

THE CHARITON COLLECTOR

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HISTORY AND FOLKLORE

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Folklore states that round barns were intended to keep the devil from hiding in the corners. The round barn is featured in Jean McCullough's story on page 5.

COVER PICTURE

Mr. Orie Smith built this bridge in the early 1900s. It has been used everyday as an access to the Smith family farm. This photograph was taken by Rick Gooch in February of this year.

EDITOR

Denny Smoyer

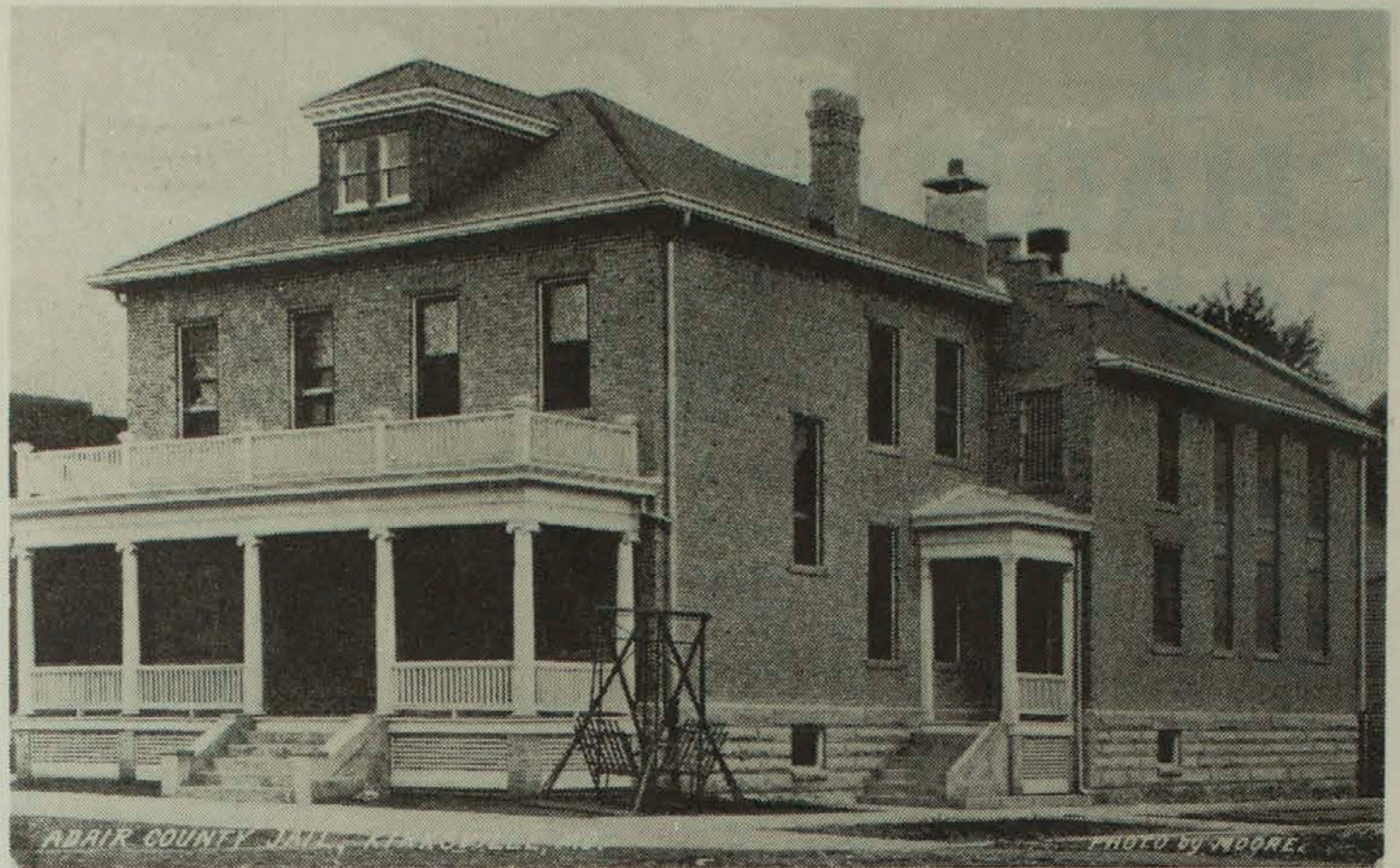
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Jean McCullough

DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

Gayla Hill

The Adair County Jail, which was located on the corner of Franklin and Missouri Streets, was built in 1906.



ESCAPE-PROOF?

By the early 1970s the Adair County Jail had become a topic of heated discussion. It seemed that the “escape-proof” jail, built at the turn of the century, was becoming just the opposite. Over the decades Adair County’s jail deteriorated until finally in 1973, Sheriff Leon Coy was forced to lock its doors for the final time.

The first plans to build the former Adair County Jail were in 1897. A bond issue to construct a courthouse and also a jail for \$50,000 was passed by the needed two-thirds majority. The courthouse was constructed first, and because of an overrun in its cost, no funds were available for the construction of a jail.

Another bond issue, after many defeats, was passed in 1905 to construct the new Adair County Jail. This bond was for \$17,367. The jail was built by Pauly Jail Company of St. Louis and A.L. Holmes of Kirksville and was completed in July of 1906.

The old Adair County Jail, which was located on the corner of Missouri and Franklin Streets, was a large two-story building with a basement. The ground floor was built of concrete and stronger material to prevent the escape of prisoners from the jail. The outer wall of the jail was constructed of two layers of brick to add extra reinforcement. The jail had the capacity to confine nearly 30 people. There were two cell blocks on each floor with two individual cells upstairs. The upper floor, in which the sheriff’s living quarters were located, was constructed mainly of wood. The sheriff’s living quarters consisted of four rooms and a bath. Attached to the jail was a small garage. The sheriff was unable to use it because it was designed to accommodate a Model-T sized car, not a modern one.

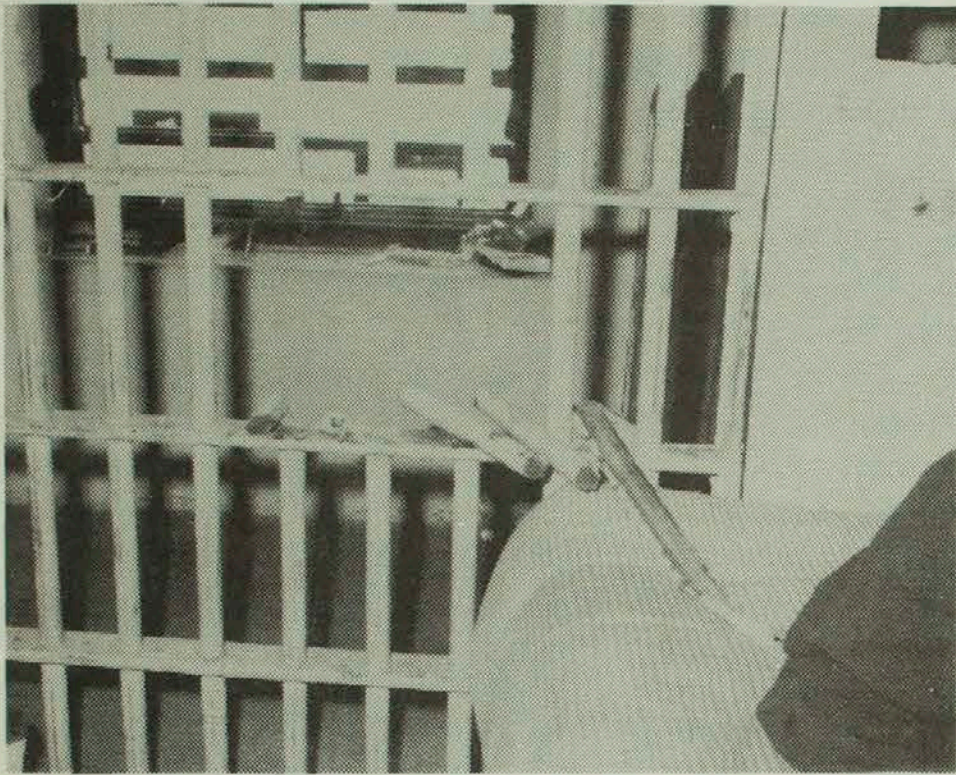
A few years after the construction, extra bars and steel partitions were added to the jail to make it more secure. “The builders of the jail thought at the outset that this was an escape-

proof jail, but they soon found out that it was not. Not long after the jail was built, there were some escapes. To correct the situation, one of the sheriffs came along with some heavy steel bars and individual cells, both on the lower floor and on the upper floor. As a result of that additional weight, the floor sagged, and the bars began to warp a little bit,” said Mr. G.E. Grossnickle, who served as sheriff from 1949 to 1957. “There is no question that when the extra weight was added to the building, it deteriorated much faster.” Mr. Leon Coy said, “The jail had been in bad condition for years. It deteriorated pretty fast at the last.”

By 1957 many of the doors to the individual cells would not close or lock; the prisoners could roam inside the jail. “While I was sheriff,” said Mr. Grossnickle, “there wasn’t any cell that you could lock except the padded cell. If we thought we had someone dangerous, we took log chains and a padlock and locked the chains around the doors to where the prisoners couldn’t get out.”

Through the years many improvements had been made to both the jail and also the sheriff’s living quarters. In 1949 the interior of the sheriff’s home was completely redecorated. Mr. Grossnickle said, “The living quarters were excellent when I was elected sheriff. The County Court, which is now the County Commission, cleaned the living quarters up. They wallpapered it, fixed the floors, and it was a comfortable place to live.”

Though the sheriff’s quarters had been improved, the overall condition of the jail was very poor. During Sheriff Grossnickle’s term he called a jail inspector from St. Louis and asked him to inspect the jail. He recalled, “The inspector told me that we didn’t have a jail here at all. He also said that if it were him, he would move out of that jail tonight.” Olin Johnson, sheriff from 1957 to 1965, said, “The jail was so bad that tobacco cans



During the later years of the jail's history, escapes were frequent. Using a hacksaw, the prisoner sawed out of the cell and escaped out a window.

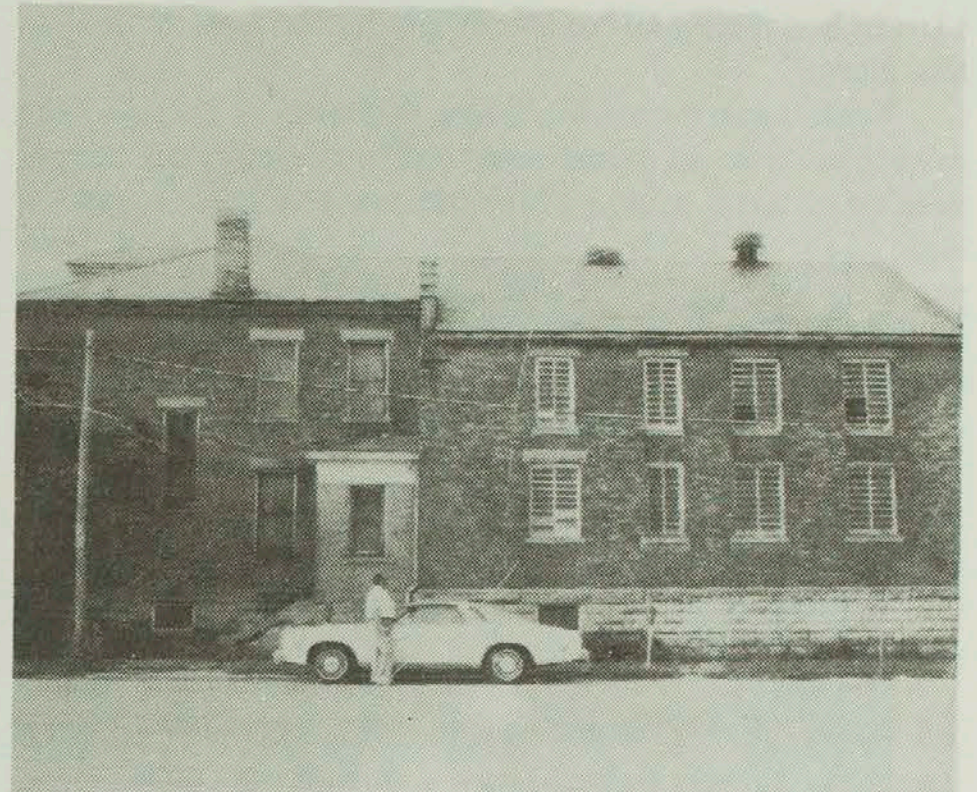
were nailed over rat holes, and several rivots were popping loose.”

Sheriff Johnson did much to improve the condition of the jail. By doing such things as removing the steel doors that would not close and converting them into bunks, he was able to increase the capacity of the jail. These were the same steel doors that were added to make the jail secure.

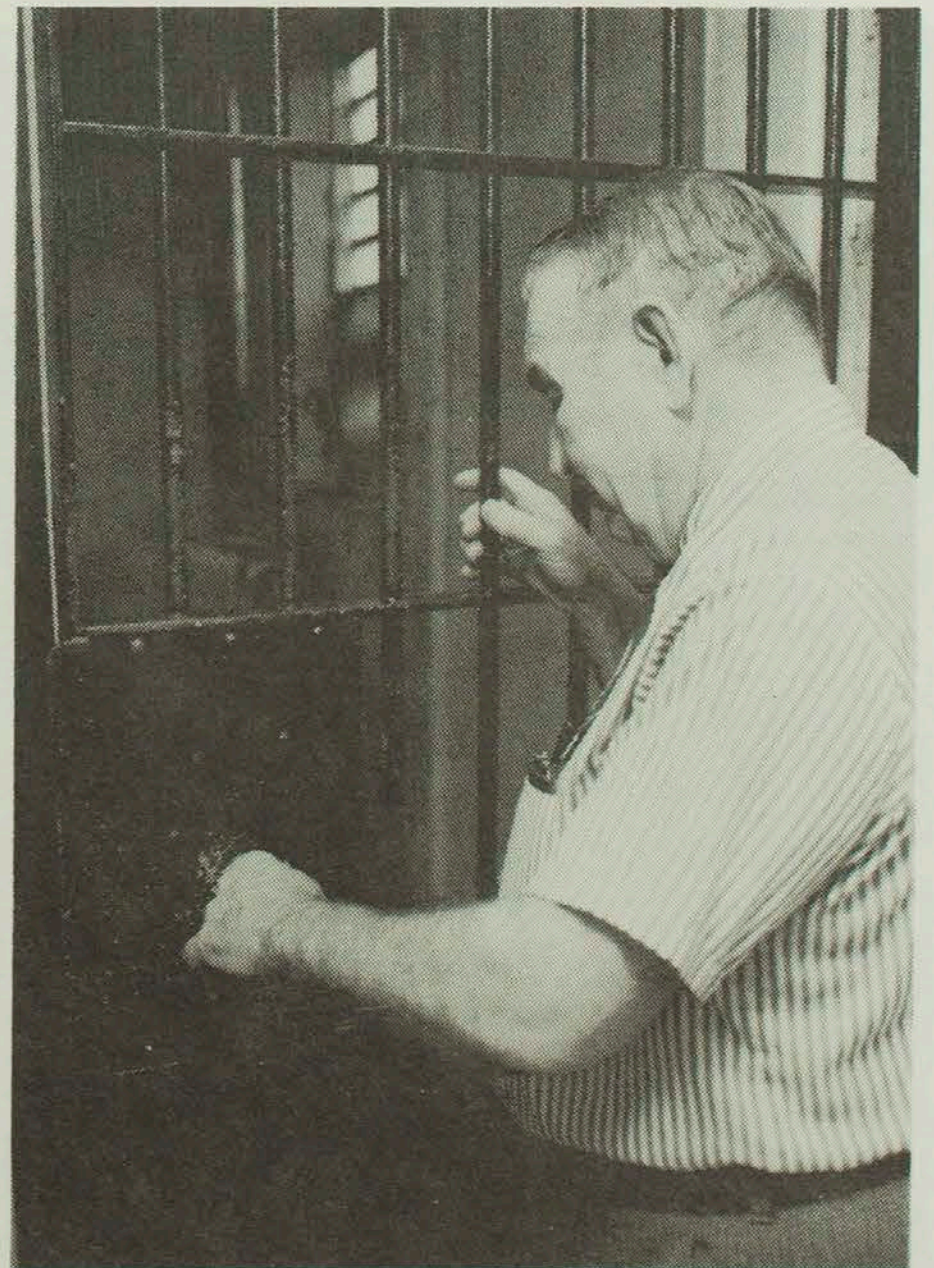
Mr. Grossnickle had some people escape when he was sheriff. Sheriff Grossnickle recalls, “These two boys dug out the plaster wall and escaped out of a hole in the back of the building. They dug that hole out with a spoon.” Sheriff Coy also had prisoners escape. One prisoner of Coy’s sawed out of the jail with a saw passed to him by some of his relatives and he escaped through a window.

The sheriff did not work alone. During Mr. Grossnickle’s and part of Mr. Johnson’s terms, two deputies were employed to assist the sheriff with his duties. It was not until the middle of Mr. Johnson’s second term that another deputy, Lola Steele, was hired to help with the increased paper work. There were two main jobs of the deputies. One was the serving of papers. Mrs. Steele said, “The main job in a sheriff’s office was learning the paper work.” An additional duty was the care of prisoners. Deputies’ responsibilities also included being on call 24 hours a day. Deputy Steele added she was on call 24 hours a day, coming in anytime she was needed.

Being elected sheriff was a job that involved the whole family. The wife was in charge of cooking the food for all the prisoners, cleaning the jail, manning the phone and radio, and guarding the prisoners during the day. To cover the expense of the food, the wife was given \$1.40 a day per prisoner. While the children did not have specific duties, they still lived in the jail and were faced with the day-to-day problems of being a part of the sheriff’s family. There is no doubt that the sheriff’s family was faced with a considerable amount of stress, caring for the prisoners day in and day out, 24 hours a day. Mrs. Steele said,



The old Adair County Jail housed the sheriff in the front and confined the prisoners in the rear. Jack Shelton, Presiding Commissioner from 1975 to 1985, is shown in the foreground.



Sheriff Leon Coy was forced to lock the cell door for the last time in 1973 because of the deteriorating condition of the jail.

“It was awful hard on the sheriff’s wife; she was confined to that place.”

Work began during Mr. Johnson’s terms to either fix the existing jail or to get it condemned and build another jail. Mainly because of the condition of the jail, six prisoners escaped in eight years while Mr. Johnson was in office. All of these prisoners were recovered within two weeks. The condition of the jail worsened until Mr. Coy was notified on January 16, 1973, that a Board of Trustees the day before had recommended that the jail be closed until it was brought up to adequate standards or a new one was constructed. On the morning of the 17th, Sheriff Coy composed the letter that announced the closing of the jail. Coy had just three prisoners so he called the Macon County sheriff to care for his prisoners. Macon took custody of Adair County’s prisoners until the new jail was built.

The process to receive the funds needed to construct a new jail was started. Mr. Jack Shelton said, “There were three bond issues, but all were defeated by a big margin.” The last bond failed in 1974 by about a four-to-one margin.

The decision was then made to build a new jail with revenue sharing money from the government. The County Court set aside \$117,000. Mr. Shelton said, “No bond issue or tax levy was

used to pay for the new jail.” The present jail was constructed for almost \$160,000, the difference in cost provided by miscellaneous money from the county.

The next step was to demolish the existing jail. Milton Armstrong was contracted for \$5,000 to raze the building and clear the lot on the corner of Franklin and Missouri Streets. This work was completed in June of 1975. The new jail was not completed until the late fall of 1976.

The new jail brought about a major change in the sheriff’s duties. The sheriff no longer had to personally care for the prisoners at night, the sheriff’s wife did not have to cook for the prisoners, and most of all, the family no longer was forced to live in the same building as the prisoners.

by Rick Gooch and Tony Frost

Sheriff and Term of Office

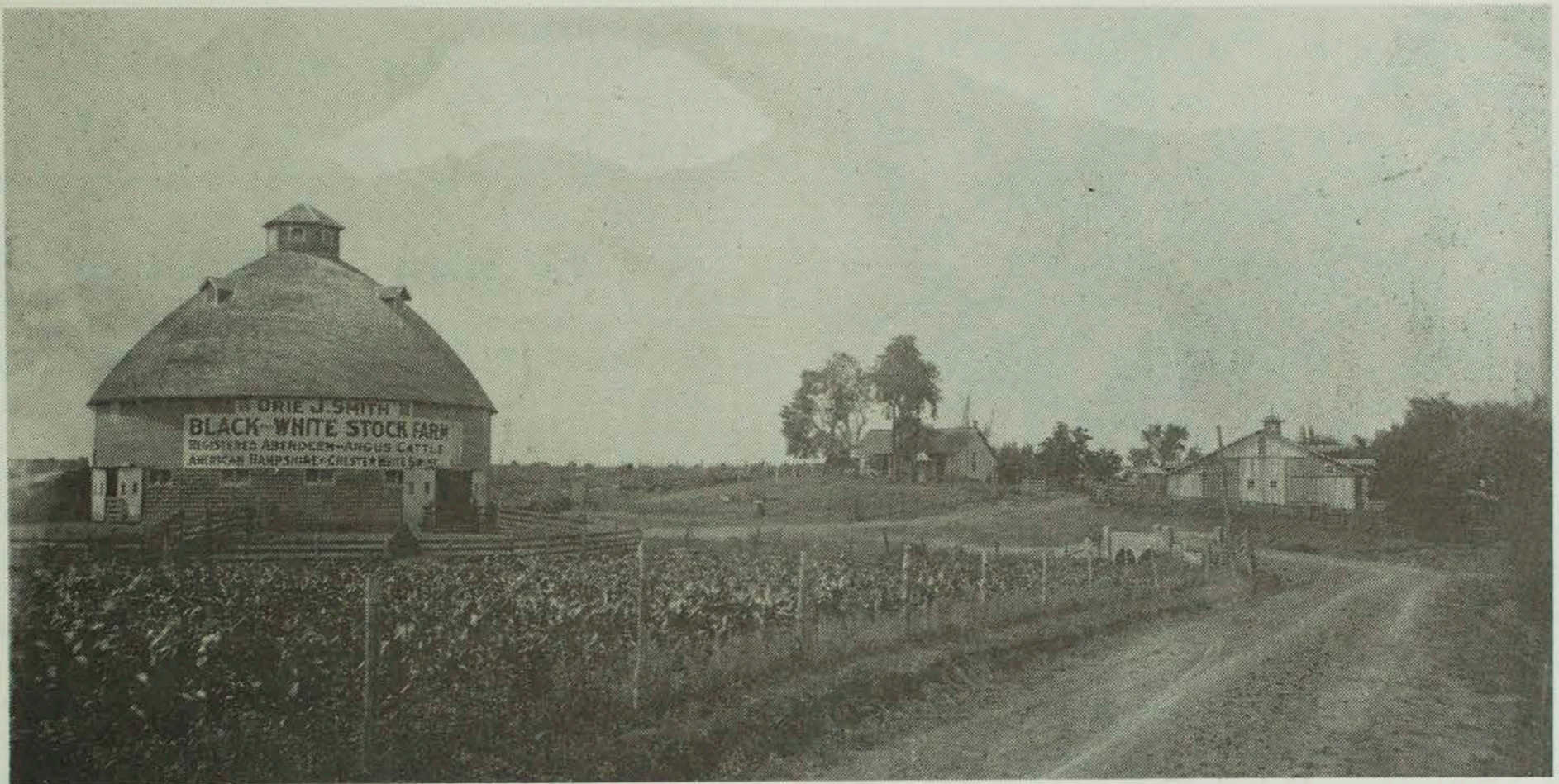
John T. Curry.....	1905-1908
G. F. Williams.....	1909-1912
S. C. Willis.....	1913-1916
Marion Shoop.....	1917-1920
Emery D. Waddil.....	1921-1924
Marion Shoop.....	1925-1928
Joseph Winslow.....	1929-1932
Charles A. Novinger.....	1933-1936
Arthur Floyd.....	1937-1940
Robert Love.....	1941-1944
Alex Brown.....	1945-1948
G. E. Grossnickle.....	1949-1956
Olin Johnson.....	1957-1964
Leon Coy.....	1965-1976



Loree Coy was required to prepare three meals a day for the prisoners and also watch over them during the day.



The Adair County Jail, which served Adair County for 68 years, was vacant for nearly two years before it was torn down in 1975 to make way for a new jail.



The Black and White Farm, located three miles east on Highway P, is what one could call a true round barn. The granary, pictured to the far right, and the stone bridge are still standing today. This photo was taken in 1914.

A Picturesque Landmark!

There is something unique, appealing, and picturesque about a round barn. Some that are called round are not true round barns, some are octagon, others are polygonal. The polygonal barns can be 6, 10, 12, or 16 sides. There are so few left throughout the country, that one must drive miles to see and to photograph this rarity. Many barns have been abandoned and torn down, but Adair County is fortunate to have one left in mint condition. Artists have often painted and photographed this barn, and last year it was featured on the cover of the Kirksville Area Wide telephone book.

The round barn was built in 1913 by Orie J. Smith, the original owner of the Black and White Farm. It is located three miles east on Highway P. "Dad sent away for the plans in early 1913 and he modified them to suit his needs," said Ben Smith, Orie's son.

Orie Smith and his family lived in a log cabin while he built the round barn. The cabin was located just back of the present house which was built in 1917. Ben was born one year later,

in 1918, so there has been a Smith owning the barn since it was built.

Snow was on the ground when Mr. Smith began to lay the foundation for the lower part of the barn. "He drove his team and spreader the entire circumference to insure the right capacity," said Ben Smith.

He added, "Dad hired a few men. He hired a head carpenter, which he paid \$2 per day and the regular carpenters were paid a dollar per day." It took about a year for them to build the barn. The carpenters would drive their teams to work and most of the work was done by hand tools. The cost to build the barn was approximately \$3,000 to \$5,000.

The barn is 64 feet in diameter, 64 feet high, and has 54 windows. The floor space measures 6,434 square feet and 128,680 cubic feet on the inside floor. "It is constructed mostly of yellow pine that cost two cents per square foot. There are hardly any pine knots in the lumber," said Mr. Smith.

It is constructed on a 18-inch foundation with an 8 foot wall



The Ben Smith barn today.

by Jean McCullough

Why build a round barn and what are the advantages of a round barn? One reason for building this round barn was that all the livestock could be kept in the barn, eliminating several outside buildings to house livestock. The barn is also easier to clean. The tractor could be driven into the barn and the bucket used for cleaning it out. This round barn is cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter because it was built into a hill. The cement blocks also keeps the barn warmer and cooler. Another advantage of having a round barn is wind resistance, the wind blows around the smooth sides of the barn. Also, there is 27 percent more space in a round barn than in a square barn.

of concrete blocks. These blocks, 24 x 8 x 9 inches, each weigh 75 pounds.

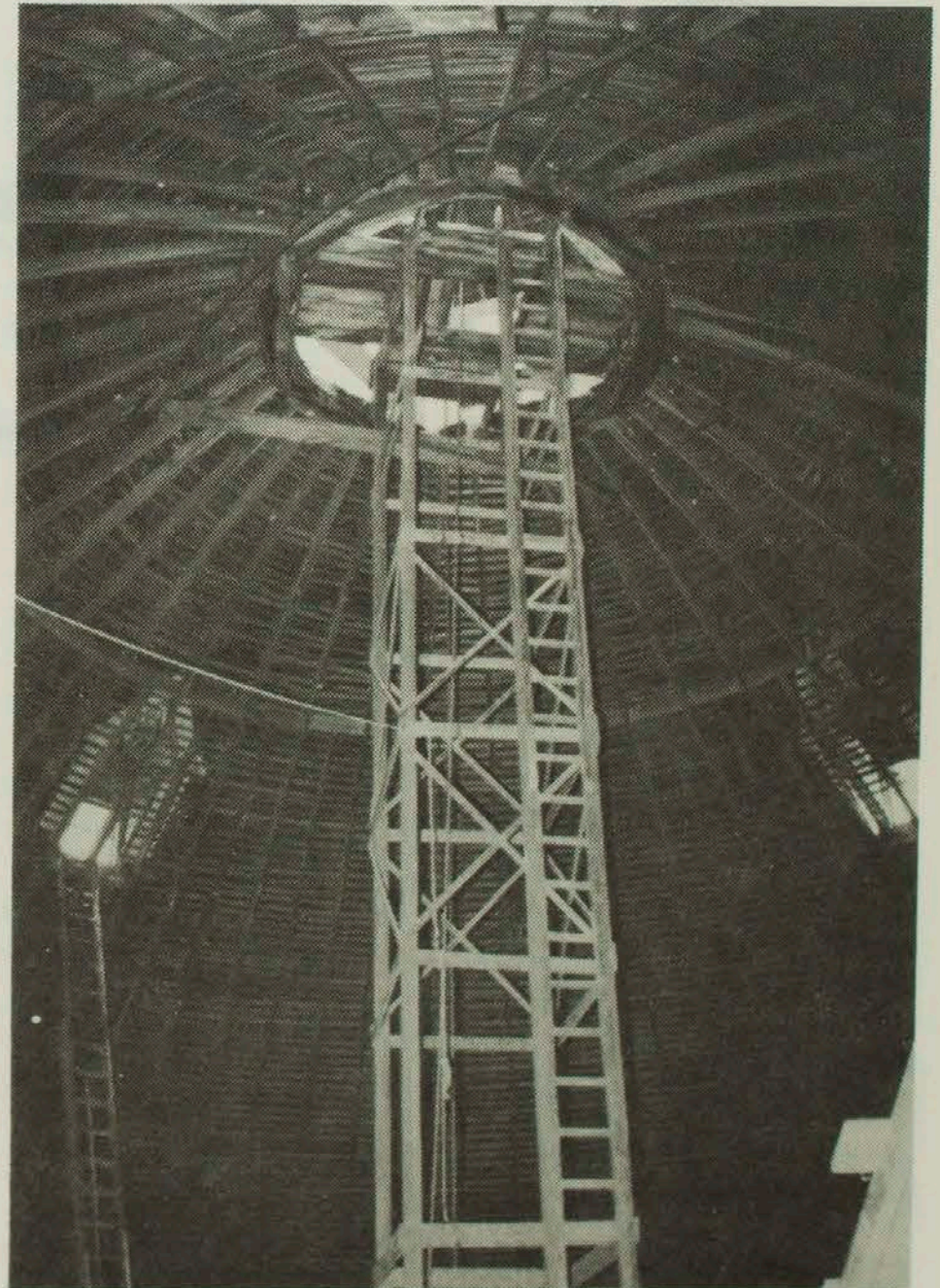
The lower part of the barn was used to house the livestock. "It was hard to put pens in a round barn; that's why the seven stalls are oblong in shape," stated Mr. Smith. They were used for mules and horses, as well as hogs and cattle. The building was filled with livestock almost everyday for 70 years.

The barn had gravity-fed running water, as well as the adjacent feed lots. The water was from a pond constructed 200 feet up hill.

The barn was built in the side of a hill so that loads of hay could be hauled into the hay loft and be unloaded with a hay fork. A round track in the middle of the roof is 360 degrees, 25 feet from the floor. One could drop the hay where one desired. "When unloading the hay one drove the wagon in one door and then out the other," stated Mr. Smith. Two other horizontal tracks are 40 feet from the floor which fill the center part to capacity. The barn could hold 100 tons of loose hay.

There is 12 feet of wood siding topped by the roof. "The roof is fully self-supporting. It has no poles to get in the way of the wagon when unloading the hay," said Mr. Smith. Fifty squares of shingles cover the roof. But the original roof was made of wooden shingles. Today the roof is covered by regular asphalt shingles.

The cupola has six windows, three of them slant inward to keep the rain out, as well as permitting a good air flow. The rafters are 1 x 8 inches, sawed on the back side to make them curve easily and laminated together three deep to make the desired length to reach the big wheel just under the cupola. The cupola is made of boards 2 x 12 x 6 feet sawed on outer side, laminated five deep. This type of roof is called conical. The wheel is about 12 feet in diameter and the rafters are woven into the wheel. Under the wheel is the hay shaft, with a ladder to the cupola. There are twice as many rafters at the bottom of the roof as there are at the top of the roof.

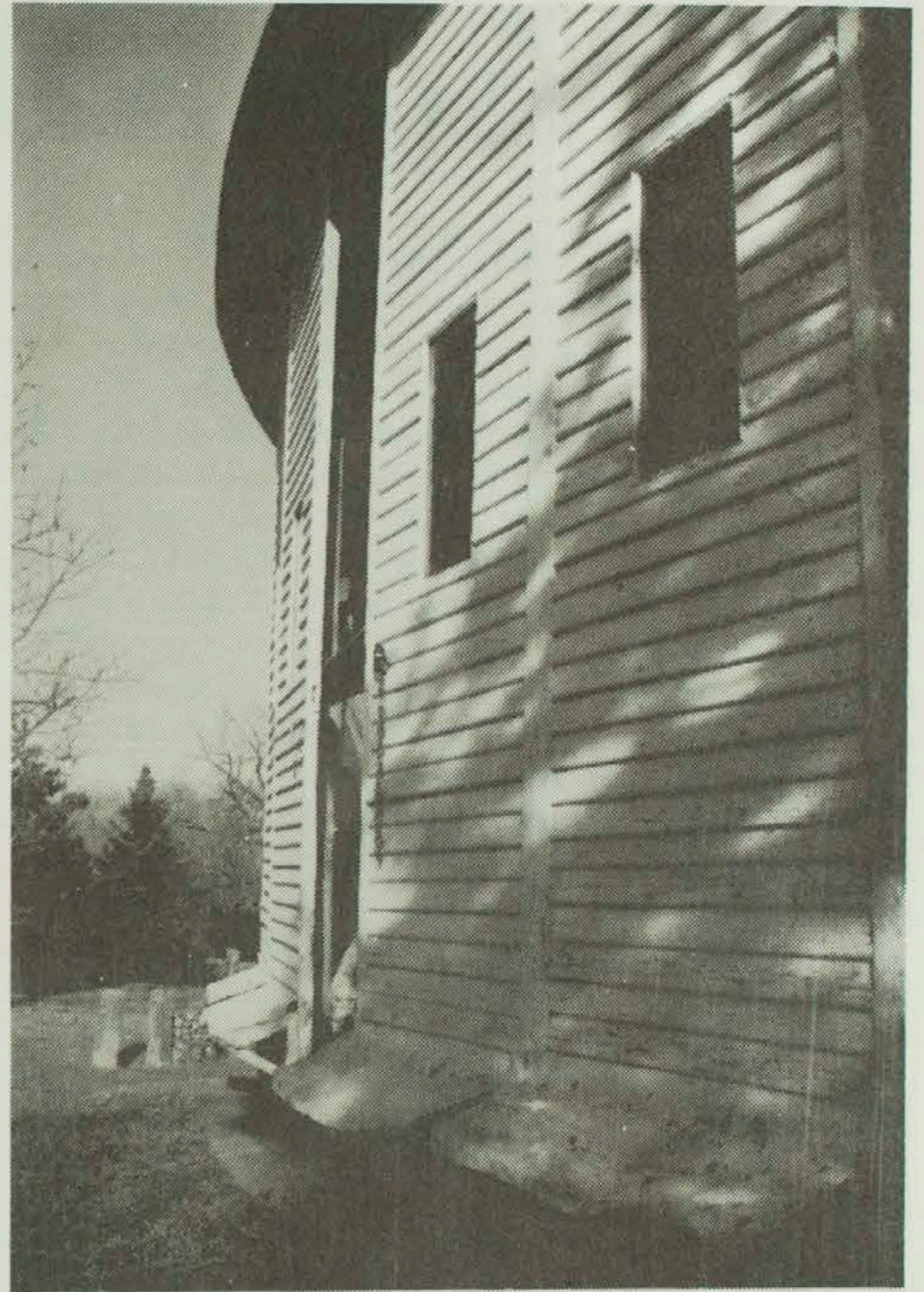


The ladder, with 36 rungs, leads to the cupola.

Ben Smith has kept the barn in mint condition by painting it every six to seven years and by shingling the roof every 35 years.

Over 1,000 people from all types of life, have made inquiries about the barn—artists, professors, photographers, and architects. The barn is a favorite for NMSU art students and also local artists. Other farmers inquire about the advantages and disadvantages of the barn.

“Gone are the days that one needs a barn, there is no need to house livestock. No longer do farmers farm the land by mules and horses, no longer is there any need to store 100 tons of loose hay to feed one’s livestock,” said Mr. Smith. With the round barn becoming a part of the vanishing landmarks, one can only hope that people who own round barns will maintain them so that future generations can admire and study them.



One of the four double doors, which curves around the barn, is another unique feature of this barn.



The pulley in the cupola was used to pull hay to the top of the hay stacks.

An Age Old Tradition

Beekeeping is an age old tradition practiced in this area for many generations. Bees are found both wild and domesticated in North Missouri. There are many aspects to beekeeping, from caring for the hives to discovering wild swarms.

To find a wild swarm of bees begin looking for a fairly large pond on a warm summer afternoon when the flowers are blooming. If bees are close they will be at the pond getting water for their honey. Watch them take off, they will make a straight line for the hive. Begin walking in the direction the bee went. If a bee is on a flower, watch it take off to check your direction. Finding the tree may take some time, but chances are it can be found. Mark the tree so it can be found again and to let others know it has been claimed.

To remove the honey and the bees, the tree should be cut. If the bees are in the main trunk of the tree, cut the entire tree down. Jim Thomas, a 40-year beekeeper, remembered, "The first wild swarm I took I found walking home from work one day when I was 13. The bees were in the branch of a black cherry tree. I went home, found my dad, and told him that I wanted to get a swarm of bees. He asked how I was going to do it and I told him I was going to take a tub and a curtain, put the tub underneath the branch, climb up, and cut it off so that it falls in the tub, throw the curtain over it and then you will drive me home. He thought for a little bit and then we did it."

Bees will build their homes almost anywhere. In years past beekeepers preferred to use pieces of hollow gum logs, which is why many hives are today called gums. For best results use a prebought or a homemade box. It should have one opening facing the south, to keep out the bad weather, and should be elevated on cement blocks. This helps keep the hive level,

prevents rats from nesting underneath, and protects the base of the hive from rotting.

During the summer months bees can be left alone. They may need to be checked from time to time to make sure no diseases or pests are bothering the hive, and to prevent a young queen from being born which could split the hive. To check on bees requires wearing bee garb: heavy pants, a hat with a veil, and gloves. This protects Mr. Thomas from the sometimes deadly sting. He recalled, "The worst stinging I ever saw was when bees got excited about a gelding picketed about 50 yards away from the hive but the bees' flight path led across it. Within 15 minutes the horse had been stung several thousand times. I cut the rope, got it away from the bees, and called the vet; we lost the horse anyway."

When fall comes the real work begins, harvesting the honey. Remove the slats that contain honey; these will be covered with a waxy substance. Underneath there will be a hexagon tube about one-half inch long. To remove this use a hot knife and cut the wax off. Then set the slat in a pan and let gravity ooze the honey out. Several machines are available and Mr. Thomas described one. "It looks like a 50-gallon garbage can with a motor on one side and a counter weight on the other. There is a spindle going down the middle with stainless steel baskets." It works by centrifugal force pulling the honey out. Once the comb is empty or the machine is full, the honey can be put through a strainer and jarred.

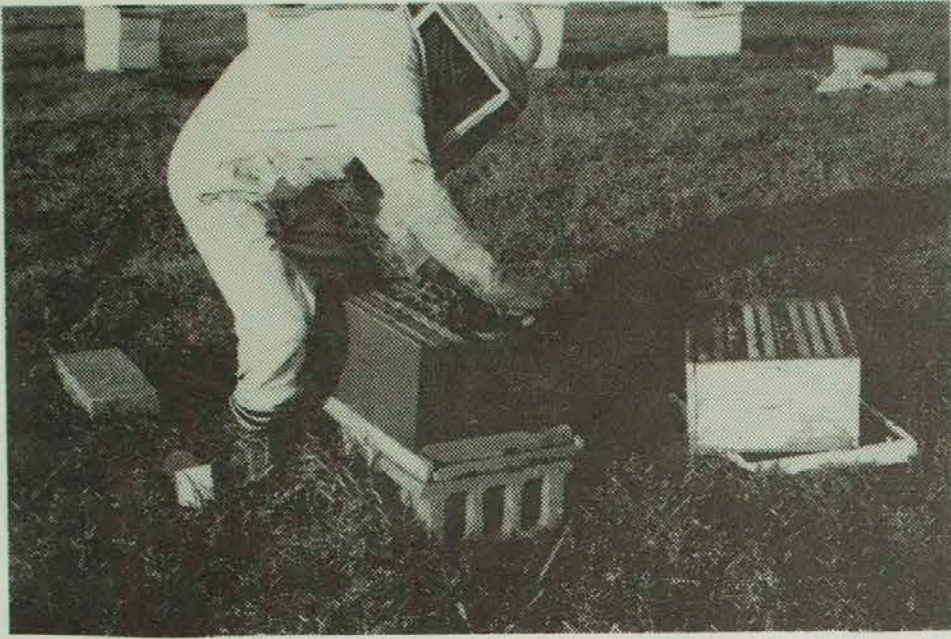
by Ben Thomas



A handcranked honey extractor like the one pictured here is used to remove honey from its comb.



Beekeepers use a veil and gloves to prevent the honey bee from stinging them.



Cliff Hollenbeck removes a section of brood where the bees live during the winter months.

The largest honey producer in this area is Bolley Bunch with over 100 hives. Most people keep just a few, 7-12, so selling the honey is not important because they only raise the honey for themselves. The larger producers are feeling competition though, said Mr. Thomas. "The honey you buy in the store is foreign. I'm not saying it's good or bad, I'm just saying that the countries that produce it may not treat it with the purity and respect it deserves."

After the fall harvest the bees hibernate in the hive during the winter. Many people use this time to repair equipment or build new boxes. Almost every beekeeper will clean the super, the part of the hive where the honey is produced and stored, to remove any larvae pests have laid such as mice, skunks, ants, and moths. Usually the bees can take care of the pests themselves, but if they do not the hive could be lost.

Although most people in this area keep bees as a hobby, some hold their bees dear. Mr. Thomas swore, "As I go from hive to hive there is a change in personality between each swarm. Some of the hives I could work with nothing on but the hive right next to it will attack you by the time I've said this." Many techniques used a hundred years ago are still used today and beekeeping is as popular as ever.

Cliff Hollenbeck prefers to wear white when working around bees because the color calms them. He is looking for the queen bee by removing sections of brood.





R. O. Gill firing his muzzle-loading rifle.

Muzzle-Loading in Missouri

Before Missouri became a state the land was not only tamed with axes, horses, and hard work but also with a gun called the musket. Though guns have greatly changed, the musket is basically the same as it was 200 years ago.

A lot of people think that muzzle-loading weapons are inaccurate, ancient weapons, but one of the most accurate guns ever made was a muzzle-loading rifle. This gun was used in the Civil War as a sniper's rifle and had great accuracy up to 1,000 yards. Mr. Tony Mihalevich, an avid hunter with a muzzle-loader, has seen people shoot ten shots at 100 yards with a muzzle-loader and the holes can be covered with a 50-cent piece.

The rifle barrel was the real turning point in accuracy. In the old days guns were smooth bore, which means the barrel of the gun was smooth. Then in the mid-1800s riflings came into being. Rifling is spiral grooves cut into the barrel to make the bullet spin and gain velocity. Rifling is determined by the number of revolutions or the number of inches for one revolution. On a typical muzzle-loading rifle there are fewer riflings per inch of barrel than on a modern rifle.

There are basically two types of ignition systems on muzzle-loading guns, flintlock and percussion. The loading process of the two types are the same except for the priming step. The first step of loading a muzzle-loader is to fire a priming charge to burn away any moisture that might have collected in the barrel. If the gun is a percussion, the priming cap is placed over a hole called a nipple and fired to burn off any moisture. On a flintlock the frizzen, which is a small compartment that holds the priming charge, is filled with priming powder. Fill the pan level full of priming powder, close the frizzen, cock the hammer, and fire the priming charge. Never stand over the barrel because if there is a small hot coal in the firing chamber, it could

ignite the powder in the barrel and fire.

Next the powder is measured by using a meter that depends on the grain of a bullet. A casing is used to hold the measured powder and the powder is poured into the gun by tripping a lever with a finger. Both black powder and pyrodex are measured the same but whereas pyrodex is heavier, black powder is denser. Pyrodex is relatively new; it is low yield powders mixed together to form a paste.

The next step is to pour the measured powder down the barrel. Hit the barrel several times with a hand to settle the powder in the chamber area of the barrel. Then choose one of the two types of projectiles to shoot from the gun, a patched ball or a maxi-/mini-ball. A patched ball is round from a .32 to a .54 caliber. With this type of projectile a greased cloth patch is used to catch the riflings of the barrel and rotate the ball. Types of lubricants to use on the patch are Crisco and Vaseline. There are also commercial brands of lubricants to use. In the old days bear fat was a popular substitute as was the "spit patch" in which saliva was used to wet the patch. If left loaded for a long period of time, the bore will rust or dry out quickly and will not lubricate the ball. Melted pork or lamb fats also work as a lubricant but these will also turn bad after a long period of time. The ball never touches the sides of the barrel when the gun is fired. The patch does not stay in the barrel when the gun is fired but usually lands 20 feet in front of the bullet's target. The patch should have a uniform brown spot to show that the gun was fired with the proper amount of powder. This is one way of determining what load is being shot from the rifle. There should be no burned holes or darkened spots on the patch.

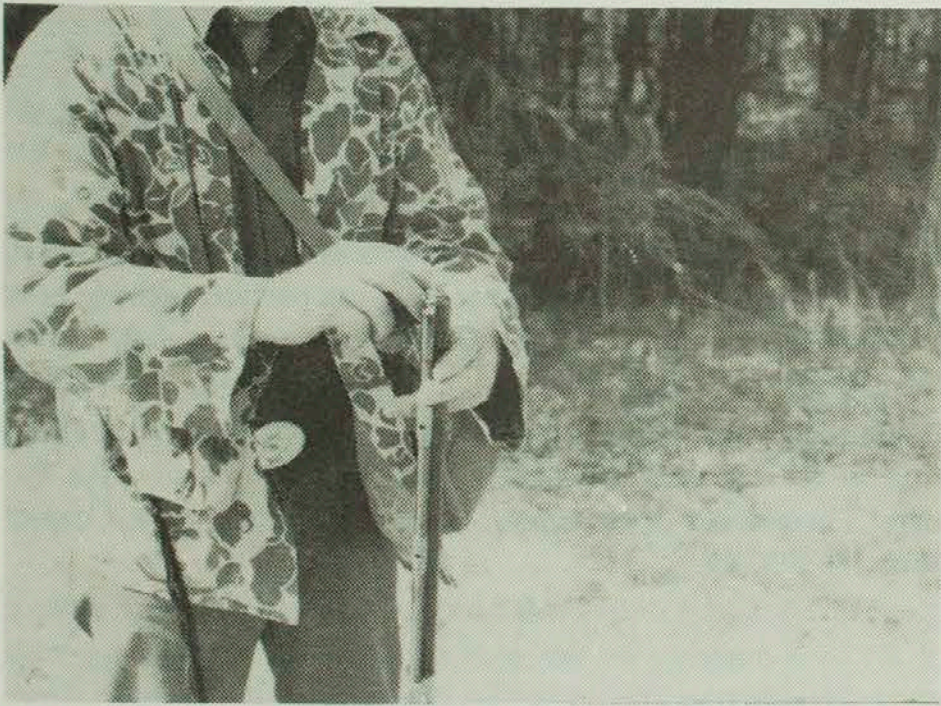
If shooting a maxi- or mini-ball, the grooves are filled with the same type of lubricant used on a patched ball. However,



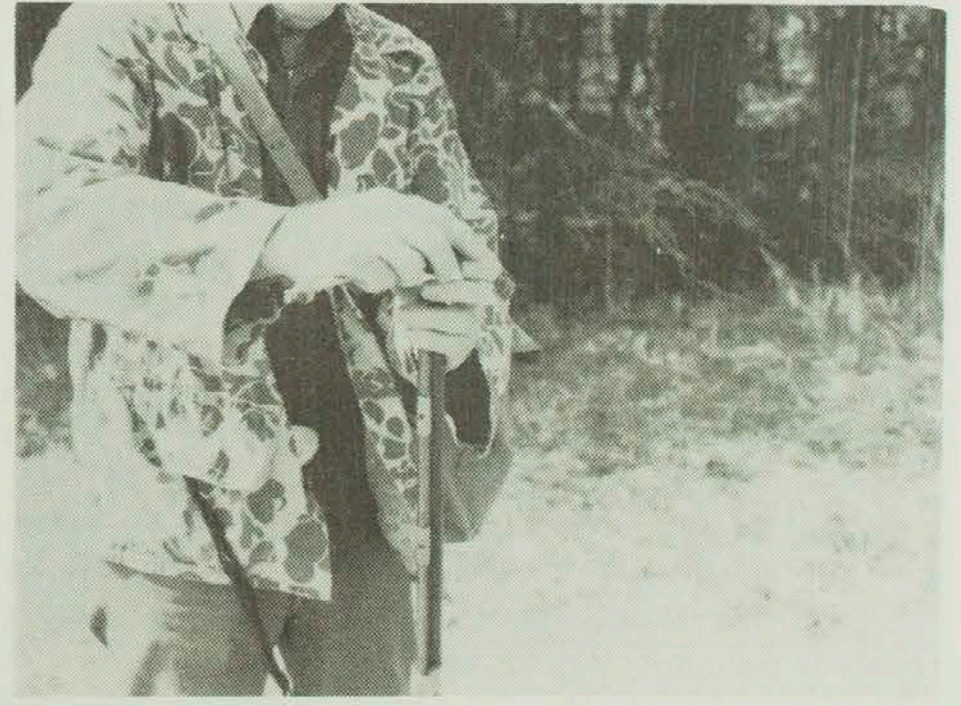
The first step of loading a muzzle-loader is firing a priming cap to burn the moisture out of the barrel.



Next pour the measured powder down the gun barrel.



Then place the projectile on the muzzle.



Tap the projectile down the barrel with a small mallet.



Continue to drive the projectile down the barrel with the long ramrod.



The last step before firing is placing a cap over the nipple and cocking the hammer back one click.

a patch is not used; the grooves on the bullet catch the riflings on the barrel. The next step is to place the projectile over the muzzle of the barrel and with a small mallet gently push until the projectile starts down the muzzle. Then the ramrod part of the bullet starter is used to drive the bullet down the barrel about four inches. Next remove the long ramrod from the rifle and drive the ball down until it is resting firmly on the powder charge. A good idea is to mark the ramrod so the next time the gun is loaded the shooter will know where to stop driving the projectile. The last step is done by placing a priming charge on the gun. This step is done exactly the same as the first step of placing a priming charge on the gun to burn out any moisture.

A problem that faces every muzzle-loader hunter is driving the projectile down the barrel without loading the powder. If the gun is a percussion, remove the nipple and load a small amount of powder into the barrel through the nipple hole. Put the nipple back on and push the ball all the way down until it rests on the light powder charge. Place a priming cap over the nipple and fire the rifle. This will clear the projectile out of the barrel. A flintlock model has a removable touch hole. With a small screwdriver press gently on the hole until it pops out, pour a light powder charge, and pop the hole back in place. Then push the ball until it rests on the charge and fire the gun. It is very dangerous to fire a muzzle-loader if the projectile is not seated well against the powder charge. This accounts for 99% of all accidents involving loading of a muzzle-loader.

Talking about cleaning a muzzle-loader, Mr. R. O. Gill says, "Oh my God it's a terrible job!" Since black powder and pyrodex are very corrosive, the gun must be cleaned the day it is shot or two to three days at the most. First use the ramrod and very hot soapy water to swab the barrel out very well. Then take hot clean water and rinse out the barrel. The reason for using very hot water is that the barrel will dry by itself and will not rust. Finally, take a lightly oiled cloth and run up and down the barrel. Mr. Mihalevich believes to insure total accuracy capability one must clean the barrel after each shot. He uses a liquid called "moose milk" that he received from some hunting friends in Oregon. It is a mixture of water soluble oil, water, and herbal essence soap. After each shot, wet a patch with this

by Brent Winn

and run it down the bore a couple of times. When the patch is turned over it will be black from the powder residue inside the barrel. Then run three or four dry patches down the barrel and it is ready to shoot again. There are also several commercial brands of bore cleaners and solvents that can be used. Many people use pyrodex believing that they can get away from cleaning after each shot. Still Mr. Mihalevich believes if one is going to shoot primitive weapons, then one should use primitive powder, which is black powder. But to insure every shot will be the same, the gun must be cleaned so the powder will not disturb the riflings and make the projectile shoot off key.

Hunting game with muzzle-loaders has the same rules as hunting with modern rifles. Mr. Gill said that there is talk of opening a season in Missouri in which only hunters with muzzle-loaders can hunt for game such as deer and turkey. The only major difference between muzzle-loaders and modern rifles is that with muzzle-loaders the hunter has only one shot, so a lot of preparation goes into making sure that the gun, powder, and projectile are all perfect.

The National Muzzle-loading Rifle Association sponsors meets all over the country in which hunters shoot at targets much like modern rifle shoots. In these contests participants are only allowed to shoot the patched ball, no maxi- or mini-balls. Also participants are not allowed to use optical sights, only iron sights. Three or four years ago there was a primitive hunting club in Queen City but it disbanded due to lack of membership. The closest primitive hunting grounds to Adair County is at Rebel's Cove.

Mr. Mihalevich says that a muzzle-loader is as much a piece of art as a painting on the wall and when he is hunting with his muzzle-loader, he feels like he is back 100 years in time. Maybe others will have the urge to buy a muzzle-loader and experience the same joy as Mr. Mihalevich and Mr. Gill.

Preserving A Heritage

The quilting world has seen various changes in the last century. Quilts have developed from being a necessity to being a work of art. Over the years costs have risen and new techniques have been developed. Quilting is truly an art that many people take for granted.

Quilt-making has been around longer than grandma and apple pie, especially in Northeast Missouri where we are largely an agriculture area. Most of the families in this area are accustomed to quilts and have several in their homes.

Although it is natural to imagine grandma sewing by the fire, the technique of quilting originated many centuries ago. It was practiced in ancient Egypt and in ancient China. It spread from Europe to the colonies as a matter of course.

The basic patchwork technique came to America in the 17th century. As immigrants flocked to America, they brought with them very few items and at that time quilts were a basic necessity. They were a necessity in the early American homes because of the cold winters and a constant supply of bedding was needed in the pioneers' poorly heated log homes. The technique of quilting developed because three layers are warmer than one.

by Gayla Hill

During the 17th and 18th centuries the design of bedcovers tended to develop from a base and flow outward and upward as in the typical Tree-of-Life design. In the 19th century it gradually gave way to more formalized patterns.

The main idea was for them to be warm and to withstand wear, they were patched and repatched, nothing was wasted. Every scrap and remnant of leftover fabric was saved. Thrifty housewives were loath to throw away bits of cloth. Quilt-making epitomizes the American woman's spirit of conservation, ingenuity, and appreciation for fine things.

As the westward movement began, quilts were transported across the country. A great number and variety of names were given to quilt designs. It is not unusual to find patterns of the same design having many different names. Furthermore, the same name would be used for several totally unrelated patterns.

The important era of American quilt-making extended from about 1750-1860. The principal types of quilts are patchwork. They are pieced, which joins many small sections at the edges; and appliqued, on which the top layer has contrasting pieces of fabric sewn onto it. Applique was for the "best" quilts and the pieced quilts were for everyday. Designs spread as women borrowed ideas from each other and took patterns with them when their families moved.



Mrs. Archie Cooper used scrap material to make her award-winning Autumn Leaves quilt.

A popular feature of frontier life was the quilting bee, the most popular way of putting a quilt together. They were a special occasion for the whole neighborhood. The women would gather around the quilt to visit and exchange news of the community while the men were working; in the evening everyone would play games. It was a social pleasure second only to a religious gathering. Bees were also used to raise money for neighborhood and church projects.

Crazy quilts became very popular during this time, making use of waste materials. They were made of scraps of silk, satin, velvet, and embroidered pieces. Then during the 1840s and 1850s the making of the quilt into separate blocks led to a special type of quilt. This was known as a Signature, Autograph, Friendship, or Bride's quilt and was made for a special person. Since then a number of other quilts have grown in popularity such as the Wedding Ring and the Flower Garden quilt.



*These quilts were chosen by Bettina Havig for the 1984 Heritage Quilt Project. The quilt on the bed, made in 1870 by Louisa Snyder Novinger, belongs to her granddaughter, Catherine Novinger Reese. It was selected to be in the book **Missouri Heritage Quilts** and also as a part of the 1985 state tour. The Bears Paw quilt in the corner, made approximately 1865 and owned by Trevia Tucker, received an honorable mention from Ms. Havig.*

In about 1935, quilt kits containing fabric pre-cut in standardized designs came onto the market in large quantities and the hand of the individual maker became less evident. Quilting by hand tends to be more creative than machine because designs can be more ornate and varied.

In this area of the country, there are large number of women who carry on the tradition of quilting. To name them all would be impossible because there are many different types of people interested in quilts.

One such person is Mrs. Gladys Cooper, an avid quilter, who has achieved great success with her quilts. She said, "I believe quilting just grows on you!" Her Autumn Leaves quilt, which was made from scrap material and organized into similar colors, traveled to Guam where it entered a quilt show to help Special Olympics. It was the most studied and photographed quilt at that show. In 1986 it took first place at the quilt show held in Kirksville, sponsored by the Hand of Friendship Threadbinders. It also won "Best Overall" at the Adair County Fair.

Another example is Mrs. Trevia Tucker who travels to auctions with her husband, Tommy, searching for the older quilts to buy. "I make any minor repairs that are needed before I resell the quilts. We look for patterns and colors and rely on the quilt's personal appeal. I believe you must have the love of the quilts and the love of the old materials when you buy a quilt."

One last example is Mrs. Faith Hiatt. It is remarkable how one woman can complete the number of quilts she does in one

year, she is constantly quilting. She has also found the time to teach quilting lessons at the Kirksville Area Vocational Technical Center.

The cost of quilts seem to have become astronomical. It is hard to envision the amount of time and love that has gone into making a quilt, especially when asked to pay the price. The quilt's value depends upon the delicacy of the stitching, the quality of the materials, the patterns, the colors of the design, its age and condition are also involved. Also, the size of the quilt and the skill of the quilter must be taken into account. The cost of the material varies depending upon the size of the quilt. The price could range from \$25-\$100 for materials alone. Mrs. Cooper feels that "an awful lot of money is wrapped up in a quilt besides the hours that it takes to quilt it! No one would pay you what it was worth; they would not pay you by the hour. If you quilted by the hour it would be a very expensive quilt."

Another expense that must be figured into the price is the cost of traveling either to buy a quilt or to sell one. According to Mr. and Mrs. Tucker, "It usually takes a whole day and often we go home with only one quilt and sometimes none. Our auto expense and cost of our meals must also be figured into the quilt's price."

Not everyone has the patience or desire to quilt. Mrs. Tucker said that some people who quilt think in terms of one quilt a year while others who really devote time to it could complete one in less time. Mrs. Hiatt is an excellent example of this, she completes around 15 quilts a year. Mrs. Cooper also felt she could complete several quilts a year along with doing her housework.

Mrs. Archie Cooper's quilt, the Tree of Life, won first place at the Adair County Fair in 1978.



Which brings up another point. The women that quilt must still take care of their families and meet their other responsibilities. To Mrs. Cooper, "The frustrating part is that everything else takes my time when I would rather be quilting."

Some people find it difficult to sell the quilts after they are completed. They know how much love has gone into every stitch and they would rather keep the quilt in their family. Families pass quilts from generation to generation trying to preserve their families' heritage. Mrs. Cooper said, "Quilting is a little like your autograph, it is yours personally and you can pretty well tell anybody's quilting. To fully appreciate a quilt, you have to make one!"

Quilts should never be stored in plastic or airtight containers. Wrap them in a cotton covering, such as an old sheet or pillowcase, to protect them from coming into contact with the wood of the storage areas and to filter light and dust. Do not store quilts in paper boxes because wood-derived products such as paper contain a natural acidic quality which damages the quilts. Store the quilts in normal temperatures and humidity since the excessive heat of attics or moisture of basements

may cause irreparable damage. Quilts should also be opened and refolded differently three or four times a year to prevent crease line damage.

Washing heirloom quilts at home should not be attempted without first consulting an expert. They may be quite fragile and not be able to stand much treatment. Washing is hard on them and they rarely look as nice afterwards. It is recommended to wash quilts in the bathtub using a gentle detergent and swishing them around until the water is no longer discolored. It is also suggested to carry the quilt outside and let dry on tall grass. Several people should carry the quilt so as not to break the threads. However, most of the newer quilts are made from sturdy fabrics and can be washed more often. A special effort should be made to preserve the quilts already in use around the house.

When admiring a quilt, think of the heritage it contains. Mrs. Cooper summed it up by saying, "As you make a quilt you are making history. You are preserving history and a life, too!"

In the late 1940s Mrs. Cleo Cooper used a kit, that had pre-cut color blocks, to quilt this Broken Star pattern.



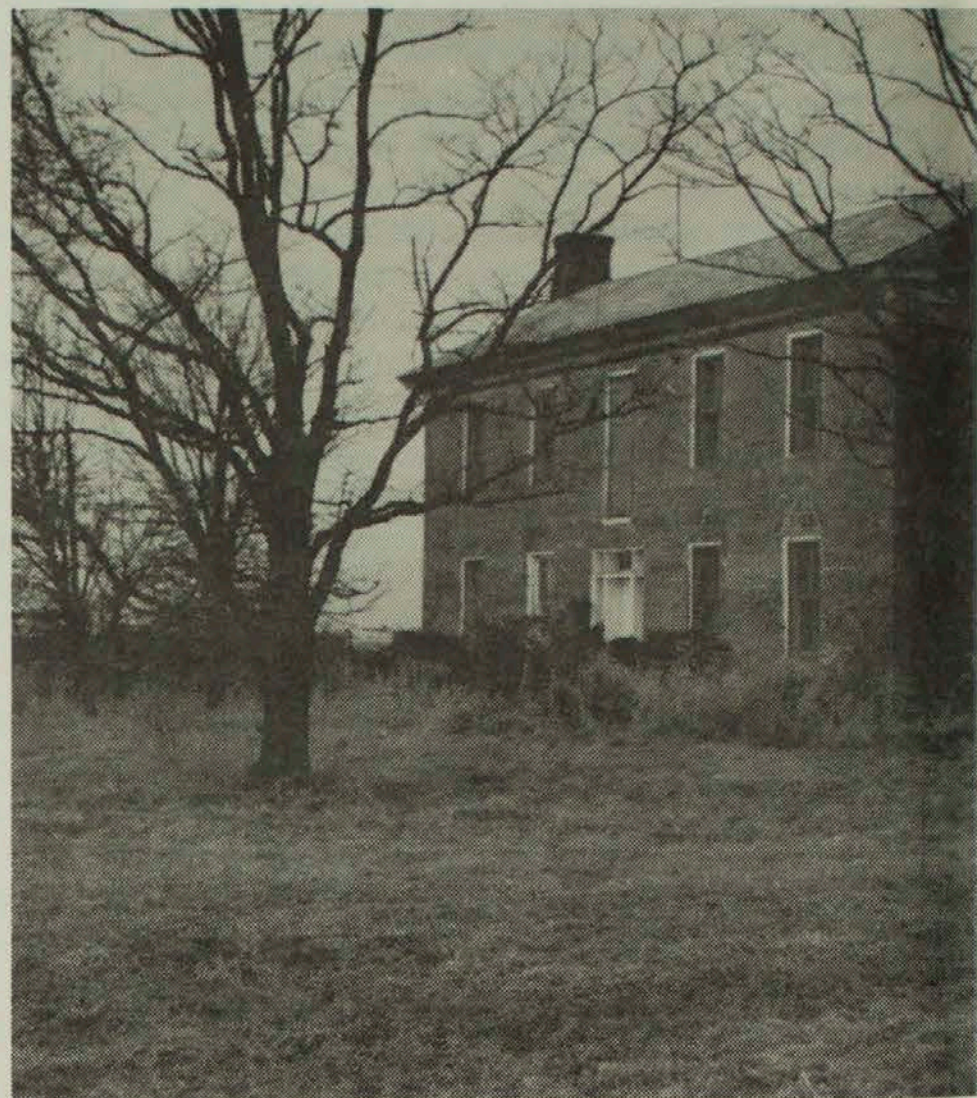
— Scenes from the Past —

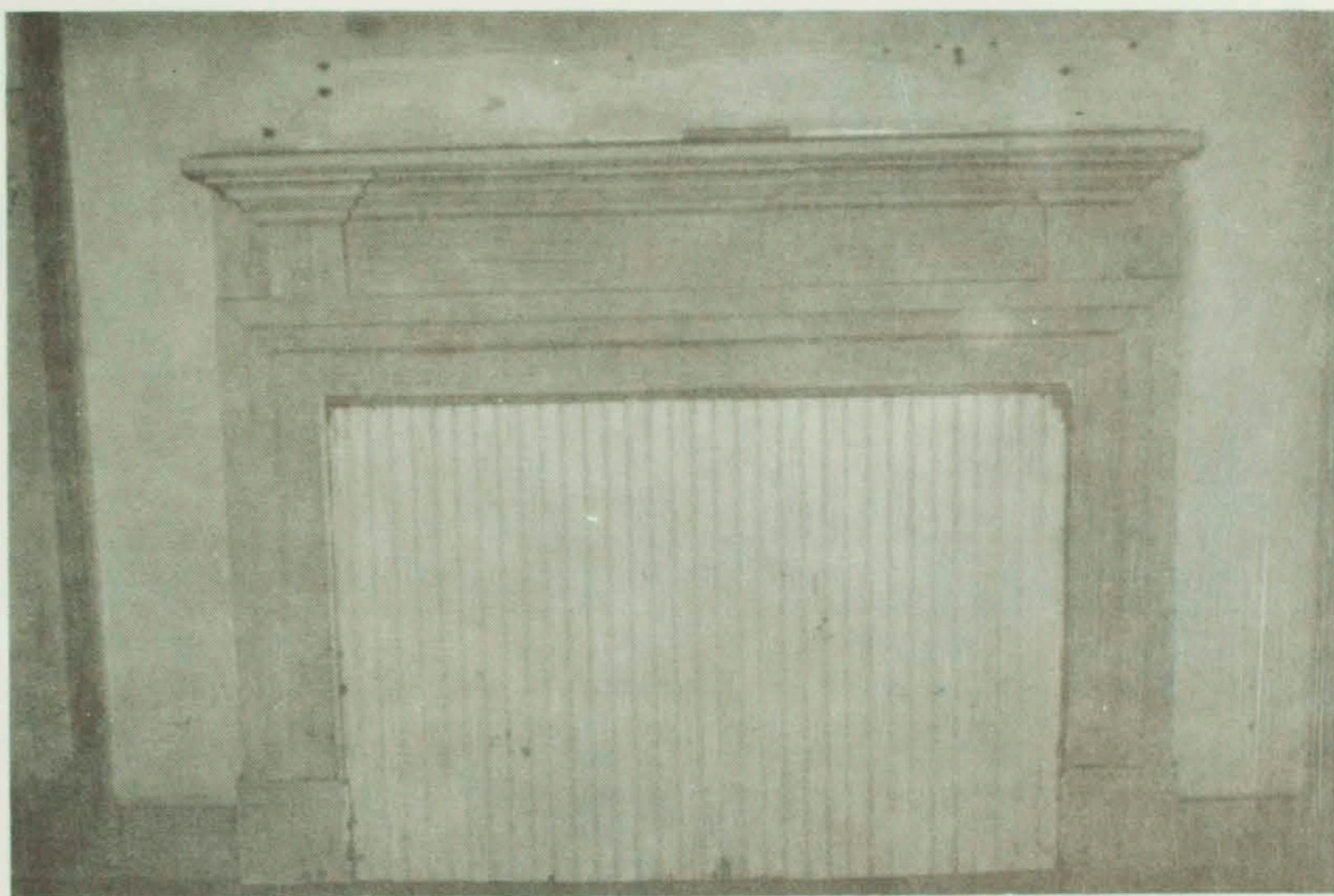
Northeast Missouri has several buildings that played a part in the War Between the States. They still stand as a constant reminder of the history that is forever present in our area. In Scotland County, one such house still stands.

Jacob Maggard was born in Kentucky in 1815. In 1836, 21 years later, he moved to Scotland County and built a house three miles northeast of Bible Grove. The house is a large, two-story brick home, pictured to the right. The house resembled the old plantation homes of the South. It has two fireplaces, one on the east and one on the west side of the house. A large walk-in hallway downstairs contains the stairway. At the top of the stairway is a door which leads into the upper level hallway. Each floor has four large rooms and the hallway equally divides the house.

On July 18, 1862, the Battle of Vassar Hill occurred. It was the largest Civil War battle that took place in Scotland County. The battleground was located halfway between the Maggard farm and Bible Grove. Major John Y. Clopper led the 11th Calvary of the Missouri State Militia, and the Confederate forces were under the command of Colonel Joseph Porter. Major Clopper in his commander's report wrote, "...they had an ambush well planned, and drew my advance guard into it, in which my men suffered severely....the bad condition of the roads, and the constant rainy weather have had the effect of exhausting my men and horses. The enemy were well concealed in dense underbrush, and I must give them credit for fighting well." (HISTORY OF LEWIS, CLARK, KNOX, AND SCOTLAND COUNTIES, reprinted 1981, pp. 519-520) A total of 83 men were killed or wounded. The Union took their casualties to the Maggard home which was converted into a hospital. The 23 dead soldiers were buried on the Maggard farm, many where they had been shot.

The farmhouse has changed owners several times since it was first built. It has stood more than 100 years of weathering and wearing. Jacob Maggard probably never dreamed that his home would be a part of the history of the area. This hallowed farm reminds us of the men who lost their lives in the Battle of Vassar Hill.







Conrad, Mark, Norman, and Arthur Ornes (left to right) were born in Brooklyn, New York. All, except Arthur, rode the train of promise to Missouri in 1910. Several years later, Conrad traveled from his home in Cincinnati, Ohio, to Sedalia, Missouri, for this portrait with his younger brothers. At that time Norman and Mark lived in Stover, Missouri, while Art lived in Sedalia.

Train of Promise

Between 1853 and 1927, approximately 150,000 homeless orphans escaped the overcrowded slums of New York by boarding a train bound to Midwestern farmlands. Norman Ornes, a resident of Brashear, Missouri, was one of the 6,000 children to come to Missouri on these trains of promise . . . the orphan trains.

Norman's story begins like so many others. Born in 1902 in Brooklyn, New York, he was the fifth child of a Norwegian couple who had immigrated to the United States in search of a dream. But times in New York were hard then. The economy was depressed and the rapid birthrate caused the population to boom. Many immigrants, like the Ornes family, ended up in New York's lower east side. Mr. Ornes remembers many boats and a lot of water and thinks they lived in a basement by the waterfront.

Disease ran rampant in this poverty-stricken area. Norman's mother was one of the many who caught tuberculosis and died when Norman was 5 years old. Unable to care for six children, his father was forced to make what had to have been one of the hardest decisions of his short life. He took his four younger

children - Conrad, Mark, Norman, and Arthur - to an orphanage where they might have a chance for a better life. Norman's father died shortly after. The oldest child, Chris, was hired as a messenger boy in a bank, while the only sister, Bertha, worked as a nurse caring for a wealthy family's children.

They were among the lucky ones; most children were merely abandoned. It was common for a baby to be found in a trash can or floating in the river. Those who did survive sold papers, polished shoes, or turned to petty crime. Boys often joined street gangs and girls were sometimes forced into prostitution. It is estimated there were at one time 30,000 children roaming the streets of New York City alone.

Hearing the desperate cries resounding from New York's streets and orphanages, a dedicated social worker, Charles Lor-

by Dana Kollar

ing Brace, founded the New York Children's Aid Society in 1853. Mr. Brace did not think orphan asylums did anything to correct the problem. Instead, they were merely temporary housing until a child could be considered an adult. According to a quote in the August 1986 issue of *The Smithsonian*, Brace believed, "The family is God's Reformatory; and every child of bad habits who can secure a place in a Christian home is the best possible place for his improvement."

With this in mind, the Children's Aid Society began dispatching orphans to homes in rural New York and surrounding states. The response was overwhelming. In September of 1854, 47 boys and girls ranging from 7 to 15 years began the first historic journey west on what was later named the "orphan trains."

It was not until February 1910 that the Ornes boys rode the train of promise. Earlier Conrad, Mark, and Norman had been placed with a Mrs. Yarrington who ran a boarding school outside of Long Island. She was like a mother to the boys and they attended school for the two years they were on Long Island. Arthur was only a baby and did not go to Long Island or to the West on the orphan train. Instead, he stayed in the New York orphanage for a short time.

One can only imagine what was going through the minds of these youngsters as they boarded the train. Some cried as the hope of their parents' return dissolved when the train pulled out of the station. Others like Norman were filled with ex-

stated that the child would be raised in a Christian atmosphere, would receive an education, and would be treated as a member of the family had to be signed. Prospective parents had to give character references and the paper was then filed with other Society records.

By today's standards, the method of finding suitable homes was rather primitive. Towns were scouted and advertisements that announced the trains' arrival were put in newspapers and post offices. An article headed "Homes Wanted For Children" in the January 10, 1906, issue of *The Princeton Telegraph* stated, "A company of orphan children of different ages will be at Sheets Opera House in Princeton on Thursday, January 18th. The object of the coming of these children is to find homes in our midst, especially among farmers where they can enjoy a happy and wholesome family life and where kind care, good example and moral training will fit them for a life of usefulness."

Local committees were established to mail applications to prospective parents who either met the children at the train depot or at another designated place, usually a church or opera house. Here, the children were lined up, and people could either pick them on the spot, or talk with them and a Society representative at length before making a decision.

This had to be a grueling experience, especially for those who were not quickly chosen. Some people might feel a child's arms and legs to decide if he would be a good worker. The



Young Norman Ornes' pet sheep gave him experience that later proved valuable when he began raising sheep on his own farm in Brashear, Missouri. Mr. Ornes also raised hogs, an animal he had never actually seen before coming to Missouri on the orphan train.

citement and anticipation. "All I thought about was coming out West and seeing the cowboys and Indians; and I was disappointed when there weren't any."

The trip was arranged by the Children's Aid Society and the cars were chaperoned by one of their aides. Boys and girls were usually separated and a nurse or doctor would ride ahead in the baggage coach. All were made to look very presentable; spotlessly clean and dressed in new clothes. When Norman and his two brothers reached St. Louis, they were taken to a department store and furnished with new, fashionable suits.

The Children's Aid Society did not require blood tests, and there were no waiting lists. There was, however, a certain procedure followed. First, if the natural parents were alive, they had to relinquish custody to the Society. An agreement which

children that were not picked simply kept going from stop to stop until they were.

Conrad, Mark, and Norman were not "lined up." After receiving new clothes they were taken from St. Louis to Versailles, in Morgan County, and then to Stover, Missouri. Mr. Ornes explains, "There were three brothers in Stover; two of the brothers the first day came and saw they wanted two of us. They had an older brother who lived at Cole Camp, so he came to take Conrad. All of us ended up in homes that were within eight miles of each other."

Conrad then moved to live with a lady in Cincinnati, Ohio, who offered to give him the best possible education. He became a chemical engineer, worked in a chemical plant, and taught at the University of Cincinnati. He is still living in Cincinnati.

Norman and Mark saw each other practically everyday. They lived within a quarter of a mile of each other and went swimming regularly at a nearby creek. As a young man, Mark went to Kansas City and worked in a dairy, married, and returned to Stover where he was a dairyman until he died.

Young Norman quickly adjusted to life on the farm of his foster parents, Mr. and Mrs. G.G. Parker. He was given a lamb of his own to care for and became acquainted with pigs, an animal he had never seen before, while he did his chores. He learned that "butta" was now called "butter," and he even changed his name. Not liking his original Norwegian name, Gustave, especially when it was shortened to "Gussy," he started calling himself Norman.

Mr. Ornes was not adopted, but said, "I was treated very well, as well as their older daughter; just like one of the family."

After graduating the eighth grade from a small country school called Haw Creek, Norman moved with his foster parents to Brashear, Missouri. He was 15 and in this year, 1918, he came down with a bad case of the flu. He knew he wanted to be a farmer so after he recovered Norman started farming. He now has a 200-acre farm in Brashear and is the proud father of three sons, Allen, Marvin, and Harold, and one daughter, Norma.



Ernest and Floyd Howes, of Kirksville, Missouri, were featured in the February 1914 issue of The People's Home Journal regarding their journey on the orphan trains.

Whatever became of the baby Ornes? By coincidence, the wife of a Missouri Pacific engineer who lived in Sedalia, Missouri, heard of him and made two trips to New York to get Art and then adopted him. Now Arthur Townsend is a retired music instructor living in Arcadia, California.

Although it is unfortunate the six Ornes children were split up, life was certainly better in the Midwest, and they did keep in touch. They have all visited each other and try to write around Christmas time. Mr. Ornes remembers his older sister, Bertha, writing and telling them all to be good boys. She later contracted a fatal case of pneumonia.

The oldest brother, Chris, became secretary of the same bank where he started working as a messenger. He then moved to Plainfield, New Jersey, and worked as a secretary for a New Jersey trust company.

Ernest and Floyd Howes came to Missouri in 1909 and were two such successful proteges of the New York Children's Aid Society. After arriving in LaPlata, Missouri, the two boys were adopted by Mr. and Mrs. H.G. Howes. They attended school in Kirksville and later Ernest began working for the highway department while Floyd farmed land east of Kirksville. The late Mr. Ernest and his wife, Melvina, had one son, Gene, and a daughter, Betty. Floyd and Flossie Howe, both deceased, had one daughter, Ellen.

Some graduates of the orphan trains did not fair as well as Mr. Ornes and the Howes. Hoping to be a part of a new family, they instead found they were only considered free labor. The Society kept in touch with the children they had placed and a survey done in 1910 found only 5% returned to New York, while 87% had "done well."

The orphan trains were assuredly a Christian effort and the story from beginning to end is touching and nothing short of inspiring. Mr. Ornes feels, "It was a good idea to get them out of that situation and into a place that wasn't as populated." What might have caused some people to be pessimistic or bitter, is accepted as just a fact of life for Mr. Ornes. He simply describes the attitude of himself and his brothers while riding the train of promise as "footloose and fancy free." From a basement in Brooklyn to a farm in Brashear, Norman Ornes has made the most of his opportunities and is a shining example to us all.



When customers bought small amounts of candy, sacks advertising the Jones' Candy Kitchen were used.



Emery and Ada Jones worked in the store together during the 24 years it was open.

A FAMILY AFFAIR

“Emery Jones and his 17 year old son, Carlos, opened the Jones Candy Kitchen in the opera house. And when my sister and I got old enough that our mother didn’t have to stay home with us, we all worked in the store. It was a family affair,” recalled Jaunita Fulks.

The Jones Candy Kitchen opened on September 22, 1922, in the south end of the Baxter Theater Building at Novinger, Missouri. There was not a grand opening celebration and from the outside it may have looked like any other candy store, but this store was unique. All of the candy and ice cream was made by Emery Jones, proprietor, and his son, Carlos.

Before deciding to open the Jones’ Candy Kitchen, Emery Jones worked for several years in two or three of the Novinger mines as a weigh boss. He set his mind to learning how to make ice cream and candy to sell. Mr. Jones felt that the candy business would be interesting and give his family something to do together. “With his determination and ability, we knew he would be a success,” said Mrs. Fulks, Mr. Jones’ youngest daughter.

Emery and Carlos Jones made a variety of candy. “They made cherry chocolates that were out of this world,” said Leona

Brown, Mr. Jones’ eldest daughter. Maple, strawberry, vanilla, carmel, and many other flavors of chocolate-filled candies were made. All of the chocolates in the store were hand-dipped by either Carlos or Emery Jones. “Bonbons, fancy box chocolates, and all kinds of candies were our specialty,” remarked Mrs. Fulks.

In 1926, Emery Jones purchased the Union Bank Building. The Jones Candy Kitchen was then moved from the previously rented Baxter Theater Building to the bank building down the street.

The Union Bank Building was a one-story brick building, and the candy was made in the back room. Equipment in the store included a soda fountain, cigar case, large candy case, and an ice cream cabinet. Farther back in the room were booths and the lunch counter. The entire building was heated by a coal or wood heating stove. “When you walked in the door, to the left was an ice-cooled chocolate case. Cakes of ice were put in the top and the chocolates were displayed below. The ice kept the chocolate cool and looking nice in the summer,” explained Mrs. Fulks.

Sweets were not the only items sold at the Jones Candy Kit-

chen. There was also a lunch counter. "My sister and I used to have to get up at 5:30 every morning, go down, and have breakfast for the coal haulers. By the time we got our breakfast ready, they all came in and we couldn't eat ours until about noon," remembered Mrs. Fulks. Sandwiches, chili, and 5 and 10 cent hamburgers were sold for lunch. The specialties were the tenderloin and brain sandwiches.

On July 1, 1946, Emery and Carlos Jones decided to retire from the candy making business. The store held a special place in the hearts of several people and touched the lives of many. For 24 years, people came from far and near for a taste of Emery Jones' special homemade chocolates and ice cream.

by Karla Baugher



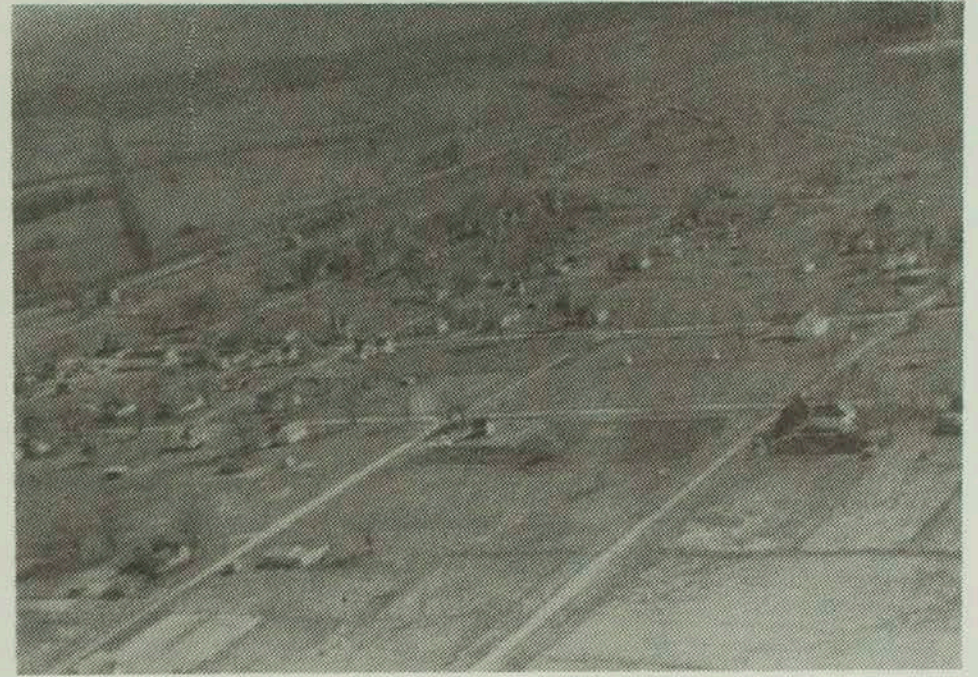
Ada Jones, center, and her daughters, Leona and Jaunita, waited on customers at the Jones Candy Kitchen.



Carlos Jones helped make the box chocolates for which the Jones Candy Kitchen was so well-known.



The Craggs and Taylor Store, located on the east side of Chicago Avenue, sold canned goods and bulk products from 1913 to 1938. During the store's existence, their meat counter was the only refrigerator in town.



This is an aerial view of Gibbs in 1948. This year the town will celebrate its centennial anniversary; celebrations have been scheduled for August 8.

A Centennial Anniversary

by Jonathan Walker

Centennial celebrations are being planned this year in Gibbs, Missouri. This small village is tucked away in the Wilson Township of Adair County. It originated as a result of the Santa Fe Railroad building a straight line of track between Kansas City and Chicago.

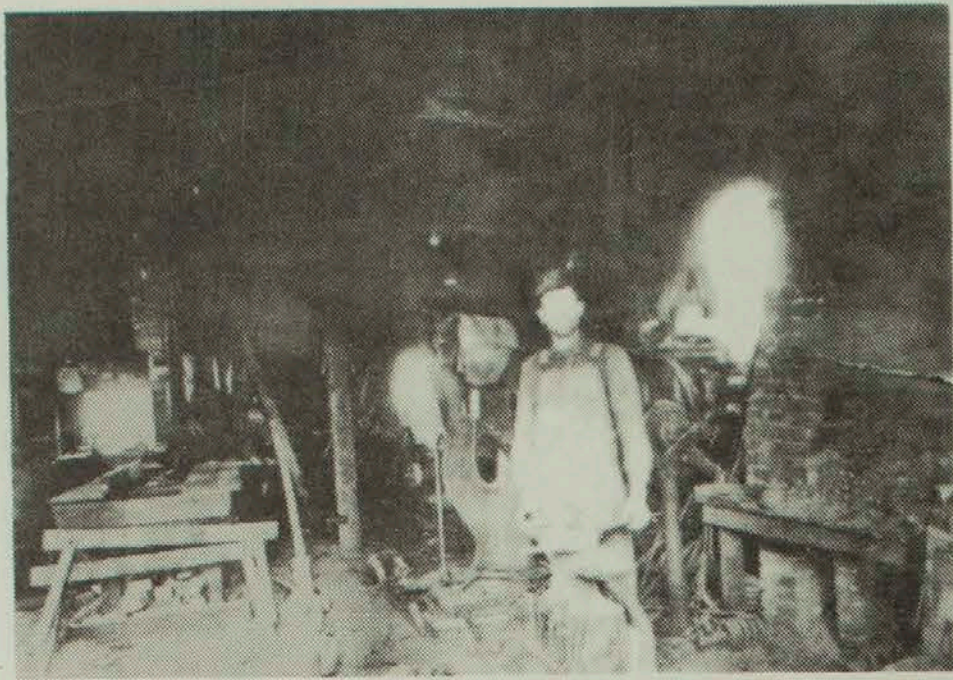
Gibbs is located seven miles from La Plata and ten miles southeast of Kirksville. The name Gibbs came from Frank W. Gibbs, who donated the land that was to be used as the depot and stockyard for the Santa Fe railroad. He formed the Gibbs Town and Land Company which sold the land which is currently Gibbs. Frank and his wife, Emma, had three children. The third child, Lonnie, born on July 16, 1887, was the first boy born in Gibbs. Frank founded the village in 1887, but it remained unincorporated until 1894.

Gibbs became a major shipping port for the surrounding communities. "The people from three neighboring counties used the railroad to ship livestock out, especially on Sundays," remembered Dale Benner, a banker in Gibbs for 20 years. Mr. Benner's wife, Ivy, recalled, "One would have been amazed at the amount of livestock that was shipped out of Gibbs." Cattle and hogs were sent north to Chicago after farmers would

drive the stock in on the old dusty roads. The hogs were brought to town in a wagon; they did not have trucks at this time. Gibbs became the first in the county to have an all-weather road. Besides the livestock, farmers brought their grain and surplus supplies to a grain elevator owned by Perrin and Co. of Chicago. A carload of apples was shipped out on the railroad, while a company would come in and ship out logs at little expense. Strawberries and eggs were sent to the larger metropolitan areas for sale in grocery stores.

As the railroad reached its peak of double tracks in 1908, so did the population of Gibbs with 168 people. Besides the shipping aspect, the railroad provided jobs. When it was first built, men and horses were brought in to level the land where the tracks were to be laid. When the second track was built in 1908, additional crews were hired to maintain the tracks. The depot was open all night; there were two night men and one day man. The railroad added to the prosperity enjoyed by Gibbs through other jobs such as, foreman, assistant foreman, and timekeeper. The railroad was a mainstay in the economy of Gibbs.

In the many years that the Santa Fe passed through Gibbs, from 1887 to the present, only one major accident has occurred. On August 12, 1894, two passenger trains collided at full speed. One of the engineers failed to understand his order to stop and ran head-on into the other train. Two of the men were killed, the engineer and an express manager, and eight others were injured. Having only one major wreck was very fortunate considering the fact that up to 35 trains could pass through in a 24-hour period.



Ed Moncrief owned a blacksmith shop located near the railroad.

Beside the railroad, on the east right-of-way, is an underground pipeline which pumps oil from Texas and Oklahoma. While this was being dug in 1908, the workers lived in big tents. Mr. Benner said, "There was one guy who made his living off the pipeline; he owned land down south of Gibbs. The pipeline would have leaks and the company would pay him for the damage."

During the early years there were only a few basic establishments. The first business established was a store built by T.E. Elmore and his brother George in 1888. As the people's needs increased, so did the number of businesses. By 1900, a grain elevator, post office, bank, and grocery store were added.

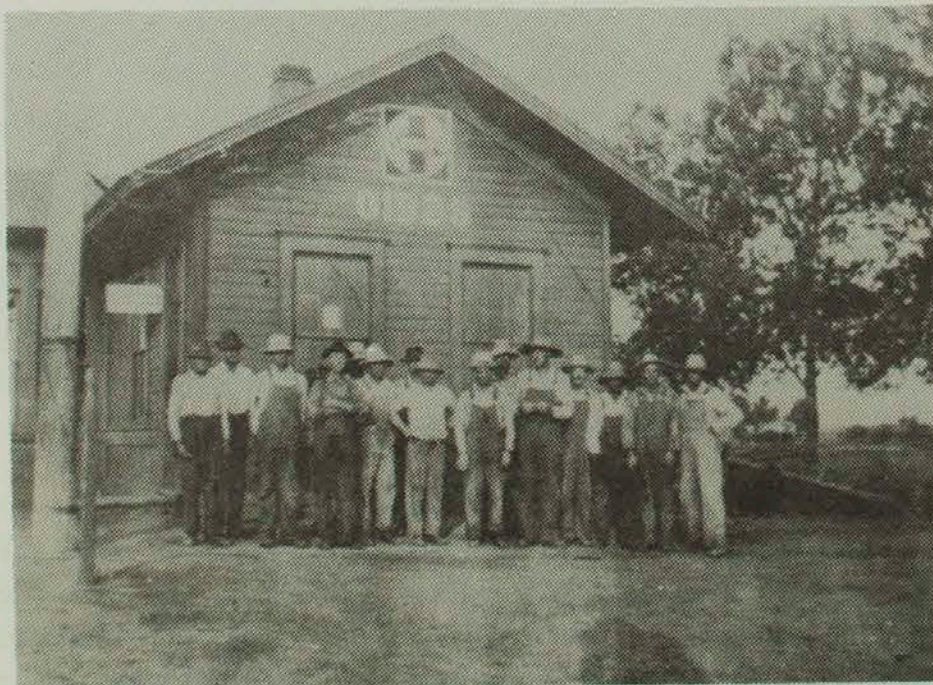
The Gibbs Saving Bank was first started as a stockholders' organization. It consisted of only the necessities, a vault and the counter to meet people. The bank eventually performed all of the functions of a present day bank. It has safe deposit boxes, made farm loans, paid checks on accounts, and had time deposits.



In the 1900s the cement factory was owned and operated by Myrt Hasher, shown on the right.

The bank changed hands five times between 1901 and 1907. It was sold to Mr. Crass and Mr. Elmore in July of 1901 with a capitol stock of \$5,000; it was then purchased by Frank Myers in February of 1903. Mr. Myers sold the bank to his son, J.H. Myers, in December of 1905. Young Myers sold the bank to Mr. Allison and Mr. Miller on April 30, 1907. Mr. Campbell bought the bank and retained it longer than any other owner. During these six years the capitol stock remained at \$5,000. During the Depression, the bank overextended itself and went bankrupt.

At the corner of Main Street and the new Highway V, the post office is one of the few survivors to pass into the 1980s. The reason for its survival was the method of receiving and sending the mail. Mrs. Benner stated, "They hung the mail up on posts and the mailman on the train had a way of grabbing it, so that the train did not stop." From the train the mailman could also deposit the mail onto the post. In the early days, the post office was the center of society life. Women would congregate in the spring and fall waiting for their mail-order packages to



The railroad played an important part in the establishment of this small village. The railroad gang is pictured in front of the depot in the early 1920s.



The location of the post office has remained the same even though the buildings have changed. This building was built in 1957.

arrive. One postmaster, Hattie Young, ran a hat shop out of the small building. Terry Elmore, Alberta Knotts, Dan Houston, and Charlie "Chick" Spenser were among the carriers who had the route out of Gibbs for several years.

One of the largest grocery stores was Craggs and Taylor's General Store. They carried everything from shoes and dress material to coffee and canned goods. In the 1920s, bologna was sold for 15 cents a pound and bananas were 6¼ cents per pound. Mrs. Benner remembers that the store did not have many different types of food, but "it was a good variety." Their meat counter was the only electrical refrigeration in town.

During the town's "high point" which was before the Depression, there were other types of stores. Two hotels were needed to accommodate people coming to and from Gibbs on the railroad. Union Hotel, located near the depot, was more widely known. Mr. Benner said, "They had their name established; they were known throughout the state. Whenever the salesmen would come in, they stayed overnight there." The other hotel was located downtown.

When the telephones were installed, a telephone office was established. Each residence was given its own code; for example, one house would have two short rings, or another might have two short and one long. It was easy to answer a call for someone else and was a common occurrence. After the lines came from LaPlata, the people were given country lines with three or four phones on each line.

In the early years there were two blacksmith shops, where farmers sharpened their plows, shod their horses, and made different parts for their machinery. Will Young had a furniture store, undertaking business, and harness store simultaneously. Lucky McGraw and Ernie Spencer each had a restaurant. A funeral parlor was once run by the county coroner, Foster Easley, and his son, Byron. Frequently the pre-burial activities occurred at the deceased's home in the front yard. Besides the county coroner, there was also the town doctor. In 1897 the doctor's name was Alleedom, succeeding him was Doctor Duff.

Gibbs's religious history has included four churches at one time. Services were last held five years ago in the Christian Church, the only church left standing. The Christian Church was organized on March 1, 1905, by Elder J.L. Hollowell with a membership of 26. Church services were held in the upstairs of a rented downtown building for two years, while a new church was being built on Main Street. The church was completed and dedicated by E.M. Richmond on August 29, 1909. The building was never torn down and remains in its original position.

Two other churches were torn down, the North and the South Methodist. Mrs. Elsie Shuman, a former teacher at Gibbs, stated, "The Methodist Church split over the issue of slavery during the Civil War, before 1861." The North Methodist Church held services the second and fourth Sunday at 11:00 a.m., while the South Methodist held services the second Sunday at 11 a.m. and at 7:30 p.m. The United Brethren met on the first Sunday at 11 a.m. and at 7:30 p.m. This church was a branch of another United Brethren Church, located halfway between Millard and Gibbs. The Church was divided over the subject of secret societies. Those who believed that one could attend secret societies went to Gibbs. They built a Brethren Church, a one-room building not much larger than a residence.

In 1924 it was struck by lightning and burned.

The Gibbs School developed out of the Union School, which was located one mile northwest of Gibbs near the Union Cemetery. Before the Civil War a log school was built and a subscription school was conducted there. The first free public school was opened in 1867 with an enrollment of 30 students. In 1900 the school went from a seven-month term to an eight-month term. The school building itself has been rebuilt and moved several times. In 1900 the building was finally moved to its present location in the northwest corner of town and another room was added.

The small two-room schoolhouse contained first through fourth grade in one room, and the fifth through eighth grade in another. Mrs. Elsie Shuman, teacher at Gibbs School in 1918, recalled, "I taught everything, little kids six years old through eighth grade: reading, arithmetic, spelling, geography, history, and a little science as you could work it in. The country schools started at 9:00 a.m. and ended at 4:00 p.m. Everything was scheduled; one grade would read at 9 in the morning and 15 to 20 minutes later another grade would be reading." During the 1965-66 school year the last classes were held in Gibbs because of the consolidation with Brashear School. The building was razed in 1975.

Citizens of Gibbs would not have said that they lived a life of "all work and no play," but by today's standard that is how it would be termed. The people worked on the farm almost six days a week and went to town on Saturdays. The work day lasted from dawn to dusk and for every able body. Usually, the children were left to do the household work. The people in town also worked six days a week.

On Saturday nights, there would be a crowd in town when the weather was good. Mr. Benner remembered, "One would be surprised the people that would come in and stay to 10 or 11 o'clock; it became a holiday in town." During the 1940s, free movies were shown in an opera house until the merchants could not afford them anymore. In the summer, the churches had ice cream suppers and the University of Missouri sponsored a contest in which the Santa Fe Railroad, through the College of Agriculture at Columbia, gave a \$50 scholarship for the best ten ears of corn shown. During the winter, there were parties at different homes where dancing and card games took place.

During the summer everyone looked forward to the week-long fair held in Gibbs. Organized in 1921, it was held in the town's park. A stage was produced for bands and actors to play for crowds. A carnival and athletic events were also happening. Local residents participated in the boxing and wrestling events. Everyone brought their livestock and craftwork to be judged. Although there was a great turnout, the fair lost money, until finally, in 1928 the fair had to be cancelled. "One would be amazed at what good fairs they had; there were not that many places to go in those days; it was like a community place," stated Mrs. Benner.

In 1987, the Town Board called a meeting concerning a block grant from the state. The money was to support a park located where the school once stood. Mrs. Ronna Magruder led the effort towards a matching grant of \$1,260. Using all types of fund-raisers and even a drawing for an afghan, the money was raised. A barbecue grill and a backstop for the baseball field were purchased, plus swings, a teeter-totter, and

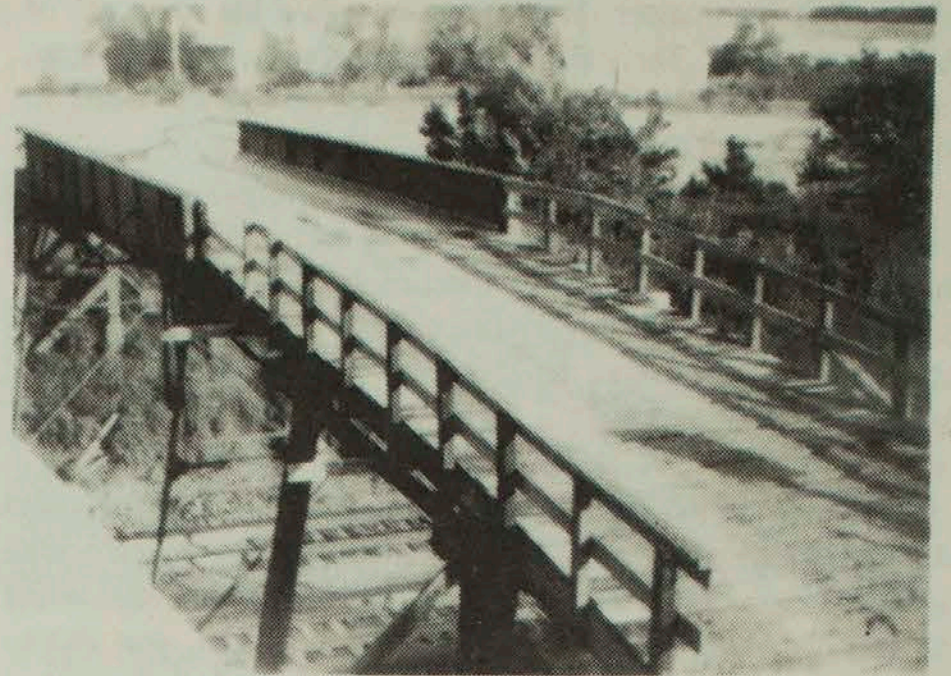
other playground equipment will be installed.

During this process, the fact was uncovered that in May of this year will be the centennial anniversary of Gibbs. After this discovery, an attempt to return the cemetery to its original appearance was made. The final burial had taken place in 1912 and the area was last cleaned in the 1940s. Two months were spent raking, brush hogging, and cutting the vegetation. A cemetery board was established and donations were taken for the upkeep. The graves of two Civil War veterans are in this cemetery. During the past year, Mrs. Magruder has researched the history of Gibbs and will be publishing an in-depth book sometime in May.

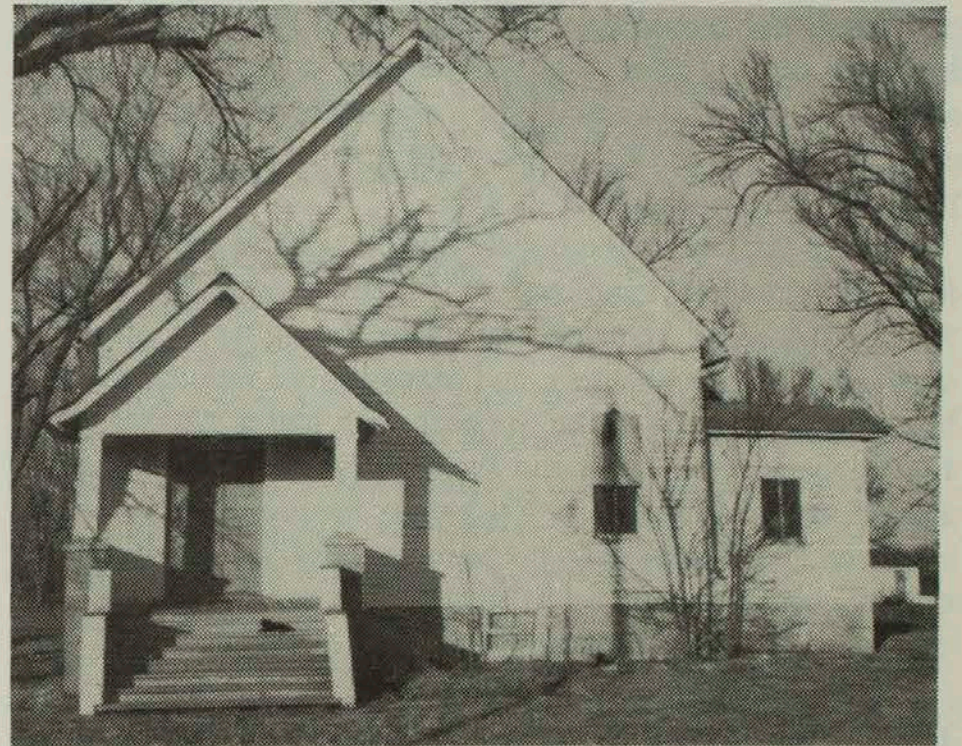
Today the village of Gibbs is waning. The rural clinic, which had existed since 1949, was moved to a newly constructed building in 1963. The expansion was to no avail; it was discontinued in 1970. A new concrete bridge was built in 1979 to replace the old wooden bridge which had stood since the turn of the century. None of the previous businesses are in existence today; in December of 1970 the final business, a grocery store, closed.

Two main events caused the town to become merely a shell of its former self. The first was the Depression. Many people were forced to leave Gibbs to find work in other towns. Mr. Bennie Fudge transported teenagers to Iowa to shuck corn for extra money. Many people came to Kirksville for jobs. The second major event was World War II. Males between ages of 16 and 45 were drafted. The women became the work force in the community. Many moved to larger towns because of working conditions. Mr. Benner said, "Everyone that lives in Gibbs works in Kirksville or some other place." Today this agricultural community is faced with the economic problems facing most of the Midwest. "Some people were out of work, some died off, and some went away as was with most towns," remembers Mr. Benner. "Now there is no one to take their place."

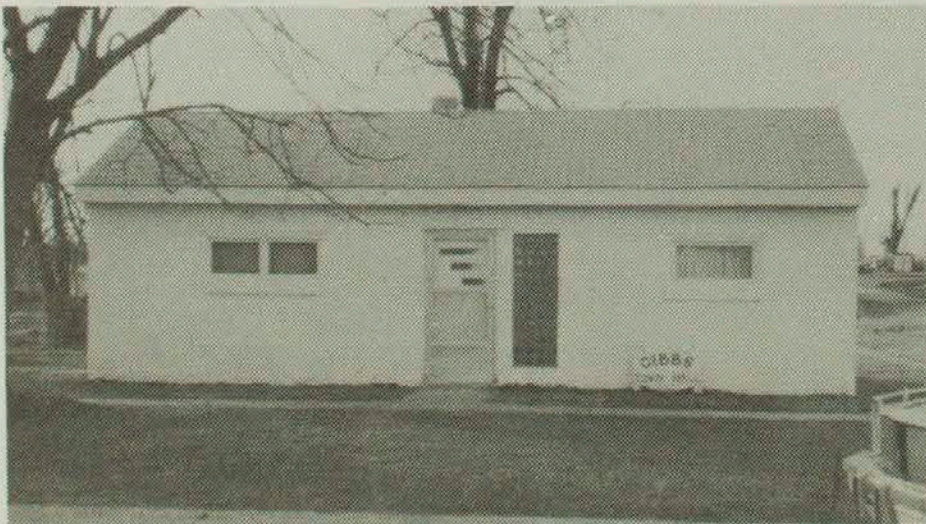
A stranger passing through Gibbs today would not recognize this once active community, centered around the railroad, and accented by the business. The village expanded according to the growing importance of the railroad. Then as railroad became a dying dinosaur, the town began to dwindle away. Those citizens that are still in Gibbs are anxiously waiting to celebrate the centennial anniversary.



In 1979, a new concrete bridge of Route V was constructed to replace this narrow wooden bridge which had stood since the turn of the century.



Services in the Christian Church, located east of Highway V, were discontinued five years ago.



In 1963, this building was constructed as a rural clinic. It is currently being used as a town hall.



In the early 1920s, several stores lined the east side of Chicago Avenue.

DOC SAVAGE

People living in the difficult times of the Depression era could forget their despair with an inexpensive adventure story in which they knew good would triumph over evil. These 10 cent, 6,000 word, Doc Savage pulp magazines supplied the necessary escape. Doc Savage, the Man of Bronze, was one of the thrilling fictional characters created by Lester Dent, a native Missourian born in LaPlata, Missouri. Though Mr. Dent died in 1959, his wife, Norma, still resides in LaPlata.

Lester Dent was born the only son of Bernard and Alice Dent and at the age of two, he and his family moved from LaPlata to Wyoming where Lester's parents had lived prior to his birth. While in Wyoming, Lester was taught by his mother, a former school teacher, and attended school from the fourth grade on. When Lester was 14 years old, his family inherited the Dent estate in LaPlata, Missouri, and Bernard Dent moved his family to their hometown in Macon County. Lester graduated from high school in 1923; he then went to a business college in Chillicothe, Missouri, majoring in telegraphy. Later he began working as a telegrapher for the Associated Press and it was during this period that he met and married Norma Gerling.

Lester Dent's interest in writing began when he heard of a friend's success in getting a short story published. Mr. Dent failed to have his first 13 short stories published but his 14th attempt was accepted by *Top Notch* magazine. Shortly after his story was published, the editor sent a letter to Mr. Dent summoning him to New York to begin writing for the magazine. Norma Dent described their move to New York on New Year's Eve, 1931, by saying, "It was during the Depression and people were out of work and times were really bad; it did look like

we were undertaking a risky thing . . . to quit a job and go some place to make a living writing."

Mr. Dent's most notable writings were his Doc Savage novels. The destroyer of evil and protector of all that is good, Doc Savage had superhuman powers. The author, Mr. Dent, in describing his character said, "I took Sherlock Holmes with his deducting ability, Tarzan of the Apes with his towering physique and muscular ability, Craig Kennedy with his scientific knowledge, and Abraham Lincoln with his Christliness. Then I rolled 'em all into one to get — Doc Savage."

Throughout the Doc Savage series, five important characters accompanied Doc on his adventures. Colonel John Renwick, "Renny," is a 6-foot-4 engineering specialist who frequently uses the expression "holy cow." He is one of the most accomplished boxers in the world and as a source of exercise, knocks down doors with his bare fists. William Harper Littlejohn or "Johnny," is an expert in the areas of geology and archeology and his command of language is extremely precise. The weakling of the crowd, Major Thomas J. Roberts or "Long Tom," who worked with Thomas Edison, is considered an electrical genius and spends most of his time inventing the devices used in the adventures. He is characterized as having a terrible temper. Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Blodget Mayfair, nicknamed "Monk," has the build of a gorilla and is one of the greatest modern chemists of his time. In developing this character, Mr. Dent wrote, "What Long Tom can do with electricity, Monk can duplicate with chemicals." Brigadier General Theodore Marley Brooks, known as "Ham," is by far the most intellectual of the clan, having a law degree from Har-



Pilots and salesmen for the Dent's aerial photography business, Airviews, Inc., gather for a dinner meeting in LaPlata, Missouri. This picture was taken in 1951.



Lester Dent with his wife, Norma, relax in the basement of their home. He acquired a first-class radio operator license and built his own transmitter. Mr. Dent used the call sign WOCBL.

vard. It is often Ham's quick thinking that bails Doc's group out of trouble.

Not only did Lester Dent write about adventure, he lived adventure. He and his wife owned a two masted, 40-foot schooner named the Albatross which they sailed down the coast from New York to Florida. Mr. Dent was an expert deep-sea diver and went treasure hunting on several occasions.

Mrs. Dent explained that they once held a contest for local high school students who were asked to write on the topic "What would you do if you were President?" and the winner was awarded a trip on the Albatross. The contest was won by a student from Novinger, Missouri, who was given an opportunity to go on one of the treasure hunting excursions.

Mr. Dent was a world traveler, and once while visiting Austria, the Nazis invaded and detained him for taking unauthorized photographs. In preparation for a novel, Lester went mountain climbing to more effectively write about the experience. He once went gold prospecting in Death Valley and was admitted into the Explorers Club of New York along with the distinguished Admiral Byrd. Lester Dent had a pilot's license and kept up with the latest advances in science and technology. He had a radio operator's license and took rigorous courses in electricity and plumbing.

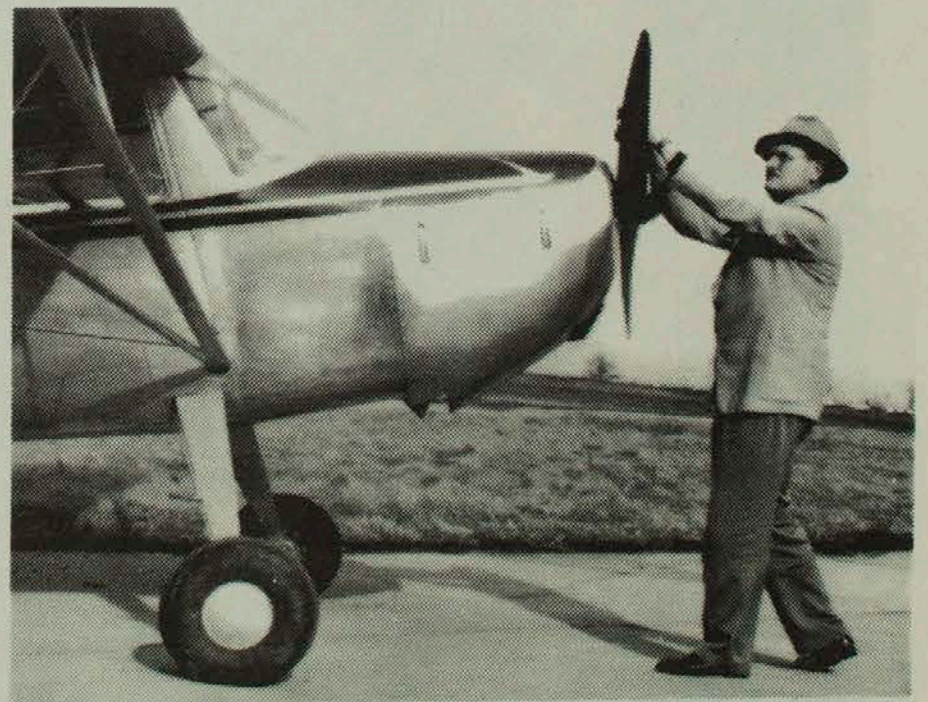
Mr. Dent would frequently write 18 hours a day accomplishing approximately one book a month. There were 182 Doc Savage stories written and 165 of them were attributed to Lester Dent while others were completed by ghost writers chosen by Mr. Dent himself.

Lester Dent was one of the earliest writers to use a formula, which he invented himself and used in the Doc Savage series. Each story had a 6,000 word manuscript which was further divided into 1,500 word segments. In the first 1,500 words, a murder method was chosen, characters were introduced, locale determined, and a physical conflict devised for the hero. Problems were compounded for the hero in the second section with another physical conflict and a twist in the plot. In the third segment, the hero cornered the villain and made some headway, only to be buried with further problems in the final 1,500 words. At the end of the fourth segment the hero extricated himself by using skill, training, and brawn. Details of Dent's successful formula were reprinted in detail in Robert Winberg's publication, *THE MAN BEHIND DOC SAVAGE*.



DOC SAVAGE, THE MAN OF BRONZE was Lester Dent's first Doc Savage novel. It was later made into a movie in which this airplane was used.

by Corey Pritchard



Lester Dent owned five airplanes that he used for his aerial photography business. Both Lester and Norma Dent had pilot licenses.

Over the years, some of the material from Dent's writings has been used by others. Similarities can be found between the characters Doc Savage—Clark Savage Jr., the Man of Bronze, and Superman—Clark Kent, the Man of Steel in Jerry Siegel's writing. The character who most resembled Doc Savage is Batman who was also a scientific genius, inventor of gadgetry, and whose Batmobile was almost identical to Doc's roadster. It was suggested, in Brad Darrach's *Time Magazine* article, that a substantial portion of Ian Fleming's material for the movie "Dr. No" was lifted from Lester Dent's novels.

In 1940, Lester and Norma returned to LaPlata where they began a dairy. Later they started a small aerial photography business, which they operated out of their home. The business soon became too large and was moved to the LaPlata square. Mr. Dent's pilots took aerial pictures of farms throughout Missouri and three of the surrounding states, then his salesmen would sell them to the farmers. Lester Dent owned five planes that he used for the business, based at the Kirksville Municipal Airport, and had a staff of 15 to 18 salesmen, 7 to 8 office girls, and 3 pilots. "We had a very complicated system and it was very successful," said Mrs. Dent.

Mr. Dent had a home which he designed himself built in

LaPlata. It included many uncommon conveniences such as an electric garage door opener, an intercom system, and closet lights activated when the doors opened. The townspeople found the home very unique and referred to it as the house of gadgets.

Lester Dent's final publication was the short story, "The Savage Challenge," printed in the February 22, 1958, edition of the *Saturday Evening Post*. Shortly after, Lester Dent died. According to Mrs. Dent, "Really, this is what he was working for the whole time and he felt like he had reached his goal when he sold his story to the *Saturday Evening Post*."

This prolific writer, who used his own fascinating life experiences in writing his stories and novels, was to be awarded the Missouri Writer's Guild Award in 1946 for the most successful Missouri writer of the year and in 1977 a movie adaptation of his first novel, "The Man of Bronze" was released.

His wife, Norma, still resides in LaPlata where she helps to perpetuate the memory of her husband and recently donated much of his collection to the University of Missouri. It is a tribute to Lester Dent that of the over 200 titles being printed at the height of the Depression, his works have endured through the years and are being reprinted today.



WATER WITCHING

Many modern sciences started as superstitions or myths; however, many of these myths have died. In today's world of laser technology and penetrating sound waves, the idea of dowsing for water has almost been laid to rest. But in Adair County there are a few old-timers who say water witching is not a superstition. They say it works!

Witching is the practice of using different instruments to locate water underground. The historical team of Barrett and Besterman estimated that witching has been in use for at least 500 years. Some people think that Moses was the first person to witch water when he brought water from a rock with a stick, but Georgias Agricola, a town physician in Bohemia, was the first to keep any accounts of water witching when he recorded his experience in 1556. His works were published in the book *DE RE METALLICA*.

Witching is used to find various underground objects. Traditionally it has been used to find water, but recently the uses have grown to encompass numerous hidden substances. A dowser sometimes tries to find minerals, water pipes, and even lost jewelry.

Most witchers throughout the United States use a fork-shaped stick. Almost any kind of stick will work, but the most prominent is that of a fruit tree. Peach and apple are quite popular while the hazel and elm limbs enjoy lots of success also.

A bent copper rod is another device used to locate hidden objects. A curved piece of No. 9 wire is also used, but not as

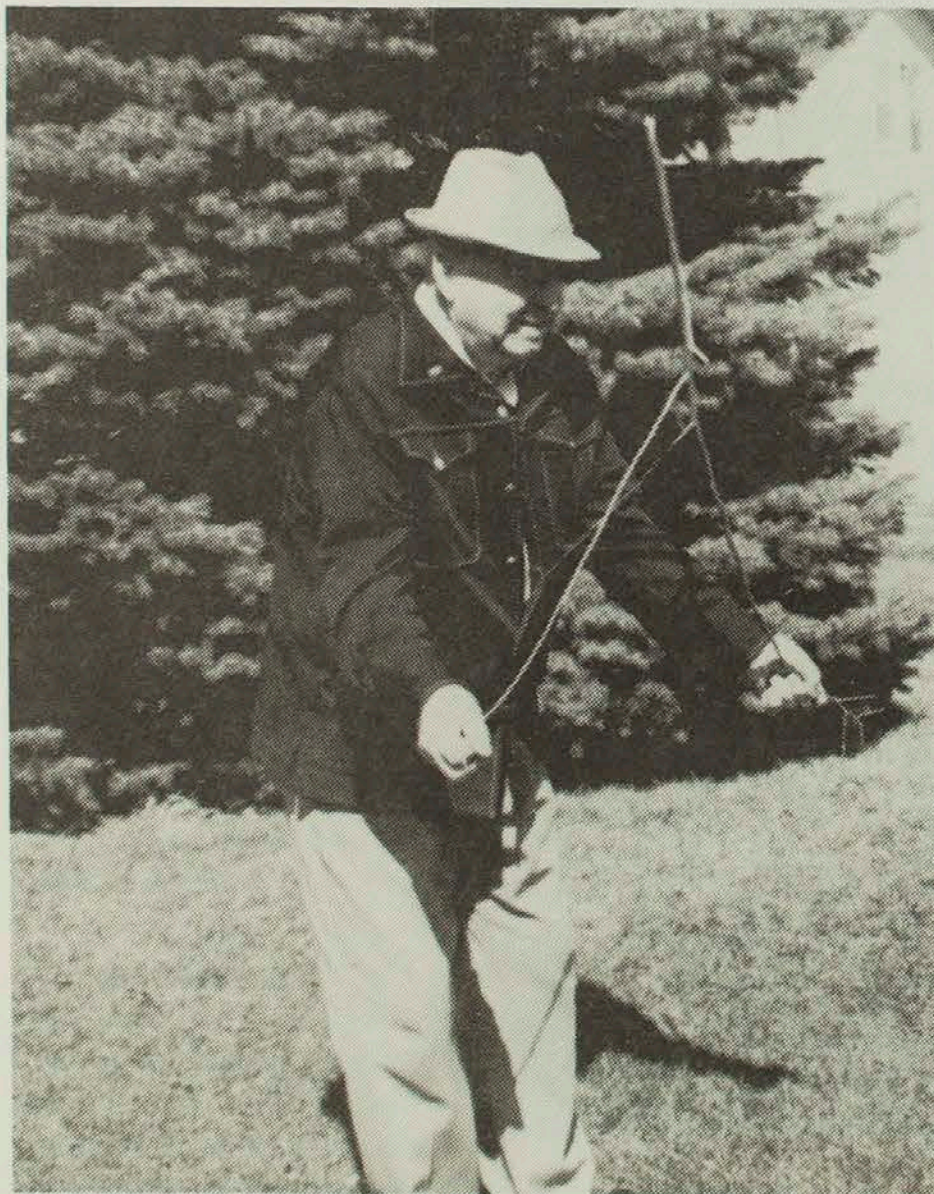
often. It seems that most people think that No. 9 wire will not work for them, so they never try it. In the case of the bent rod and forked stick, there are many different ways to use them.

To actually dowse for water, learning a method to operate the different tools is the first step. The forked stick ranges in size from small to large. After finding a stick, the extra foliage is stripped from the forks. The stick is then held with a fork in each hand. It can be held with the open end pointing toward the dowser or the ground. Holding the sticks tightly, the dowser walks over the area of ground in which he would like to find water. When the witcher is near a vein, the stick starts to go down. This continues until the stick is pointing straight into the ground, which means the vein is directly underneath.

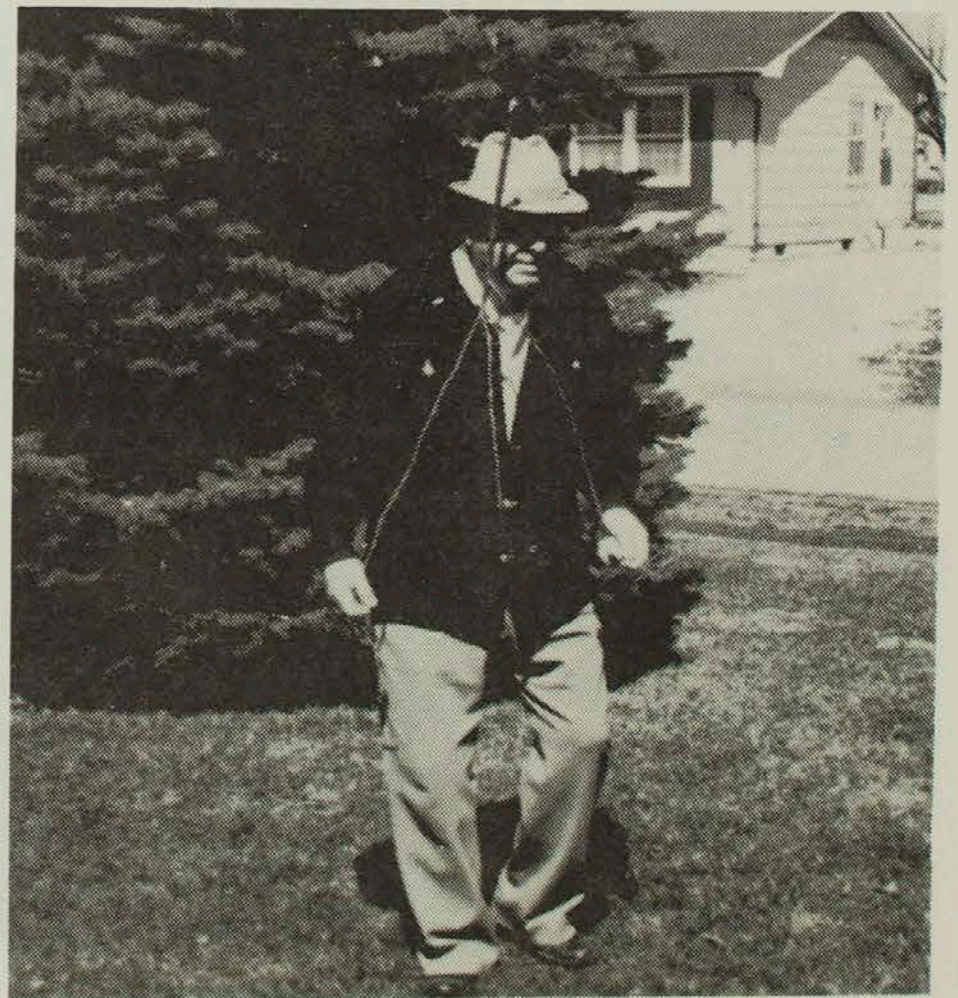
The use of the No. 9 wire is quite similar to that of the forked stick. The wire is slightly rounded but otherwise straight. It is also held with two hands. As it is passed over a vein, it will bob up and down, but then it will be pulled toward the ground.

Many plumbers use the copper rods to find where water pipes are. One or two rods are used, with the rods bent at right angles. When one rod is used, it is held with either hand. The free hand is then cupped around the first hand. As the dowser passes over water, the rod turns in the dowser's hand in the direction the vein runs. When two rods are used, the same happens except the rods point toward each other and then cross.

A few men and women in Adair County have used dows-



Ivan Peterson, witcher for 60 odd years, illustrates the forked stick method of water witching. Mr. Peterson stops over a hidden pipe in his yard. The stick has started to move toward the ground.



ing in their lifetime. In the 1800s and the early to mid-1900s, many of the wells in Adair County were found by witchers.

Ivan Peterson, a retired farmer who now resides in Kirksville, could be classified as an experienced witcher. He has been witching ever since his grandfather showed him how he found water in his native Sweden. Mr. Peterson was in high school at that time and "all the kids in the neighborhood wanted to know how it worked and what it was." People started asking him if he could find water for them. "In the drought years, I probably witched 60 or so wells for people," he recalled. Mr. Peterson uses a forked stick to locate the water. "As a general rule, I walk from southwest to northeast when witching. Sometimes when the stick turns down the bark will come off right in your hand."

"I did a lot of witching," he said, "but I never charged anybody." Most witchers do not charge to find water. Some do, because it is their job and part of their livelihood. "I've always heard that if you charge people, you could not find water anymore," said Wayne Morehouse. Mr. Morehouse lives north of Sublette and has witched ever since he saw a neighbor doing it some 40 years ago. "When he left I probably walked around for an hour, trying to see if it would work for me." Mr. Morehouse generally uses a piece of No. 9 wire, but sometimes he uses a copper rod. Mr. Morehouse recalls the time he found a buried water pipe for a Kirksville city worker. "I watched him drill for half an hour. Finally I went up to him and said, 'For a case of beer I'll find that pipe.' He asked me how I was going to find it and I told him that that was my business. I got out my wire and walked to where he had been digging. There were holes all over. After a couple of minutes my rod started bouncing up and down. I told him to dig four feet and he would find his pipe. He dug for about ten minutes before looking at me and saying, 'Looks like I just lost a case of beer.' " Mr. Morehouse also uses his rod to tell how deep a vein is. The number of times the rod bobs is how many feet deep the water is.

Gordon Collett has witched ever since he learned that it would work for him. "I was in college, when one day my dad and I were trying to find water for the horses. I had never done it, but I had read about witching. Dad got a stick, but it didn't work for him. I tried and it worked. We found three springs that day." The Collett farm has a historical spring where Chief Keokuk and his braves drank when they came down the Chariton River. Mr. Collett, through witching, has found three other springs joining to form that one. In the 1940s Mr. Collett found the well that is located in the Girl Scout Camp west of Kirksville, "That well is the deepest I ever found. It was 243 feet deep." Mr. Collett finds the depth of the water by multiplying by nine the distance from when the stick first moves until it is completely down. He also witched a well for Edward Polovich of Route 3. "Gordon witched the well for us 20 years ago," said Mr. Polovich. "We dug 13 feet and hit limestone. After we dynamited the rock the water was running everywhere. We dug four more feet and found enough water to supply the house ever since." The stick does something somewhat strange for Mr. Collett. "When I am over dead water, water in a pipe or a pocket underground, the stick turns up instead of down."

Most scientists think that there is nothing to water witching. "At this time there is no scientific explanation whatsoever," said Dr. John Hoffmann, Kirksville High School science in-

structor. He has had people try to locate water for him, but they have failed. Others say it has to do with electrical currents found in a person's body. "Not all people can find water," said Mr. Morehouse.

This author was twice invited to try to locate water, once with a forked stick and once with a copper rod. Although I could not find any with the stick, I was able to locate a vein with the copper rod. This doesn't mean that water witching works, but, along with seeing others witch, it sure made me stop and wonder.



Wayne Morehouse located a water vein on his farm. Notice the rod has turned downwards, pointing toward the vein.

by John Hill

Adair County's Own

The Adair County Historical Society was established in 1917, functioned until about 1940, then dropped from sight due to lack of interest among the public. On July 8, 1975, during the Bicentennial celebration of the American Revolution, the Society was re-established and Samuel A. Burk was chosen to be president. Mr. Burk wanted the public to take more interest in preserving the history of Adair County. At that time in 1975 the Society had a maximum of 166 charter members. The Society has had five past presidents since its re-establishment in 1975.

The current president, Emil Green, stated, "The Adair County Historical Society has no permanent location at this time. Although the Museum is located on the third floor of the Adair County Courthouse, most of the contents of the Museum have been donated by the people of Adair County who feel these items have some sort of historical interest to the public and should be preserved." This facility, staffed by the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) volunteers, is open to the public from 12 noon to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Friday of each week. There is no charge but contributions are welcome.

The Society has its own set of by-laws, which are a set of less restricting, small yet enforcing laws. It belongs to the State Historical Society.

Since its beginning the Society has had a major interest in genealogy. The Society has sponsored workshops on genealogy and all have been successful. In April of this year the Society will sponsor another workshop on genealogy to be conducted by the Missouri State Geneological Society. If you want to trace your roots, but don't know how, this program can show you

the proper way to start. They also can give you some very important information that will make the process of tracing your roots much smoother.

There is an annual dinner meeting held in the fall. The main purpose of this meeting is to review what has happened over the past year, and also to acquire new members. Single memberships are \$3.00, family memberships are \$5.00, sustaining memberships are \$25.00. If you are interested in becoming a member contact Emil Green of Rural Route #5, Kirksville, Missouri.

"Dr. David March, a historian of the first class," stated Mr. Green, "helped the society out a lot. Dr. March taught at NMSU, and also wrote a book on Missouri history that is used in a lot of schools as a learning tool."

The Society makes available two books: THE ADAIR COUNTY ATLAS has a record of all the landholders of Adair County in 1975, and the PLATTE BOOK OF 1895 which also has records of Adair County's landowners. They can be purchased from any officer of the Society for \$10.00.

"The Society doesn't exist to make money," stated Mr. Green. "The Society exists to help the public and to foster the interest in the history of Adair County. Also to help those people who want to come together and participate in helping others, whether it be in genealogy or the loaning of materials for the public to use or view."

The Society is out there for the public, so come join and enjoy. They could use your support.

by Brian Walker

