

PHILLIPS COUNTY
HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

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PHILLIPS COUNTY
HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

Volume 9

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The Phillips County Historical Society

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The Phillips County Historical Society supplies the QUARTERLY to its members. Membership is open to anyone interested in Phillips County history. Annual membership dues are \$3.50 for a regular membership and \$5.00 for a sustaining membership. Single copies of the QUARTERLY are \$1.00. QUARTERLIES are mailed to members.

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Dues are payable to Miss Bessie McRee, Membership Chairman, P. O. Box 629, Helena, Arkansas, 72342. Meetings are held in September, January, and May, on the fourth Sunday in the month, at 3:00 P. M., at the Phillips County Museum.

POSTAL SERVICE IN PHILLIPS COUNTY

The following is a list of postmasters, their dates of appointment, and post offices of Phillips County, compiled from records in the National Archives, the Post Office Department, and the Territorial Papers of the United States for Arkansas Territory. It is hoped that in a future issue of the Quarterly there will be a map showing the locations of these places.

ASHLEY'S POINT: William D. Clack, 1871; discontinued 1874.

ASKEW: William S. Miller, 1856; James Clark, 1860, 1865; Frederick E. Planton, 1868; disc. 1868; reestablished 1870; F. E. Planton, 1870; in Lee County.

AVENUE: Sanford Ludlow, 1894; Robert H. Knowlton, 1901; S. W. Ludlow, 1902; Walter D. Morrison, 1904; disc., mail to Reese, Miss., 1908; reest., Mrs. Julia E. Smith, 1909; John P. Singleton, 1911; disc., mail to Mellwood, 1912.

AXSOM: James H. B. Axsom, 1902; William A. Reed, 1908; disc., mail to Marvell, 1908.

BARNEY'S---GILLEN'S LANDING: Zimri Barney, 1850; Richmond A. Jones, 1854; changed to Gillen's Landing, 1859; John Gillen, 1859; Moses B. Matthews, 1866; Robert N. Yerby, 1873; disc., 1875.

BARTON: Nathaniel A. Longley, 1873; Reese P. Hughes, 1873; disc., 1875; reest., 1875; James T. Graves, 1875; Columbus A. Belsha, 1876; Columbus S. Belsha, 1876; James L. Belsha, 1884; Richard C. Burke, 1904; William H. Gibson, 1903; Ernest H. Reece, 1904; Louis E. Berard, 1904; Junius B. West, 1907; W. H. Gibson, 1912; Mrs.

Sallie O. Smith, 1941; Mrs. Anna Schaffhauser, 1953.

BEECH GROVE: Salathiel Sherrod, 1849; disc., 1866.

BIG CREEK---TRENTON: James Hanks, 1830, bonded for \$300; disc., 1835; reest., 1838; James C. Dean, 1838; William B. Swan, 1839; J. M. Hutson, 1840; Bailey Kendall, 1840; changed to Trenton, 1858; William H. Smith, 1858; Robert B. Paslay, 1860; disc., 1866; reest., 1868; Samuel Bender, 1868; James Humphrey, 1869; Nathaniel Williams, 1870; George L. Gholston, 1886; Simon Krow, 1890; Alex Tableman, 1894; Ira Krow, 1901; Jessie L. Kendall, 1906; Carl D. Gilmer, 1918; Irma H. Dean, 1920; Clarence E. Carlton, 1921; Lee R. Foster, 1925; disc., 1930, mail to Poplar Grove.

BRISTOL: Peter Rhodes, 1873; disc., 1874.

CHEEK: Alonzo B. Oliver, 1890; passed to Avenue, 1895.

COFFEE: Christopher C. Spain, 1898; disc., mail to Cypert, 1904.

COFFEE CREEK---GOBLE: C. C. Spain, 1878; Mrs. Catherine C. Lightfoot, 1880; C. C. Spain, 1880; W. R. Kersey, 1881; C. C. Spain, 1881; changed to Goble, 1897; Green W. Goble, 1897; passed to Coffee, 1899; reest.; William E. Stewart, 1901; Samuel B. Kelley, 1903; Hardman A. Abington, 1904; mail to Marvell, 1905; rescinded, 1905; Robert E. Williams, 1905; mail to Marvell, 1905.

COUNCIL BEND: Lardner Clark, 1847; Thomas Peters, 1848; James T. Crofford, 1849; in Crittenden County, 1849.

COUNTISS: John M. Countiss, 1907; mail to Elaine, 1925.

CYPERT: Thomas F. Dawson, 1884; J. L. Wilson, 1886; disc., moved to Coffee Creek, 1886; reest. 1887; John Womick, 1887; disc., no papers,

1887; reest., 1889; Samuel L. Cooke, 1889; Virgil E. Cooke, 1899; disc., 1927, mail to Marvell.

CYPRESS: Hardeman A. Abington, 1875; disc., 1875.

DAUGHERTYS: Christopher W. Daugherty, 1881; disc., 1881.

DORAN: Henry R. Smith, 1904; John H. Ball, 1905; Edward M. Blackburn, 1906; M. E. Felletier, 1907; disc., mail to Avenue, 1907.

DUNN: Catherine Moody, 1880; R. L. Swope, 1883; Samuel L. Nichols, 1883; in Monroe Co., 1883.

ELAINE: Edward M. Allen, 1907; Joseph N. Moore, 1914; Jesse F. Booth, 1921; James D. Lowrie, 1927; Bennie H. Lucy, 1936; Carl H. Huber, 1965.

FAGI: Mary E. Alexander, 1881; T. W. Alexander, 1882; disc., 1882.

FAIR: Peter J. Joecken, 1903; Frank A. Gillette, 1905; Peter L. Throne, 1906; mail to Modoc, 1908; reest.; Burwell B. Stanley, 1910; mail to Modoc, 1913.

FERGUSON: Isaac C. Ferguson, 1899; Wade Brown, 1906; Rose Carter, 1911; Caroline Simmons, 1911; Joseph E. Simmons, 1913; Abrom E. W. Davis, 1917; disc., moved to Lundell, 1919; reest.; William B. Chaney, 1921.

HALSTEDVILLE: Daniel V. Halsted, 1873; disc., 1874.

HELENA COURT HOUSE: William B. R. Hornor, 1821, bonded for \$700; George W. Ferebee, 1827; Eli J. Lewis, 1831, bonded for \$800; John Steele, bonded for \$800, with sureties of J. Clark and William L. Martin, 1834; Samuel S. Smith, 1834, bonded for \$800, with sureties of G. W. Ferebee and W. B. R. Hornor; William T. Yeomans, 1835, John B. Ford, 1837; John S. Hornor, 1845; William D. Hornor, 1848; Charles H. Adamson, 1855; Douglas Saint, 1859; Austin E. Chester, 1865;

Darwin C. Grinnell, 1866; Albertis B. Shrader, 1867; James T. Watson, 1869, 1873, 1877; George D. Jacquess, 1882; Henry P. Grant, 1886; James B. Miles, 1890; H. P. Grant, 1893; Samuel I. Clark, 1897, 1898, 1902, 1906; Arthur W. Campbell, 1910; W. J. Williamson, 1914; Joseph C. Myers, 1915; W. L. Jarman, 1915, 1916; Daniel C. Wines, 1922, 1926, 1930; Charles L. Moore, 1934; Luther J. Wilkes, 1940; Mrs. Bessie M. Wilkes, 1941; Kenneth B. Laswell, 1943; James A. Leighton, 1958; Ray M. McCarty, 1962; Harry L. Bealer, 1963.

HICKSVILLE---POSTELLE: Thomas C. Hicks, 1883; Mrs. Sarah L. Hicks, 1888; George M. Williamson, 1890; Mollie B. Perry, 1891; G. M. L. Williamson, 1892; changed to Postelle, 1894; Joseph W. Martin, 1894; Jesse L. Johns, 1904; Jefferson D. Weeks, 1905; James C. Turner, 1906; disc., mail to Marvell, 1907; reest.; James L. King, 1907; Arthur B. Sanders, 1908; Van G. Patrick, 1909; mail to Palmer, 1911; reest.; Eugene J. Poole, 1912; Minerva K. Poole, 1913; Winnie Poole, 1914; Minnie Robinson, 1917; Cecil Fielder, 1920; Benjamin M. Blackburn, 1923; Mrs. Mattie M. Blackburn, 1928; John L. Fielder, 1929, 1930; Mrs. Hazel Meyer, 1951.

HOOP SPUR: Bob Joyner, 1910; mail to Elaine, 1912.

HYDE PARK: Halsey T. Edwards, 1885; Robert H. Foster, 1891; passed to Latour, 1892; rescinded, 1892; R. H. Foster, 1892; passed to Latour, 1892; reest.; Elizabeth DuBarry, 1892; Rossie E. Stacey, 1894; passed to Latour, 1895; reest.; Irvin F. O'Harra, 1897; Lewis A. Fitzpatrick, 1899; disc., mail to Latour, 1907; rescinded; R. A. Blount, 1908.

JEFFERSONVILLE: John H. Simmons, 1857; James Renard, 1859; disc., 1866.

KEYSVILLE: Marshall K. Key, 1877; John G. Mason,

1884; M. K. Key, 1885; disc., moved to Red Store, 1887.

LAGRANGE: Jesse Everett, 1852; William H. Robison, 1859; disc., 1866; reest., 1867; Jarod D. Lowndsberry, 1867; James Robertson, 1872; in Lee Co.

LAMBROOK: Joseph A. Sumrow, 1918; Manley V. Williams, 1919; William M. Arnold, 1920; Fred W. Patton, 1921; John E. Matthews, 1922; Harry A. Belford, 1923; disc., mail to Elaine, 1929.

LAPOSA: John M. Williams, 1898; disc., passed to Avenue, 1899.

LATOUR: William J. Alexander, 1881; disc., 1882, post to Lexington; reest.; James M. Payne, 1883; James F. Thompson, 1890, declined; Frank DuBarry, 1896; H. H. Kloene, 1897, declined; George Kloene, 1898; James F. Thompson, 1898; Jessie M. Thompson, 1900; William Larkin, 1901; Charles F. Keese, 1903; James A. Harden, 1904; Clara B. Potter, 1918; disc., moved to Lexa, 1920.

LEXINGTON---LEXA: Nathaniel L. Graves, 1880; changed to Lexa, 1885; Ben B. Bonner, 1895; George H. Warfield, 1895; Hugh L. McAlexander, 1897; Charles M. Warfield, 1904; Thomas E. Bonner, 1914; R. F. Heywood, 1917; Bertha E. Millian, 1918, 1920, 1924, 1928; Oscar E. Crouch, 1934; Mrs. Frances E. Crouch, 1936.

LICK CREEK: Peter Edwards, 1836; John H. Koonce, 1840; Jesse H. Hicks, 1841; disc., 1842; William Williams, 1842; William W. Odle, 1845; J. H. Koonce, 1846; disc., 1848.

LOUIS: William R. Henderson, 1907, declined; rescinded 1907.

LUNDELL: John H. Delabar, 1914; Edwin C. Humphreys, 1916; James H. Griffith, Jr., 1919; Catherine M. Perry, 1920; Jefferson D. Heslep, 1921; Catherine Perry, 1922; John D. Reid, 1923; Mrs. Nina Mae

Brandon, 1933; Nathan R. Patrick, 1951.

MARTIN'S: Josiah S. McKeill, bonded for \$300, Martin O. Small his surety, 1833; J. S. McKeill, bonded for \$300, sureties R. H. Yeates and T. B. Hanly, 1837; disc. 1843.

MARVELL: Dan M. Webster, 1873; George H. Cowan, 1875; Robert M. Jackson, 1876; John M. Goodwin, 1880; William F. Carloss, 1881; Louis Kahn, 1883; James L. Teas, 1886; James H. Teas, 1886; Edward T. Nelson, 1889; Marvell M. Carruth, 1893; Alfred J. Hale, 1897; Isidor J. Maas, 1901; Richard Lewis, 1906; John W. Terry, 1907, 1909; T. G. Robinson, 1913, 1917; James H. Bass, 1922, 1926, 1930; James W. Burton, 1934; Mrs. Jennie C. McDonald, 1946; Louise F. Bass, 1968.

MELLWOOD: Flora A. Boyd, 1906; Barnet H. Boswell, 1910; Nellie A. Boswell, 1914; William L. Meacham, 1916; Eva E. Meacham, 1918; Jesse A. King, 1926; Mrs. Edith A. Pratt, 1926; Laura E. Campbell, 1928, 1929; Mrs. Lucille I. Rogers, 1945 (name changed to Lucille R. Yates, 1966).

MODOC: Isaac W. Williams, 1875; John R. McGuire, 1880; Christian P. Decker, 1904; William Cox, 1906; disc., 1920, mail to Elaine; reest.; William H. Wright, 1921; Mrs. Lillian L. Estes, 1926; disc., 1927, mail to Elaine.

MOONEY: Miles Knowlton, 1850; Richmond A. Jones, 1851; disc., 1851.

MOUTH OF CACHE: John Maddox, 1828, bonded for \$300.

MOUTH SAINT FRANCIS RIVER---SMILEY: Stephen S. Dawson, 1875; W. G. Smiley, 1885; James Baker, 1886; William G. Smiley, 1886; Clinton E. Ewart, 1907; name changed to Smiley, 1911, never in operation; disc., mail to Helena, 1911.

NEWELL: James W. Sylar, 1893; mail to Marvell, 1906.

NORTH CREEK: Lee M. Dade, 1848; Francis H. Dade,

1851; disc., 1853; reest.; James M. Fraser; F. H. Dade, 1855; William Bonner, 1856; disc., 1856; reest., 1857; William McGrew, 1857; Jesse Locke, 1858; Wilbur F. Randle, 1859; Joseph W. Maxey, 1861; disc., 1866; reest., 1866; Mrs. Mattie Armstrong, 1866; James Stewart, 1868; disc., 1871; reest., 1871; George W. Bonner, 1871; Arthur M. Scott, 1872; Sylvanus P. Hanly, 1916; disc., 1917, mail to Lexa.

OAKDALE: Lewis S. Poe, 1847; James W. Sullivan, 1848; disc., 1849.

OLD TOWN---PREWITT'S LANDING: Elijah F. McNabb, 1838; William Suggett, 1839; Oliver B. Grary, 1842; Samuel M. Wirt, 1842; William B. Pool, 1843; Ferdinand Adair, 1846; disc. and reest., 1849; James W. Munsey (or Muncy), 1850; William Donald, 1851; disc. and reest., 1857; E. F. McNabb, 1857; John N. Rankin, 1858; Thomas C. Cas-teel, 1859; Peyton R. Gray, 1860; John N. Quarles, 1860; Joseph Rogers, 1861; disc., 1866; reest., 1868; Phillip H. Ford, 1868; disc., 1871; reest., 1872; William B. Robson, 1872; John J. Watson, 1874; changed to Prewitt's Land-ing, 1876; J. J. Watson, 1876; disc. and reest., 1876; W. R. Rightor, Jr., 1877; William M. Pat-ridge, 1877; disc., 1878; reest.; James Rankin, 1902; Edgar L. Williams, 1902; John W. Newman, 1904; James H. Martin, 1904; disc., mail to Friars Point, Miss., 1908; reest.; James H. Mar-tin, 1909; Charles L. Bromwell, 1913; Lizzie A. Martin, 1914; James A. Martin, 1915; Lillie M. Shawler, 1916; Olive E. Wade, 1918; disc., 1918, mail to Helena.

OLIVER'S LANDING: Benjamin L. Oliver, 1870; disc., 1872.

ONEIDA: Thomas J. King, 1907; William F. Craggs, 1913; James L. White, 1920; Austin W. Paslay, 1921; Mrs. Mary P. Etzel, 1925; William I. Etzel, 1931; Mrs. Lucy Burch, 1934; Mrs. Marie Parker

Campbell, 1934; Mrs. Vallie Casey, 1960.

PHILLIPS BAYOU: Henry F. Kemper, 1868; disc., 1868; reest., 1870; H. F. Kemper, 1870; J. O. Gray, 1873; disc., 1874.

PILLOWS: Edward D. Pillow, 1878; disc., 1881; reest; David King, 1889; Byron S. Carleton, 1890; post to Barton, 1893; reest.; Dora W. Hanly, 1893; disc., post to Barton, 1894.

PLANTERS---BIG CREEK---WILLIAMS SHOP: James Nelson, 1849; Jonathan P. Canterberry, 1858; James Nelson, 1859; Lycurgus D. Shelby, 1859; added to Big Creek, 1859; L. D. Shelby, 1859; Thomas Williams, 1859. Apparently this part of Big Creek that was not a part of the Trenton postal area was changed back to Planters in 1860, and the whole was changed to Williams Shop. L. D. Shelby, 1860; John T. Jones, 1861; disc., 1866; reest., 1868; George Waters, 1868; disc., 1869 and reest., 1870; Williamson Goodwin, 1870; A. S. Hawkins, 1873; disc., 1875.

POLK STORE: John Lohorn, 1870; disc., 1872.

POPLAR GROVE: James R. Turner, 1870; John W. Terry; Robert W. Barrington, 1892; John C. Turner, 1897; George F. Heller, 1916; Raymer Bonner, 1925; Mrs. Frankie Pettigrew, 1925; Myrtle Kirk, 1929; Metra L. McClusky, 1960.

RATIO: William M. Daily, 1916, declined; John J. Peadro, 1916; James R. McDonald, 1920; Herman Moore, 1923; Powhatan H. Carpenter, 1933; Wallace G. Turner, 1942; Bedford H. Hudspeth, 1945; William E. Kinman, 1947; Jesse J. Kelly, 1947; Mrs. Martha K. Agee, 1948; Jesse C. Peter, 1948; Claudy G. Travis, 1949; Mrs. Lena M. Swindell, 1954; disc. 1960, mail to Ratio Ind. Rur. Sta. Elaine; Mrs. Lois A. Dyer, 1968.

RED STORE---LAKEVIEW: Willa V. Johnson, 1878; William Hildreth, 1880; John H. Fisher, 1880; William

B. Stanley, 1883; W. H. Hildreth, 1883; Allen H. Toney, 1886; John T. Moore, 1887; Charles E. Toney, 1890; William W. Gordon, 1892; Susie R. Gordon, 1900; David C. Perkins, 1901; changed to Lakeview, 1906; Willis M. Richardson, 1906; John W. Keesee, 1909; disc., mail to Helena, 1925.

SALVADOR: Thomas E. Austin, 1882; Alexander B. McGonnigal, 1887; post to Helena, 1894; reest.; Jacob W. Gibson, 1900; disc., mail to Helena, 1907.

SCRUGGS FERRY: Hartwell Scruggs, 1860; disc., 1866.

SOUTHLAND: Emma F. Landcaster, 1889; William B. O'Shields, 1894; Ruth S. Russell, 1897; William Russell, 1915; George W. Watkins, 1917; Margery E. Martin, 1919; Ella V. Martin, 1923; disc., mail to Lexa, 1925.

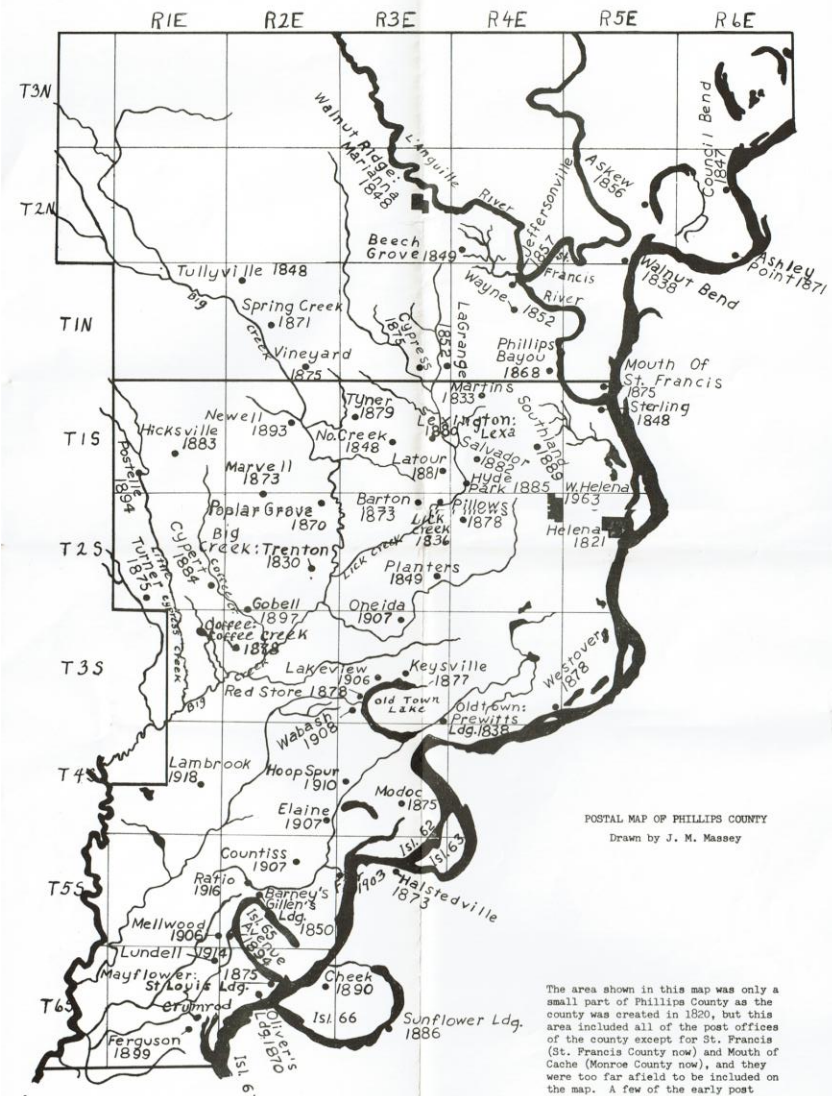
SPRING CREEK: J. R. Robins, 1871. In Lee County.

STERLING: Albertis Wilkins, 1848; William W. Odle, 1852; disc., and reest., 1855; Alfred P. Ewart, 1855; A. Wilkins, 1857; William M. Hardy, 1861; disc., 1866.

ST. LOUIS LANDING---WILDWOOD---MAYFLOWER LANDING---SUNFLOWER LANDING: Nimrod T. Lunsford, 1875; changed to Wildwood; reest.; Robert N. Yerby, 1875; Mayflower Ldg., George Gratlin, 1875; Mayflower changed to St. Louis Ldg., 1877, Benjamin L. Oliver; all mail to Sunflower Ldg., 1886.

TULLYVILLE---EDWARDSBURG: Lewis B. Tully, 1848; changed to Monroe County, 1850; Edwardsburg, late Tullyville, 1854, James C. W. Tollison; William L. Williford, 1856; disc., 1867.

TURNER: Thomas J. Browning, 1875; John G. Groves, 1876; Mortimer B. Moody, 1878; George W. Terry, 1880; Reuben Terry, 1888; James C. Terry, 1897; James T. Ward, 1905; Iverson M. Cartwright,



POSTAL MAP OF PHILLIPS COUNTY
 Drawn by J. M. Massey

The area shown in this map was only a small part of Phillips County as the county was created in 1820, but this area included all of the post offices of the county except for St. Francis (St. Francis County now) and Mouth of Cache (Monroe County now), and they were too far afield to be included on the map. A few of the early post offices of the county whose geographical positions are unknown were also omitted.

1906; disc., mail to Postelle, 1907; reest.; Huston D. Reeves, 1907; James M. Cooter, 1910; Robert A. Brown, 1913; Milton H. Blaine, 1922; James Lewis, 1923; Victor H. Brown, 1925; James Lewis, 1926; Mrs. Nora Kline, 1926; Erwin McR. Blaine, 1927; Stephen J. White, 1930; Robert A. Brown, 1943; Mrs. Virginia D. Norton, 1947; William B. Hill, 1949; Mrs. Ruth M. Snyder, 1967.

TYNER: John F. Woodin, 1879; disc., mail to North Creek; reest.; John P. Johnston, 1888; Erastus D. Vineyard, 1903; disc., mail to Poplar Grove, 1911.

VINEYARD: Micajah L. Pearson, 1875; Stephen M. Reynolds, 1879.

WABASH: Samuel E. Howe, Jr., 1908; Otis D. Howe, 1910; John C. Howe, 1915; Boone B. Norris, 1916; Edith A. Pratt, 1920; John C. Howe, 1926; E. Clay Bumpers, 1946.

WALNUT BEND: Silas Pledger, 1838; disc., 1839; reest.; William Sebastian, 1846; William Polk, 1847; Joseph Kent, Jr., 1849; disc., 1850, reest., 1851; Eli T. Diamond, 1851; disc., 1866; reest.; Cephas M. Obenchain, 1873. In Lee County.

WALNUT RIDGE---MARIANNA: James Bayliss, 1848; James K. Jones, 1849; changed to Marianna, 1852; David A. Wicker, 1852; William B. Worsham, 1856; James C. Green, 1857; disc., 1866; reest., 1867; W. B. Worsham, 1867; J. Sanders, 1869; John K. Saunders, 1869; Ike D. Neihardt, 1870; Joseph Roberts, 1871; John W. Henley, 1871. In Lee Co.

WAYNE: Valentine P. Rodgers, 1852; disc., 1859.

WEST HELENA: George R. Brister, 1963.

WESTOVER: James H. Murray, 1878; Walter C. Stephenson, 1878; William H. Elmore, 1883; James W. Elmore, 1884; George W. Willey, 1886; Thomas J. Rowell, 1888; post to Helena, 1891; reest.; Joshua T. Jefferson, 1891; no papers, 1892; Mary J. Foster, 1898; post to Helena, 1900; reest.; Robert L. Cobb, 1904; mail to Helena, 1905.

FALL ON THE FARM

by

Carolyn R. Cunningham

HOG KILLING: The crisp, chill days of Autumn mean many things to many people. It means football and cheerleaders, or perhaps a weekend in the mountains enjoying the pageantry of the turning leaves, but just before the turn of the century I can tell you what it meant to children. My parents tell me of the excitement of getting up on a cold, frosty morning in November for hog-killing on a farm in Arkansas seventy-odd years ago. Children who ordinarily curled up under the warm quilts to catch another forty winks invariably jumped out of bed before daylight to eat their hot, nourishing breakfast before grabbing coats and caps to rush outside to watch the hogs being slaughtered.

The farmers raised their own hogs. As soon as the sow "found" the pigs they were anxiously counted, for this was food for the next year's table. Happy hogs were those which were well-fed, had holes of mud in which to wallow in the hog-lot, and a rough-bark tree to scratch up against. The last two things could furnish hours of entertainment during a long hot summer day for a hog.

About six weeks before killing time, the hogs were put into a floored pen for fattening.

The old settlers were firm that November was the best month for killing, so a day or two ahead of time they chose their date and finished up other chores around the place to have all of the time free for hog-killing. This was one thing where all hands on the place were present, not only to help, but the negroes knew they would be given a piece of fresh meat to cook for supper - if not their

favorite, chitterlings, better known as chittlins', then a piece of heart, kidney, or maybe even a backbone!

Everyone was present and accounted for just as the sun came up. Their breath was steaming, they stomped their feet to keep them warm and blew on their hands.

The wash pot was full of water over a great roaring fire. Nearby stood a barrel. All of a sudden business picked up. The hot water was transferred into the nearby barrel just as a shot rang out. At once the hog was thrown onto his back, and a long sharp knife plunged into the throat area, actually directly into the heart. A quick plunge into the boiling water, and the hair became slippery and could easily be scraped off. He was then hung by his back legs for bleeding. Then followed the last cleaning off of all hair. Next he was split open down the stomach and the intestines removed. The hog then hung for the rest of the day and all night, and the next day he was cut up.

They cleaned the heads, feet, tail, and intestines. The heads were used for souse, or hogs-head cheese. If feet were cooked a long time, this could be used for jello. The tail was boiled with the backbone, and the ears with the head. The tongue was scalded and scraped and boiled until tender. It was thought by many to be a delicacy and was better eaten cold in a sandwich. It was not greasy. There were good old brains and eggs along with hot biscuits for a quick supper or maybe breakfast. The skin was boiled down for any excess fat and for the sheer pleasure of eating it. One did not go to the supermarket in those days for a cellophane package of skins. One made his own, and they were made to last as long as possible. They made awfully good chewing on cold winter afternoons. The tenderloin and lean scraps went into sausage which was ground up, seasoned, and put in homemade

bags, of either brown domestic or flour sacks. The sausage was later smoked in the smokehouse. The hog was first blocked out and then cut up, then trimmed. Scraps went into the black iron wash pot for making lard.

The children always got the melts. These were three or four inches wide and twelve or fourteen inches long. It was cut into lengths for cooking. Lucky was the child who got the bladder for it made the most wonderful balloon in the world. It was very carefully washed and dried, blown up and tied with a string. This was cause for much envy by brothers and sisters.

Hams, shoulders and middelings (side meat for boiling with vegetables and for frying like bacon) were soaked with salt. The salt boxes stood on four legs like a table and had edges several inches high. Coarse salt was used. The salt was thoroughly rubbed in and the meat was allowed to remain in the salt from four to six weeks, after which it was taken up and washed in tubs of warm water several times, then dried off and hung up. A hole was cut through the skin on the little end and a wire run through that and hung over stationary hooks in the smokehouse. Then began the smoking. After this the hams and shoulders were brushed lightly with a mixture of molasses and pepper, then put into sacks and hung up to be eaten as needed over the coming year. For an average family of six or eight children, eight or ten large hogs were butchered to last a year.

Running wild in the woods might be a bunch of hogs known as a "community claim." When a farmer got hungry for fresh meat, he went to the woods, shot and stuck a pig, tied him with a rope to the tail of his horse, dragged him to the house, and dressed him. He then shared equally with the other farmers who were in the "claim." This meat was always eaten fresh and was a welcome change of diet.

LARD-MAKING: The lard was made in the wash pot outside also. The skins were cooked separately. The grease was then drained off from the fat, and the skins salted and used for chewing. Quite a treat for the children. As all excess fat was trimmed from the fresh meat, it was tossed into pans to be emptied into the pot for boiling. It was boiled for several hours and stirred often. It was stored in five gallon lard cans and stored in the smokehouse until needed. It was creamy in color and not as firm as Crisco.

MAKING HOMINY: Another all day job at the wash pot in the backyard was that of making hominy. Three or four times during the winter the family got hungry for a batch of delicious hominy so they would make a pot full. Nowadays most of the black pots adorn our front porches and patios filled with petunias and geraniums, but long ago they were the hub of outdoor cooking activities. White corn was used. The shelled corn was put into the pot and covered with water. Lye from the hopper was added to eat off the husks. When the husks began to come off the corn was taken out and always washed thoroughly in several waters to be sure the lye was off. The little point on the kernel of corn also came out. Then it was put back into a pot of fresh water to boil until tender. When taken up, it was fried in a skillet in butter or fried meat grease with salt and pepper, sometimes thickened with flour.

In the cold of winter a batch of hominy lasted several days and tasted mighty good.

MAKING SOAP: Lye soap was always made in the spring, usually March. The hickory ashes were saved all winter when they were removed from the stove or fireplace and emptied into a hopper in the backyard. There they accumulated until spring. The hopper was made of planks, large at the top, but tapering to a funnel shape at the bottom. It was kept covered with boards to keep out the rain. Also being saved

during the winter months was all the old grease, as well as scraps, and even ham bones - anything with a scrap of grease in it. To make the lye, gallons of water were poured through the hickory ashes which ran into a container under the hopper, more than likely a crock, at any rate not something the strong lye would eat up, for this liquid was pure lye. The lye and old grease were put into the wash pot and boiled until the lye ate up all particles and scraps. This was poured into a barrel and was usually of a soft jelly substance. It always made good suds. This was stored in the smokehouse.

PERSIMMONS: Soon after a few good frosts, the persimmons would be good and ripe, but the Lord help you if you got impatient and tried them before they ripened because they puckered your mouth and felt like they drew it up into a hard knot. Mama says nothing was better though than the way her mother fixed persimmons. She took the biggest and best ones, fixed a layer of them in a big container, and covered them with sugar, more persimmons, then more sugar until the container was filled. These were eaten like candy during the winter and were delicious.

NUTS: Every farm used to have a black walnut tree and several hours each late fall were used for gathering the nuts. They were spread out to dry and when dry, the ebony covering was removed. There were fruit salad and cake recipes which called especially for black walnuts, and using them in home-made ice cream could not be beat. After drying and cleaning off, these were kept in a croaker sack at the barn. Not of as much popularity but enjoyed by many, were hickory nuts, and there's many a thumb or finger been "busted" between brick and hammer when picking out hickory nuts.

SORGHUM-TIME: Sorghum is a type of cereal grass with sweet, juicy stalks grown for grain, fodder,

or syrup, similar in looks to cane.

Almost every farm, no matter how large or how small, had a sorghum patch. Before harvest time it was the best place on the farm to sneak off to, equal to the watermelon patch in July and August. You could pop a stalk off right at the joint, peel it, and bring forth, by chewing, the most delectable of juices. What was not swallowed ran down a dirty chin, therefore it was always a hard matter to hide that you'd been to the sorghum patch before the discerning eye of a mother or father. When the crisp, cool days of autumn came, it was time to cut off the tops of the cane, strip the leaves, cut the stems at the ground with one clean, sharp swish of a hatchet and go to mill. My own parents were raised on farms that had their own mills, but Papa always went to one in the neighborhood. One year Mama's father made over a hundred gallons of molasses and sold some for fifty cents a gallon. Now it sells for three to four dollars.

You turned in the drive that felt sort of puffy because of all the piles of squeezed out cane thrown there. The cane was run through rollers operated by a mule that moved constantly in a circle for hours on end. It must have been a drunk mule who went back to the barn every night from the molasses mill. The rollers were for the purpose of squeezing the last drop of juice from the cane. Then the juice was strained through sacks into big pans about four by twelve or fifteen feet. A wood fire was kept burning under the entire length of the pan. The pan was zinc and was proportioned into a zig-zag appearance. The juice was cooked for three to six hours, and a toll of one to four was paid to the owner of the mill.

Containers were buckets and barrels. As the syrup cooked, a heavy foam would form which was skimmed off with a dipper or scoop with holes in it to let the juice run back into the pans. Lucky

was the child who could beg the sweet, sticky, messy foam to eat. It was part of the fun of going to mill, the same as playing with other children who had been allowed to come with their father, as well as getting to walk behind the mule and occasionally prodding him on. A paddle was used to stir down the channels to avoid sticking. The farmer either waited at the mill or went to do other errands, but he picked his molasses up that night to take home. This also was stored in the smokehouse and made mighty good eating with big, flaky biscuits, lots of country butter, fresh eggs, and either ham, shoulder or side meat.

It came in handy and delicious, too, for great pans of gingerbread and for popcorn balls which were a must at every party on the cold winter evenings. The men popped the corn in wire screen poppers over the log fire in the fireplace, and the women made the balls near the big stove in the kitchen. A more romantic way was for the young courting couples to make them together. Usually in the oven was a big pan of peanuts roasting to a perfect turn, and maybe a pan of taffy candy was boiling on the stove waiting for just the right moment to start slapping and pulling for a good old taffy pull - maybe not very sanitary but larrapin' good!

Farm life was hard work, but it was rewarding, fun, and created a family closeness which my parents brought to their six children, as their parents before them had done, and it's a way of life that I am happy to have as my heritage.

ADDITIONAL MEMBERS FOR 1970-1971

Mrs. Herbert H. Hill	Helena
Mrs. Marguerite Kimble	Daytona Beach, Fla.
Mrs. Hurt Porter	West Helena

GIFT TO THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mrs. W. E. Hicks of West Helena recently presented to the Phillips County Historical Society a bedspread which has been in her family for more than 110 years. It will be on loan to the Phillips County Museum. Having loved Phillips County and called it her home for nearly a century, Mrs. Hicks, after much deliberation, decided that this was what she wanted to do with the treasured heirloom of her family.

Mrs. Hicks' grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Isaac O'Shields, came from South Carolina some years before 1860, and settled at Southland, Phillips County. With them, they brought their six children: four sons, Thomas N., John, Isaac, and Richard, and two daughters, Lizzie who married Thomas Kibbey, and Jane who married Thomas Carter. As the younger O'Shields grew to adulthood, they became the owners of large tracts of land, most of which is still in the family.

Thomas Nixon O'Shields joined the Confederate Army, and after serving in the war, he married Ellen Matthewson. They had two children, one son long deceased and a daughter, Lena, who married William Elbert Hicks of El Dorado. Mr. and Mrs. Hicks had a son who died as a young child, and a daughter, Dorothy, who taught in the Helena-West

Helena School system for many years, and died November 28, 1958.

Before the O'Shields family left South Carolina, they grew the cotton, corded it, spun the thread, weaved the cloth for this bedspread. Although not sure, Mrs. Hicks thinks that the design is a freehanded one drawn by her grandmother, who with her daughters did the beautiful handwork. A heavy fringe originally bordered the spread, but that has long since worn away. The design bears the outline of a basket or urn of flowers and the work resembles chenille in appearance.

THE BOYD SITE

It is interesting to note here that one of our contributors, John Connaway of Helena, field archaeologist of the Department of Archives and History, State of Mississippi, has helped excavate during the past year, the Indian settlement site located at Clayton, Tunica County, Mississippi. This is called the Boyd site after the owner of the land, and it is not far off Highway 61 going north to Memphis.

Open house at the Boyd site was held on the afternoon of December 8th, and the levels of excavation were open to view along with remaining fish and animal bones, pottery, arrowheads, stone weapons, and other things left by Indian settlement of approximately 200 B. C. The weather was perfect for such a viewing, and visitors from Mississippi and from Helena enjoyed this rare opportunity to see the fruits of archaeological research and work at first hand.

STEAMBOATS AND HELENA

by

T. E. Tappan, Jr.

PART II: SIGMA

No story of the river should fail to point out that Helena was mentioned by Mark Twain in his Life on the Mississippi that has been quoted verbatim on Page 20 of the December, 1969, Quarterly.

1870

Another great event on the river was the race of the Natchez and the Robert E. Lee. The following concerning Helena is quoted from "The Fastest on the River," the story of the great race between the two steamboats, written by Manly Wade Wellman, July 31, 1870, New Orleans.

"Hurriedly the reporter for the Missouri Republican continued writing his dispatch. He among many felt that Leathers had achieved great triumphs and shortly would achieve still more.

"The reporters report. The Natchez will undoubtedly set a mark that will be a goal for other boats for years to come. If we had put her through without landing, taking our fuel from steamers with full head of steam on and for the sole purpose of racing, we could have made Helena at least an hour ago, which is the opinion of every man on board. Helena is just now 5:20, July 1, 1870. We will not stop but I will send this ashore by skiff if possible.

"The Natchez rumbled past the little town of Helena on the Arkansas shore and the people at the landing waved flags and roared their joyous good wishes. The reporter had lashed his dispatch to a

billet of wood and now he flung it overside into the river and was glad to see a little steam ferry puff out to pick it up and carry it to the telegraph office. Somebody was able to shout loudly enough for the crew of the Natchez to hear that the Lee was perhaps twelve miles in the lead. The Robert E. Lee had passed Helena swiftly, so swiftly in fact that she had been unable to hear anything about her rival's position in the river below her, only bellowed rumors, vague and contradictory concerning trouble with the Natchez machinery. Nobody aboard the Lee believed such reports or felt the need to believe them. Cannon, the captain, predicted modestly that they would reach Memphis by eleven o'clock that night. One of the reporters aboard prepared to leave the Lee there and travel north by railroad to come aboard again at Cairo. Not even a record breaking racer on the river could outrun the regular trains alongside."

When the Robert E. Lee passed Helena it was one day, twenty-three hours, and twenty-five minutes out of New Orleans. The Natchez was two days, no hours, and eighteen minutes out. The Natchez was fifty-three minutes behind the Robert E. Lee.

In 1949, the Diesel-powered Harry S. Truman attempted to break the record of the Natchez and the Robert E. Lee and failed. A further coincidence concerning this is that on January 12, 1970, the Harry S. Truman, now renamed the John Fox, caught on fire and burned thirty miles below Helena.

The following newspaper clippings concerning steamboat events near Helena were taken from three large volumes of "Steamboats" by Captain W. H. Tippitt, a retired Mississippi Steamboat Captain who lives at Hernando, Mississippi now. His books concern the Mississippi, Missouri, and Ohio Rivers, and I have tried to use events of a bygone period of our heritage that are of interest to residents of this area.

"SAWYERS 1870: On December 22nd, the snagboat R. E. DeRusey from White River was on her way to Mound City to lay up. At the mouth of St. Francis River pulled the "Granddaddy" of all snags. It is reported to be the largest ever moved from river's bed; by measurement it was 35 feet in circumference at the butt, and where the limbs commenced branching at the top it was 15 feet around. Its length was 170 feet and its weight 200 tons.

"A. J. WHITE 1870: Built at Louisville by Cheek & Malone for the Memphis and Friars Point trade, she was taken over the Falls at Louisville on July 21st, to be completed at Portland. The new steamer arrived in Memphis on August 24th in charge of Captain George Malone; Charley Smithers and Andy Granger were clerks; Lew Belle and Charley Winston, engineers; H. W. Powers, mate; Morris Herman, steward; and John Brigis barkeep.

"The White was 182 feet long with 32 feet beams and 6 feet 9 inches depth of hold; three boilers 40 inches in diameter and 24 feet long; her engines were 22 inches in diameter with 5 feet stroke. Her wheels were 32 feet in diameter with $8\frac{1}{2}$ feet length of bucket. Her cabin was most comfortable, her carpets, chandeliers, and tables unsurpassed in point of elegance.

"On November 27th, in making a landing at Glendale, opposite Helena, Arkansas, she struck a snag and sank in eight feet; she settled on the stump and will be a total loss. She was valued at \$12,000 and owned then by Memphis & Vicksburg Packet Company. Captain N. S. Green master with John Gwathney and Neil Booker her clerks.

DECEMBER 18, 1870: "New steamer, City of Helena, loaded and advertised to leave for Memphis this evening; adverse weather caused trip to be cancelled.

1871

"KATIE MORRISON 1871: Small St. Francis River packet, sank at landing at Helena, Arkansas, soon after arrival with load of cotton. After settling, the swift current broke her loose and she floated several miles down the river before settling on a sand bar. Owned by Captain T. R. Barber of Moon Lake, total loss. Valued at \$6,000.

"WEBSTER 1871: Towboat cut down at Helena by ice in January. Sank in deep water.

"KATIE 1871: Katie sank at 2:00 A. M. Friday, November 8th by striking the wreck of Lucy Holcomb two miles below Helena, Arkansas. She was one of the finest steamers that ever ran on the river. Built two years ago at New Albany by Captain J. M. White and Pinkney Smith (after whose wife she was named) at cost of \$200,000 for New Orleans and Vicksburg trade.

"She ran two years in the trade against the strong opposition of Steamers Robert E. Lee, Natchez, Frank Pargoud, and others. She failed financially and was turned over to her creditors. Captain John W. Cannon acquired her for \$80,000.

"She was started this season in New Orleans and Grand Gulf trade, but recent compromise between contending boat owners caused her withdrawal and she was then entered in Memphis and New Orleans trade running on opposite Thursdays to Captain Frank Hicks' Belle Lee. This was her first trip, Captain Cannon in command; she arrived in Memphis Wednesday and departed Thursday with cargo of 375 bales of cotton, 351 boxes of cheese, 15 horses and small lots of sundries.

"The wreck has been greatly in the way of all passing boats during low water season for over ten years. Last winter Emma C. Elliott narrowly escaped destruction on it. The Richmond has also struck the wreck and received much injury. The Eckert, now engaged in raising Belfast sunk 100

miles above here, had been sent for.

"All stock and freight aboard were saved; she is hung on wreck in seven feet of water. It is feared she might break in two. She had nine boilers and her cylinders were forty inches in diameter with ten feet stroke, insured for \$80,000 in New Orleans. Her pilots, Ford Montana on watch, Weaver and Trenally were also in pilothouse. She caught on shaft of the old boat and several holes were punched in her bottom. She broke in two forward of boilers late in day. There is hope of saving her, the river is rising and Eckert has passed down to her. Due to strain on her steam pipes, she has been cooled down.

"The T. F. Eckert, aided by rising river, raised the Katie at 4:00 P. M. yesterday, November 12th. The result of her labor was totally unexpected. The Katie, on the 14th, floated off the wreck of Holcomb and downriver two miles--where she lodged on a bar. Both chimneys gone, her cabin and texas a wreck, bulkheads are being built in the hull. Mechanivis were engaged in repairing her steam lines so she could raise steam. The Eckert may tow her to New Orleans. Cost of raising the Katie was \$20,000 and her repairs a like sum.

1872

MEMPHIS AVALANCHE, JANUARY 12, 1872: "Parties are now engaged in boring explorations and making excavations in a cotton field some eight miles above the mouth of St. Francis River and about two miles from the present riverbank, searching for the wreck of the Thomas Jefferson, s steamer which sank in that vicinity some thirty years ago. The current of the river has changed so much at this point that the old channel is far inland and years ago was turned into a cotton field on a large plantation.

"The party of treasure seekers who are endeavoring to find the ancient wreck are not fully

informed concerning the spot. When the old Thomas Jefferson passed out of existence as a steamboat she was loaded with a valuable cargo of liquors, a great portion of which were choice brands of wines, brandies, and whiskies in bottles. It is possible that the present effort will be successful in unearthing the long buried wreck, but it is doubtful whether the cargo will be worth the effort and the labor necessary to reach it. All along the river there are similar wrecks strewn through the period of fifty years. The cargoes of these boats, their machinery and iron works were never removed, because formerly there were no wrecking boats.

"The River Reporter on a newspaper in palmy days was a person of some consequence, and frequently his report was challenged by a competitor in some other river town, as per Cincinnati Commercail: 'A steamer called the Thomas Jefferson, Captain Cornelius Sedan, was sunk eighteen miles above Baton Rouge in 1849, loaded with 450 tons of Dean & Dexter whiskey and with 400 people aboard. All of the people were saved; also that those who now work near St. Francis River had better be in other business. Frank Peirce, now steamboat inspector at Cincinnati, was pilot on board and at the wheel at the time of the sinking. By way of further edifying Frank and his friends we will say that the Thomas Jefferson buried beneath a cotton field near the mouth of St. Francis River, is not the craft Peirce sank. This one was lost about 1832. As far, however, as ever finding either the boat or anything worth a cent, we think the prospect about equal to the completion of Miles' Mississippi River cutoff project from Helena through Arkansas and Texas to the Gulf of Mexico.'

BEGINNING OF END 1872: "The year 1872 is referred to in later years as the year of the great depression, a year in which there was a marked decline in steamboats as a mode of transportation in the

Mississippi and Ohio Valleys.

APRIL, 1872, FROM THE TIMES PROMOTER OF OCTOBER 2, 1870: "Miles, the erratic editor of the Helena (Ark.) Clarion, tells of the arrival at Helena of a little, dinky steamer, called the Phoenix, after a very circuitous and lengthy voyage. She was a trading craft down in Yazoo Pass, Coldwater and Tallahatchie Rivers. (Author's note: Yazoo Pass was a swampy area between Moon Lake--old Mississippi River bed--and the Mississippi River that could be used by light draft steamers during high water times. During the Civil War, General Ulysses Grant deepened the Pass so that the Union Army gunboats could go from the Mississippi into the Coldwater River.)

"A levee was built some time ago that shut off communication with the Mississippi River at Moon Lake. The river got low, and she could go neither way. The crew was set to work and constructed a succession of log and dirt dams, and after each rain they floated their boat a few hundred yards; they rested from their labours during the dry spells.

"Repeating the damming process, they finally worked 100 miles down the Pass to Coldwater River, thence into the Tallahatchie and on down into the Yazoo and finally reached the Mississippi. From thence they moved north on the Mississippi, making a trip of 1,000 miles to reach a point within ten miles of their starting. Five months were occupied in making the voyage."

During 1872 losses to steamboats and barges and flatboats were in excess of \$3,371,000 and twenty-eight were dismantled. Although 1872 was the beginning of the end for steamboats, there was considerable activity on the rivers. In 1873, there were 155 boats lost.

GEO. C. WOLFF: "Helena, Ark., August 22nd:

Boilers exploded at 2 P. M. when abreast St. Francis Island just above here, twelve known lost, sank. Hull raised and towed to Memphis by Lady Lee on September 24th, by Future City where she was rebuilt for Missouri River trade. On May 2, 1874, encountered a snag in Bowling Green Bend on Missouri and sank, total loss, Captain W. G. Crapster in command."

GRAND TOWER MYSTERY

"On July 17th, it was announced in St. Louis that Captain John P. Keiser, Superintendent of the Memphis and St. Louis Packet Company, had sold the hull only of the Grand Tower to Grand Tower Iron Company, of Grand Tower, Illinois.

"I have searched my records and have been unable to find when and where a new hull was built for this boat; she is shown in operation until January 6, 1882. The Cairo Bulletin, January 8, 1882, reports as follows: 'About 7 o'clock Friday night (6th) the Grand Tower on her way down from St. Louis ran upon an obstruction in the river about fourteen miles above this City near Commercial Point, which tore a large hole in her bottom and caused her to sink in about seven feet of water within three minutes from the time she struck.'

"As soon as the great craft struck she halted, and while yet throbbing with the violence of the shock, she settled to the bottom. The alarm did not need to be given by an officer, all on board knew at once what had befallen them and there was no panic. Those on the main deck went up to the cabin, and were soon followed there by the deckhands, engineers and firemen. The yawls were launched and other life saving apparatus was gotten ready for use; in the meantime the wreck-boat Salvor, which is engaged near the scene of the disaster raising a sunken barge of iron, came to the rescue and many of the passengers got aboard

of her. The towboat Alice Brown was also fortunately near at hand and also came immediately to the rescue. It is reported that three deck passengers are missing.

"The actual cause of the accident is not known--recently a large stump which barely protruded above the water was sawed off by a Government dredge, this she may have hit, while others recall an old iron barge sunk in that vicinity and may have been the cause. Captain George Lennox long her master and others of river fraternity are of the opinion she cannot be saved.

"The Grand Tower was built in 1870 for the St. Louis and Vicksburg trade; Captain George Lennox came out in command of her with William White as head clerk. She was considered a very fast boat and in 1876 she made the run from Helena, Arkansas to foot of Beale Street Memphis in 6 hours 12½ minutes which was some 30 minutes better than the time of the Robert E. Lee in the famous race of 1870, the Lee being 6 hours 43 minutes making the run. The new City of Providence on April 26, 1881, made the run from Helena to Memphis in 6 hours and 1 minute thus nosing out the Grand Tower by 11½ minutes.

"The Belle Memphis on 20th of May, 1881, set the peg for the run from Helena to Memphis at 5 hours and 56 minutes, she having a more favorable river than Providence. This racing fever generally occurred in the spring, when business was light, river at good boating stage, and the resulting publicity from breaking a record was always good for business. On May 27, 1881, the Jim Lee eased into port at Memphis and posted on sides of her pilot-house in large numerals was 5 hours and 4 minutes. Scarcely was the paint dry in fact the next day May 28th, the City of Greenville arrived at Memphis having set the peg at 5 hours and 30 seconds for run from Helena to Memphis. The Commercial said

that the people around Memphis have no money to lose on betting that City of Greenville cannot further reduce the time of the run. (In 1883, the Kate Adams # 1 again broke the record in 5 hours 18 minutes 30 seconds.)

"It is possible that the St. Louis reporter made a mistake in name of the hull sold by Captain Keiser, still the accuracy of these reporters is amazing, and their pride in their work would hardly allow for such a mistake. It is also possible that some part of the hull of the Grand Tower showed a weakness and that the Company built a new hull at St. Louis and without fanfare transferred the cabin and machinery to the new hull; if the reporter had made such a mistake other river scribes would have had a field day, so the mystery remains, did or did not Captain Keiser sell the hull of Grand Tower in 1873?"

1873

"In the year 1873, there were probably more boats in the hands of the U. S. Marshals than in any other period of steamboating on Western Waters. Poor crops, the panic, yellow fever caused an overabundance of tonnage, cut rates, and general failure among steamboat owners." Mr. Tippitt lists thirty-four steamboats sold to the highest bidder and the Northern Line based at Keokuk, Iowa offered eight of their steamers for sale.

"The panic which had gripped the country since early last winter broke and there was a general revival of business by the last of September, 1873, and the yellow fever which had raged through the South was subsiding." Captain Tippitt lists eighty-five steamboats built in 1873, but has the following quotation from the personal memories of Captain William J. Irwin of Cincinnati. "Based on my personal observations I am of the opinion that the Government booked records do not

always amount to much for historical purposes," and states that his own experience obtained from over thirty years in Government service coincides with the above.

"On October 4, 1873 there were thirty-six steamboats and twenty M V T barges laid up idle at St. Louis for want of water and business. Included in the list was the City of Helena. Twenty-six were laid up at New Orleans and eight in Cincinnati. The average number of steamboats on our Western Waters for the last four years has been 1,038 carrying 297,712 tons.

NOVEMBER 5, NEW ORLEANS. "The cotton season is in full swing, the Steamer Natchez arrived with the "Blue Ribbon" trip today, 4,126 bales of cotton and 4,882 sacks of cotton seed, which is equal to 5,500 bales. Look out for the Lee, Captain Cannon will not be outdone by the Natchez."

HELENA WORLD, December, 1938

Explosion 100 Years Ago

"The following article was taken from yesterday's Commercial Appeal. It was written by Joe Curtis, who writes a regular column concerning happenings on the Mississippi River in the present and during years long past.

Many steamboat disasters have happened on the Mississippi River in the vicinity of Helena, but none appears as destructive as the exploding of the boilers on the General Brown, November 25, 1838, killing fifty-five persons and injuring seventy-five.

The Steamer Brown was one of the finest

packets of her time. She was a sidewheeler and operated between Louisville and New Orleans, in command of Captain Samuel Clark. Joseph Underwood and Hamilton McCray were the pilots.

Leaving Louisville, November 19, with a heavy freight cargo and about 150 passengers, the Brown collided a few miles below Brandenburg with the Steamer Washington, bound upriver. One of her water wheels was wrecked, but a carpenter on the boat built a new one. She proceeded slowly down the Ohio and Mississippi, landing at Helena on Sunday, November 25, to let off a passenger.

Captain Clark and Dr. Price of Lexington, Kentucky, were on the forward hurricane deck conversing about the low water. Pilot McCray was on duty at the steering wheel. When the passenger had safely stepped ashore from a narrow gangplank, Captain Clark was in the act of pulling the bell cord to signal the pilot he was ready to depart.

Suddenly the boat's three boilers let go with such force, more than half of her upper structure was torn to splinters. The captain, still grasping the rope, was blown overboard, together with a portion of the woodwork on which he stood. Dr. Price fell to the lower deck and died in flames which destroyed all that was left of the steamer. Captain Robert McConnell of Paducah, who was clerk on her, was blown into the river, but being uninjured, managed to get to the shore. Although many passengers and members of the crew were injured or killed by the explosion and fire, the few who leaped overboard were drowned.

Helena was a mere village at the time of this disaster. The few citizens there did all they could to aid those injured, but their efforts were in vain and all of them taken from the river died during the night. Some were buried on the bluffs at Helena."

THE MOORE BELL

The bell that was hung in the tower of St. John's Episcopal Church shortly before Christmas is probably one of Phillips County's oldest relics--if that is the proper word. The placing of the bell came about partly through a suggestion of the late S. D. Warfield, who often spoke of the absence of tower bells in the churches of Helena. He left a memorial gift to St. John's, and it was tentatively proposed that this be spent for a bell and its installation. This was not necessary, however, as the bell was given by Charles L. Moore and it was hung under the direction of Mike Barrow, both members of St. John's.

Mr. and Mrs. William F. Moore came to Phillips County from Virginia, stopping for a short while in Huntsville, Alabama. They settled in the late 1820s near the present LaGrange, then in Phillips County and now in Lee County. This was the "old Moore Place," which, after the Moore boys went to the Mexican War, became known as Palo Alto. It is thought that the Moore family brought this plantation bell with them from Alabama, and it was a familiar sight and in use at Palo Alto for many years. It had silver coins melted into it in its casting, to improve its tone.

The bell was used on a place at Barton and later on the Dade Moore Place by Charles L. Moore, its donor. In about 1939, it came to rest at the M. E. West home on Beech Street where Mr. and Mrs. Moore were living, and finally it was in their yard at their present home on Circle Drive.

The bell was rung at St. John's during the last Christmas Eve service, and it brought pleasure to those who heard it.

*

DR. M. L. PEARSON

by

Carolyn R. Cunningham

Dr. Micajah L. Pearson was born near Dadesville, Alabama, in June, 1848, and died at his home in Poplar Grove on Monday evening, December 13, 1909. His death came after an illness of several weeks.

As a boy he received his education in the country school where he lived. He loved his native Southland and, although only a youth of sixteen years, he had the heart of a true patriot so he enlisted as a private at Atlanta, Georgia in 1864, in Company G, 3rd Alabama Regiment, Engineer Corps, of Johnson's Brigade, Confederate Army. He served his country well until the surrender, taking an active part in battles in Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia.

Soon after the war he was invited to make his home in Vineyard, Phillips County, Arkansas, with a distant kinsman, Dr. Vineyard (see the Quarterly of September, 1968; "A Man To Remember.") Being a young man past twenty by then, he became a teacher in private schools in the county for several years, saving his money for an education toward his chosen profession of medicine.

He read and studied in Dr. Vineyard's office when not occupied with his school work. With this excellent basic knowledge, he left for Tulane University at New Orleans to study, later going on to the Kentucky School of Medicine at Louisville where he graduated in June, 1876.

He returned to Vineyard and became associated with Dr. Vineyard in the practice of medicine, and was also postmaster for a time at Vineyard. Two

years after his return, he married Miss Emma Forrest Turner at Midway, the only sister of James R. Turner of Helena and J. Carr Turner of Poplar Grove. The Pearsons had four children, only one surviving them, John B. Pearson, who made his home in Little Rock. John B. Pearson married Miss Gertrude Slaughter, a sister of Miss Donna Slaughter who married J. C. Barlow. The Pearsons had two daughters and a son. The son is now deceased, and Mrs. Gertrude Pearson, daughter-in-law of Dr. Pearson, died last year at her home in Little Rock.

Dr. Pearson moved his family from Vineyard to Spring Creek near Aubrey, where he practiced for three years. Then in 1881 he located permanently at Poplar Grove. He led an active, useful life as a competent and successful physician, as well as citizen.

In December, 1876, he applied for membership in the Phillips County Medical Society and was accepted. He remained a member throughout his lifetime, and served as president of this organization four times. He was a member of three other medical societies, Third District, Arkansas, and American. He was a member of Sam Corley Camp, United Confederate Veterans.

Dr. Pearson's funeral was conducted by the Presbyterian minister, the Reverend Johnson, and he was buried in Gamble Cemetery at Midway.

IN MEMORIAM: Douglas S. Heslep of Helena, a member for some years of the Historical Society, died this past fall.

*