer the sap is cooked, the less sap produced. Approximately 120 gallons of sap equals six gallons of syrup.

After the sap has been cooked, it must be sealed in jars or frozen to prevent spoilage.

When Etzel got all of the maple syrup he wanted, he asked Clifford Scrivens if he wanted to make some. Clifford agreed and he is pictured in some of the photos on these pages.

Many people don't realize that if they have a maple tree in their yard, they are sitting on a gold mine of sweets that cost nothing. Or even if they don't make very much, they have the satisfaction of saying to their neighbors, "I made this maple syrup myself!"



In top left photo, Etzel takes a break after tearing down an old house for fuel for the cooker. Top right is Etzel's maple tree patch, owned by Marvin Mears. The two center photos show the tap and collector, and Etzel with his cooker-evaporator. Bottom left, Clifford Scrivens pours the sap, using a cloth over the bucket for a strainer. Below right, Clifford prepares the fire for another batch of syrup.

THE PALACE BAKERY



This is how The Palace Bakery looked when it was operated by William Bondurant (pictured behind counter on the right).

By Charla Morris and Kim Wayman

"We had all these folks and I knew everybody in town then. It was such a popular place," recalls Mrs. Ethel Bohon about The Palace Bakery.

The Palace Bakery was owned and operated by the Bondurant family in northeast Missouri for more than 50 years. The Palace was famous for its bread, candy, cakes, cookies and ice cream, and it was a favorite place for the students in town.

In 1907, Mrs. Bohon's father and Bill Bondurant's grandfather, James D. Bondurant Sr., moved to Kirksville from Downing, Mo., where he had owned a hardware store. His children were growing up and he wanted them to be able to attend college. Upon moving to Kirksville, he purchased from Mr. Curry and Mr. Pease a business on the east side of the square and called it The Palace. For a number of years, the business was operated as a soda fountain and confectionery. The bakery then went into making cookies, bread and ice cream.

It was a family business. "My father always liked to keep the large family of us together. There were seven boys and three girls in my family. We all would work in the bakery and they would open up at about 5 o'clock in the morning.

Sometimes when there were big parties, we worked until 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning," Mrs. Bohon said. She worked as a secretary for the bakery from 1907 to 1915.

"We just made some of the best ice cream that anybody ever made," she said.

"The retail bakery was quite a busy place for a long time," Mrs. Bohon said. "They made ice cream in this place and when we bought it, the bake shop was across the alley. Mack Hopewell made ice cream upstairs. Mack was such an expert at it. He made some of the best ice cream! A delicious flavor was Norwegian Lemon Ice. The Stills and the Laughlins went overseas to England and brought the recipe back with them. They liked the Norwegian Lemon Ice. It was exclusive for a while but everyone wanted it so we sold a lot of it. The ice cream was so good and different."

In the latter part of the 1920s, trucks became available. The bakery started two wholesale routes, one east of Kirksville and one west of Kirksville. As time went on and highways got better, they expanded those routes. At one time, the bakery had nine trucks running daily throughout northeast Missouri. These routes went as far north as Kahoka; as far east as Canton; south to Macon, Bucklin and Marcelline; and west to Harrison, Newtown, Milan and Unionville.



Left to right are Earl Bondurant; Paul Bondurant; Mack Hopewell (the ice cream maker); James D. Bondurant Sr., owner; and Will Bondurant.

In 1920 Will and Jim Bondurant decided to expand the business, so land was purchased where the Commerce Bank now stands. "My father thought that was a little bit too much and it would cost a lot of money, but my two brothers decided to go ahead with the plan." The Palace, then located on the east side of the square, was moved into the new building on the corner of McPherson and Marion streets.

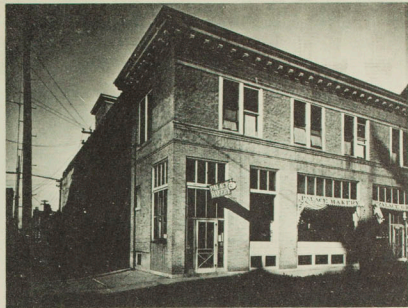
When the wholesale business was started, bread and ice cream was distributed throughout the northern part of the state. In the early 1920s, the merchandise was shipped by train. The ice cream was packed in wooden tubs with ice and salt to keep it cold and put on the trains to be shipped to the nearby towns for drug stores and soda fountains.

In those days the bread was not sliced; they didn't have slicing machines or wrapping machines. They had crates that would hold 20 to 25 loaves of bread. The crates were lined with paper; then the bread was put in. It was sealed and taken down and put on the train, and sent to the stores which had ordered it. It would be there the next morning.

"As things progressed, the slicing machines came into style. I can remember the first slicing machine the bakery got. The bread was run through and, of course, wrapped." Bondurant remembers.

Mrs. Bohon said, "We had a milk route and we delivered all over town. They bottled the milk and delivered it around to the towns. There were two railroads, the O.K. and the Wabash. They went through here and we had 12 or more trains in and out of Kirksville every day."

As the business expanded they purchased the Burk Brothers Packing Plant in the west part of town. It was con-



The Palace Bakery building as it looked in late evening.

verted into a dairy processing plant. The milk was pasteurized and the ice cream made to be kept in hardening rooms to keep the ice cream hard and the milk cold.

The bakery received milk directly from the farmers. The farmers brought the milk to the dairy to be weighed, tested and processed. At the bakery's peak, the total employment was 55 to 60 people.

As time went on, the large companies came into Kirksville from St. Louis; Kansas City; Quincy, Ill.; and Ottumwa, Iowa. The competition became stiff. The supermarket chains would contract with the larger bread and milk companies, forcing some of the small dairies and bakeries out of business.

By the early 1960s, many small groceries were going out of business; supermarkets were taking over. As a result, the bakery was closed in 1963. The building was sold to the Commerce Bank and they tore down The Palace Bakery to build a new bank building.

The Palace Bakery is missed by many people who remember it. "Even today people tell me how much they miss having the bakery in town," Mrs. Bohon said. The past owners of The Palace Bakery are still appreciated today for their loyal service to the community for more than 50 years.

THE PALACE BAKERY

FANCY CHOCOLATES
CONFECTIONS

Quality Kind Ice Cream

Our Ice Cream Parlor is Headquarters
for Students

You Are Welcome Here

THE PALACE BAKERY

East Side Square

This appeared on in the 1916 *Tigris*, the third yearbook published by the Senior class at Kirksville High.

North Against South . . .

GIFFORD



It is hard for us to realize how important railroads have been to the towns in America. Railroads were the backbone of many communities. Gifford, Mo., is one such town, for the railroads both made and destroyed this community.

Gifford is located in northwest Macon County, about 25 miles southwest of Kirksville. Gifford was founded as a shipping point on the Iowa and St. Louis Railroad to replace the livestock drives to Hannibal, Mo.

Controversy developed in the settlement over the location of the railroad depot. Some wanted the depot to be built in the north part of town and others wanted it in the south part.

Grover Belfield recalls, "Allen Pudley of South Gifford owned some land where the depot could be built, but he wanted a good price for it. The Nelson brothers of North Gifford (David and Ike) gave the railroad company six acres of land from the Adair County line south. So the depot was built in North Gifford.

"These North Gifford fellers had a contract with the railroad company. They would give the company that land, and in turn, the railroad agreed that there wasn't to be another depot or stockyards within three miles of North Gifford."

This contract did not make South Gifford happy. Town meetings were held to try to change it; Grover attended some of these meetings. But the agreement was not changed.

A swamp several feet wide divided North and South Gifford and became known as no-man's land. A path across no-man's land connected the two towns.

The hardware store in Gifford served as the background for this photo of several Gifford townspeople. The man with the badge is George Kelly, the sheriff of the town.



The business district of North Gifford included a post office, a livery stable, Crow's Hotel, a hardware store, T.I. Murray's General Store, a box factory for egg cases, a lumberyard, a tile factory, a restaurant, a Baptist Church and a bank operated by Clay Surbeck.

The first place of business in South Gifford was a post office operated by John and Martha Lagles. Other businesses included a hotel, a poultry house, a feed store, a tile factory, two banks and a Christian Church.

Rivalry continued between North and South Gifford but an agreement was finally decided upon. The first town to reach a population of 100 would claim the name. In 1914, Bernice Mock was born in South Gifford to make the 100th person, and South Gifford became the official name. North Gifford had only reached a population of 89. The winner also claimed the railroad depot and it was moved to the location where it stands today.

South Gifford had two banks at one time and Virgil Buck recalled the time one of them was robbed. "The Gifford Bank was robbed one time and they knew who robbed it, but they never did catch him. The robber was a feller from up around Yarrow. He took one or two hostages from the bank. Around Cameron, Mo., he turned them loose and gave them enough money to get back to Gifford. I'm not sure what they got, but it might have been around \$800."

Virgil remembers the type of entertainment that went on in Gifford. "They used to have free shows there every Saturday night and people from all around would come with horses

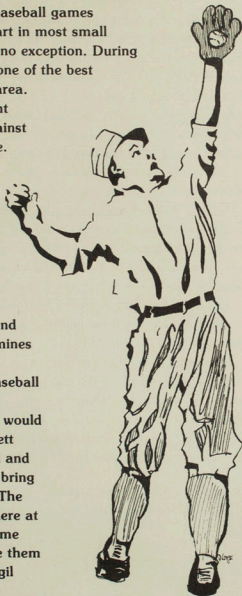
and buggies and walk down to the picture show building. Sometimes Vaudeville would come in and they would have a show that would last a week. Once in a while a carnival would move in.

"The high school would have track meets and other schools would come into Gifford to compete. That was a big day."

In the early 1920s, baseball games played an important part in most small towns and Gifford was no exception. During this time, Gifford had one of the best baseball teams in the area. The two most important games played were against Hannibal and Kirksville. Gifford defeated them both, downing Hannibal 3-1 and Kirksville 8-1.

Virgil said Emmett Corrigan's Novinger team travelled in style. Emmett owned and operated several coal mines around Novinger and managed the town's baseball team.

"Whenever Novinger would come to Gifford, Emmett would go over to Milan and hire the whole train to bring the players to Gifford. The train would sit down there at the station until the game was over and then take them back to Novinger," Virgil said.



Gifford players during that time included: Grover Belfield; Jim Mock, catcher; Earl Green and Buck Lynch from Goldsberry; M.E. Dudley; Albert Hays; Lloyd Hays; Bill Gray; Albert Sadler and Lewis Pole.

Pitchers were Dutch Lagle and Irving Hartgrove; the manager was Harry Davidson. "The Gifford team once held their opponents scoreless through games that totaled 57 innings," Grover said.

After the glory of the baseball games, Gifford's end was near. During the depression, the Bank of Gifford went broke. The town managed to survive while other towns were ruined.

The final blow came in the late 1940s. The Iowa and St. Louis Railroad was waging a legal battle with the Santa Fe Railroad over crossing rights. The courts decided against the Iowa and St. Louis Company and Gifford's fate was sealed. Soon after this the railroad abandoned its interest in Gifford. Gifford's population melted away and the few businesses that survived the depression were ruined by the decrease in business.



Above, Virgil Buck and Ray Easley are two of the men pictured in front of the MFA Exchange. Left, the Christian Church was located in South Gifford along with the post office, hotel, a poultry house, feed store, and two banks.



By John Buck

Kirksville Community Sale Barn

Hey, what'll ya give me?

"Sale Barns Do Million Dollar Business Here," was the title of an article that appeared in the Kirksville Daily Express May 18, 1952. That article reported that many people don't consider sale barns a big business even though \$3¼ million would change hands each year.

The Kirksville Community Sale, located at 116 South Wabash, is one of the oldest sale barns in Missouri still operating in the original location. Started by Austin Martin in 1920 in an old livery stable south of the Wabash Station, it has been in operation for 61 years.

Martin ran a cash-only business, which is a mind-boggling fact in a day where checks are so prevalent. After the sale he would ask for an escort to follow him home so no one could rob him on the way.

Fred A. Bailey, the second owner of the barn, recounts what happened after the sales were over. "I used to work for Mr. Austin and when the sale was over he would always send to town and get a gallon or two of coffee and a sandwich, and a piece of pie apiece, but before he sent for it he would tell some of us we could go home if we wanted to — but most of the time we stayed to partake of the pie and coffee and sandwiches. Then if we had an extra penny or two he would say we could have a game of "crackaloo" and we'd get over behind the stove in the wintertime and match pennies."

The old livery barn was torn down about 1925 or 1926 and replaced with a pole structure. All livestock was sold by the head out of the pens until scales and a ring were put in around 1949 or 1950. Cement floors were added to the sale area and pens in 1954.

At first about all that was sold was horses and mules along with farm machinery, hay and posts. Then about 1928, when farmers could take tractors and farm more in less time, horses started getting scarce so more hogs, cattle and sheep were sold.

In 1952 Bailey bought the barn from Martin for \$10,000. In the first years he and his wife, Opal, owned the barn, the average sale was \$20,000 to \$30,000. Even though they were used to selling 800 to 1,000 head of hogs every week, Bailey recalls a sale in the fall of 1964 that kept them running. Trucks were lined up by the railroad tracks to Franklin Street. Bailey gives no economic reason for this; he attributes it to the time of year.

Bailey has many fond memories of the excitement that seems to linger around the old barn. He brought back to life the good times along with the scary ones in these stories he related.

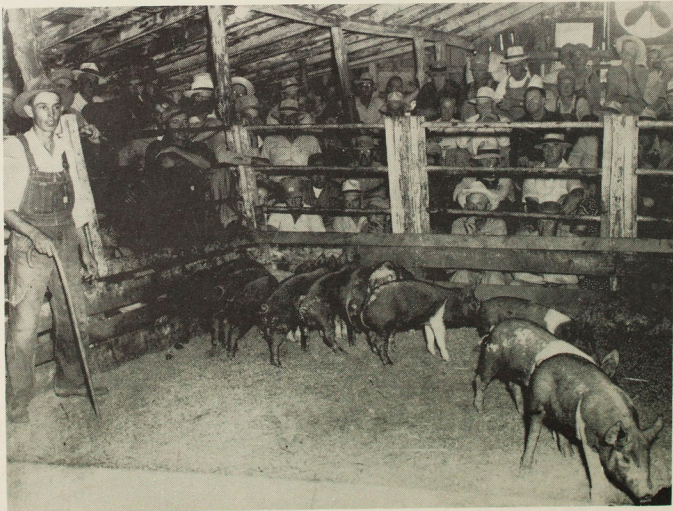
"One time we had some pigs people didn't want to buy so I sold the sow by the pound. Then I said the first five kids to

Working the Ring

Clarence Findling was working the ring in this 1952 photo of a sale in progress.

The Kirksville Community Sale Barn is one of the oldest sale barns in Missouri.

Frederick Bailey currently owns the barn, which is still in its original location on Wabash Street south of the old Wabash Railroad Station in Kirksville.



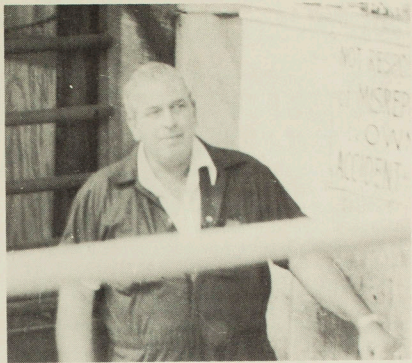
get over in the ring and catch a pig could have it. But it kind of surprised me because the first person in the ring was a 50-year-old man."

Almost immediately after finishing this story, Bailey started another on a slightly more serious note.

"We hadn't been there too long and a man backed up to unload five calves and he started to pull away before the boys got the gate shut. One calf got out so we yelled at the man that owned them. He got nervous and excited and backed up too fast and hit the shoot and bounced away and another calf got out. Then he did that until he had three calves out. Two of them are all we got drove back in and the other one went about two miles south of town.

In the process of trying to catch him we got him overheated so we cut his throat and butchered him on the spot and paid the owner by the average weight and price of his other calves." Then with a small chuckle Bailey added, "A friendly farmer turned us in for rustling cattle."

Bailey also described a kind of "rodeo event" at the sale barn. "A buyer that bought mostly bulls would have us turn his bulls together and let them fight before we loaded them



The Community Sale Barn is still a busy marketplace on Saturdays. Pictured above is Lorne Reese during a sale.

At first only horses and mules were sold at the community sale barn. After more scales and pens were added, however, cattle, sheep and hogs were taken there for sale also. This photo was probably taken in the 1930s.



in the truck so they wouldn't fight and hurt the other cattle after they were loaded. It was always kind of a show for anyone around."

The auction has always been a consignment sale. Livestock was brought in by farmers. It was then numbered, penned and sold. Buyers from John Morrell, Oscar Mayer and other packers along with local farmers and traders lined the wooden benches every Saturday to watch the procession of animals. Usually a sale lasted from three to five hours depending on the weather and the time of year.

As they could 61 years ago, buyers and traders can still come every Saturday to hear the current owner, Frederick Bailey, call for bids in the extraordinary chant of the auctioneer.

Modern technology has provided machines to speed up the sale and make it as efficient as possible, but there is still that country feeling when the auctioneer calls, "Hey, what'll ya give me?"



After 60 years in operation the Kirksville Community Sale Barn is still going strong. Various improvements over the years changed the barn considerably.



Every Christmas pictures were taken of the employees to use as an advertisement in the local paper. Employees in the 1957 Christmas photo are (first row, left to right) Frank Goldsberry, Donnie Rill, Ralph Major, J. W. Harris, Lee McElhinney, Jane Copp, Frederick Bailey, Opal Bailey, Ira Harris, P. Mabis, Donnie Findling and Fred A. Bailey. In the back row are Clarence Findling, Butch Long, J. Bailey, Ernie Welch, Bob Conner and Dr. Rodabaugh.

