

The JOURNAL

The History of Speer Hardware Company



Inside:



*"Camp Plenty"
Speer Hunting Camp*



*Hangin' Times in
Fort Smith, Part VII*



*Blair-Amis Home
of Fort Smith*

Vol. 28, No. 2, September 2004



MISSION: The mission of the Fort Smith Historical Society, Inc., founded in 1977, is to publish The Journal of the Fort Smith Historical Society and through The Journal and other activities to locate, identify and collect historical data; to publish source materials and historical articles, all pertaining to the City of Fort Smith and the immediate surrounding area. Preservation of Fort Smith history is our primary mission and to this end, we always welcome the loan of Fort Smith historical material and will return promptly.

MEMBERSHIP & ORDERS: Journal back issues are available. Cost for the current issue is \$7.50 plus a \$2.00 mailing charge per copy. Cost for past issues is \$4.00 plus the \$2.00 mailing charge. A composite index for Volumes I thru IX is available for \$10.00 plus a \$4.00 mailing charge. Cost for the complete set of Journals, Volumes I thru 28, is \$175.00. Volume I will be a reproduced copy as this copy is no longer available in original form.

Membership in the Fort Smith Historical Society includes a subscription to The Journal of the Fort Smith Historical Society, which is published semi-annually. Correspondence concerning current or back issues of The Journal, membership dues, and all business matters, should be sent to:

Fort Smith Historical Society
Attention: Joanne Swafford, Treasurer
P.O. Box 3676
Fort Smith, AR 72913-3676

QUESTIONS pertaining to the Fort Smith Historical Society or The Journal should be addressed via e-mail to:

Charles Raney	cdraney@cox-internet.com
Ben Boulden	benboulden@sbcglobal.net
Joe Wasson	joe@efortsmith.com

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

<http://www.fortsmithhistory.com>

Our website is updated regularly, and contains information on the Organization, Membership, Back issues: How to order, Tables of Contents of Back Issues, Contacts & Links, Archives, and a Gallery of Historic Images: Views of old Fort Smith.

See the Query page on our website for a bulletin board of current research questions. Readers may post their own research questions or topics in hopes of furthering their own research.

Webmaster: benboulden@sbcglobal.net

MANUSCRIPTS: Contributions of all types of Fort Smith, Arkansas-related materials, including previously unpublished family Bibles, diaries, journals, letters, old maps, church minutes or histories, cemetery information, family histories, and other documents are welcome. Papers should be submitted in print, typed and double-spaced, and on a 3.5 inch disk or CD, compatible with PC word-processing programs. Submissions should include author's name, address, phone number, and email address if available. Contributors should send photocopies of original documents or duplicates of photos since they cannot be returned. Manuscripts are subject to editing for style and space requirements. Please include footnotes in the article submitted and list any additional sources. All articles and images accepted will become the property of the Fort Smith Historical Society, Inc. unless return specifically requested. Submit to:

Journal Managing Editors
The Fort Smith Historical Society
P.O. Box 3676
Fort Smith, AR 72913-3676

Neither the Fort Smith Historical Society nor the editorial staff assumes any responsibility for statements, whether of fact or opinion, made by contributors.

AMELIA WHITAKER MARTIN
Journal Editor & Co-Founder 1977-2004

CHAIRMAN, EDITORIAL BOARD:

Charles D. Raney

MANAGING EDITOR

Carole Barger

ASSOCIATE EDITORS:

Benjamin Boulden

Joe Wasson

CONSULTING EDITOR:

Carolyn Pollan

INDEXING:

Joe Wasson

OFFICERS AND BOARD DIRECTORS:

Jack W. Arnold, President

Jerry Akins, Vice President

Chloe Lamon, Recording Secretary

Jo Tillery, Membership Secretary

Janice Eddleman, Corresponding Secretary

Joanne Swafford, Treasurer

Carole Barger

Ben Boulden

Becky Chancey

J.P. Chancey

Dorothy Doville

Billy Higgins

Deloris McMillan

Gene McVay

Jack Pollard

Charles D. Raney

Clara Jane Rubarth

Ben Stephens

Joe Wasson

Rena Westbrook

Membership in the Fort Smith Historical Society includes subscription to *The Journal of the Fort Smith Historical Society*, which is published semi-annually. Year begins January 1 and ends December 31.

For membership, send dues with your name and mailing address to:

The Fort Smith Historical Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 3676

Fort Smith, Arkansas 72913-3676

Types of memberships:

Annual \$ 25.00

Senior Citizens (55 or older) 15.00

Student 15.00

Institution 25.00

Annual Sustaining 50.00

Annual Business Sponsor 100.00

Annual Civic Club Sponsor 150.00

Annual Corporate Sponsor 250.00

Life (Individual) 200.00

Journal Back Issues Each Copy 4.00

(For mail orders, add \$2.00 mailing charge per copy.)

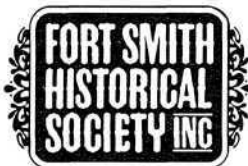
Composite Index

for Volumes I thru IX 10.00

(For mail orders, add \$4.00 mailing charge per copy.)

We welcome the loan of Fort Smith historical material and will return promptly.

The Fort Smith Historical Society, Inc. is a non-profit organization under Sec. 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. Gifts and legacies are tax deductible.



The JOURNAL

Contents

VOL. 28, NO. 2

September 2004

Contents	1
News & Opportunities	2
Descendants of U.S. Marshals Convene	5
Pomp and Circumstance of 1904	8
When "The Fiery Saint" Came to Fort Smith	10
The History of Speer Hardware Company	12
"Camp Plenty"	16
"The Man from Rich Mountain"	20
"The Veins are Thick": Coal Mining in Sebastian County	24
Coal Mining in Northwest Arkansas	26
"Never Take A Coal Man" Labor Unrest in 1914	28
The History of the Blair-Amis House	32
Hangin' Times in Fort Smith	36
1904 News	40
Index	43

COVER: Speer Hardware Company on Garrison Avenue.

Photo courtesy of Stan Kujawa.

© Copyright 2004 ISSN 0736 4261

by the Fort Smith Historical Society, Inc.

c/o Fort Smith Public Library

3201 Rogers Avenue

Mailing address: P.O. Box 3676

Fort Smith, Arkansas 72913-3676

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Change of address cards are free at your post office.

If you move, please fill one out and send it to:

P.O. Box 3676 • Fort Smith, Arkansas 72913-3676

No portion of this publication may be reproduced in any form, except for brief excerpts for review purposes, without the consent of the Editors of *The Journal*.

News & Opportunities

Detective killed in 1912 belatedly honored on fallen officer's memorial



Detective Patrick Andrew Carr

On Thursday, May 13, 2004, Detective Patrick Andrew Carr was remembered in a Memorial Service at the Fort Smith Police Department. His name was also added to the Honor Roll of fallen police officers but only after extensive research led by Police Chaplain Ben Stephens. Relatives of Detective Carr were in attendance at the ceremony. Detective Carr was the first police officer killed in the line of duty under the current Police Department organization.

He was thought to be a Constable but not on the Police Department rolls. Chaplain Stephens was successful in finding the documentation to prove otherwise and after 92 years, Detective Carr's name was etched into the stone for fallen officers outside the Police Department. He now joins six other police officers killed in the line of duty to be honored on the monument.

Patrick Andrew Carr was born in 1870 in West Virginia. He was a detective on the Fort Smith Police Department when he was shot and killed. Andy Carr and his wife, Della James (Meek) Carr, lived at 601 South 17th Street in Fort Smith and had five children – Pansy Romaine, Della Mae, Jack Meek, Margaret Stanhope and James Andrew.

On Saturday night, March 23, 1912, Detective Carr was shot and killed while helping other officers capture an escaping prisoner. Another Fort Smith detective, Cathey Pitcock, had observed a 24-year-old black male, Sanford Lewis, engaged in a loud verbal confrontation with a black female on Garrison Avenue. Detective Pitcock arrested Sanford Lewis and began escorting him to jail. The prisoner pulled away from the detective and fled. Detective Carr observed Sanford Lewis making his escape and joined with others in pursuing the escapee. During the pursuit and recapture of the prisoner, shots were fired and Detective Carr was struck above the right eye by a bullet. The officer died nine days later in St. Edward Hospital without ever knowing what had happened to him. He was laid to rest in Oak Cemetery. Andy Carr was 42 years old.

"LEST WE FORGET"

Social Studies Educators bestow achievement awards in April

Recipients of the Fort Smith Secondary Social Studies Educators 2004 Frontier Achievement Awards were (left to right) Barbara Webster, Bob and Donna Mitchell, Harold Carlee and Sherry Toliver, and Larry Cantwell. Mayor Ray Baker (far right) commended the honorees. The awards, made annually to recognize individuals and organizations who have made outstanding contributions to the preservation of Fort Smith historical or cultural heritage, were presented April 22, 2004.



63rd Annual Conference of the Arkansas Historical Association Conference held in Fort Smith

Fort Smith welcomed members of the Arkansas Historical Association for its 63rd annual state conference, held April 15-17, 2004. The meeting opened April 15 with a reception at the Hell on the Border Jail at the Fort Smith National Historic Site.

Historians and researchers, both amateur and academic, made presentations on subjects including early jurists Judge Isaac C. Parker and Judge William Story; People and Communities in Western Arkansas; Early Methodism in Northwest Arkansas; Fort Smith and Transportation, and Fort Smith in the Civil War. Sessions were held on jurists in Fort Smith, people and communities of Western Arkansas, and transportation.

During a session for local and county historical societies, Jack Arnold, Chuck Raney, Ben Boulden and Joe Wasson of the Fort Smith Historical Society led a discussion on the activities of our society.

Historians asked to share in Encyclopedia

Tom Dillard, curator of the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, was the featured speaker at the Friday luncheon and business meeting.

The Richard C. Butler Center of the Central Arkansas Library System exists to promote the study of Arkansas history and related disciplines. The Butler Center's ongoing Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture project has the goal of using the Internet as a medium to gather and initially publish online a comprehensive reference work on the state and its people. As it develops, the encyclopedia will document the political and social history of Arkansas, its geography and geology, its religions, its businesses and agriculture, and more.

Dillard invited those present to contribute their research, writings, photographs and other materials to the project.

To reach as broad an audience as possible, the Encyclopedia will be produced in various formats: a website, an educational CD, and a proposed print edition. The online Encyclopedia will be unveiled June 15, 2005, the 169th anniversary of Arkansas statehood. The other versions will follow at later dates.

Distinguished writer closes conference

The closing luncheon speaker was Dr. Elliot West, alumni distinguished professor of history at the University of Arkansas, a scholar of the American West and Native American history.



***Dr. Art Martin accepts an award
recognizing the Martins' efforts***

The awards banquet was held Friday evening with a special recognition award presented to Dr. Art Martin and posthumously, to Amelia Martin, the late editor of this Journal, for their contributions to historical preservation efforts in Arkansas and Fort Smith.

The conference was well-attended. Dr. Billy Higgins, AHA Board member, Fort Smith Historical Society Board member and professor of history at the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith was the local chairman of the arrangements of the conference.

Fort Smith will next host the AHA conference in 2017, on the anniversary of the city's founding.

We Have A New Home

*The Fort Smith Historic Society
has moved into offices located at*

*Yoes Allstate Plaza
422 North B Street
P.O. Box 3676
Fort Smith, AR 72913-3676*

Local writer's debut novel uses Fort Smith as setting

A SECRET WORD
by Jennifer Paddock
Simon & Schuster



Jennifer Paddock's debut novel is unusual on several fronts. For starters, there isn't one central character but rather three. Although the story is told in episodic vignettes, the author is able to keep her narration on track in both a skillful and satisfactory manner.

The story begins in 1986 in Fort Smith and spans about fifteen years of time. Leigh, Chandler and Sarah are tenth-grade classmates. One afternoon during a lunch break from the school, they witness a car crash that claims the life of a boy they each know. The tragedy binds them together in more ways than even they first realize. Following graduation, Chandler and Sarah, the more affluent of the three, leave Fort Smith for New York. Leigh, the daughter of a single mother, remains behind, trapped in a series of dead end jobs.

Fort Smith readers will find local details especially intriguing. For example, Blair Park mentioned in the book is unmistakably Creekmore and her description of the area along Cliff Drive near Hardscrabble Country Club is vivid and on target. Her characters are like many of the people we know and they face real problems.

A Secret Word has a fully-developed plot and is written in a crisp, satisfying style. This remarkable first outing is a book that contains both grace and insight.

Jennifer Paddock attended Southside High School and graduated from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. She received her master's degree in creative writing from New York University and is the daughter of Anita and the late Ben Paddock of Fort Smith. She lives with her husband in New York City.

- Reviewed by Larry Cantwell

Annual Corporate Sponsors

Regions Financial Corporation
723 Garrison • Fort Smith, AR 72901
Phone: 479-494-1000

Entertainment Fort Smith Magazine
316 N. 7th St. • Fort Smith, AR 72901
Phone: 479-494-1888

Annual Business Sponsors

Belle Point Beverages, Inc.
1 Belle Point Place • Fort Smith, AR 72901
Phone: 479-782-3511

Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce
612 Garrison • Fort Smith, AR 72901
Phone: 479-783-6118

Spiro State Bank
1008 West Broadway • Spiro, Oklahoma 74959
Phone: 918-962-2453

Richard B. Griffin Investments
P.O. Box 1688 • Fort Smith, AR 72902-1688
Phone: 479-646-8898

City of Fort Smith
623 Garrison • Fort Smith, AR 72901
Phone: 479-785-2801

Fort Smith Trolley Museum
100 South 4th St. • Fort Smith, AR 72901
Phone: 479-783-0205 or 479-783-1237

Moore Dental Care
2913 South 74th St. • Fort Smith, AR 72903
Phone: 479-484-5050

Jerry E. Wagner, DDS
417 South 16th St. • Fort Smith, AR 72901
Phone: 479-783-4182

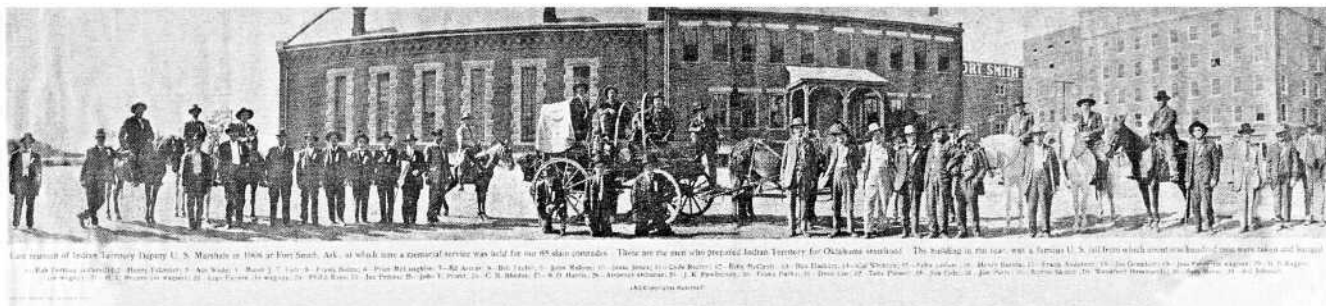
EMA Foods Company, Inc.
3230 East Highway 64 • Alma, AR 72921
Phone: 479-632-5050

Fort Smith Public Schools
P.O. Box 1688 • Fort Smith, AR 72902
Phone: 479-785-2501

Total Rehabilitation Inc.
7320 Rogers Avenue • Fort Smith, AR 72903
Phone: 479-452-7773

*Descendants of U.S. Marshals catalogue history
of the men who rode for Judge Parker*

Local group working to attract U.S. Marshal Service Museum to Fort Smith



Fort Smith has raised the ante for cities vying to become the new home of the U.S. Marshal's Service Museum.

A local steering committee formed in March, 2004 is dedicated to proving Fort Smith is the best – and only – place in the country where the colorful history of the U.S. Marshal Service should be housed.

A 10-member site selection committee has been appointed by the director of the Marshal Service's Office to gather information for determining the best place for the new museum. Fort Smith is expecting a visit by the committee, says Dick O'Connell, U.S. Marshal for the Western District of Arkansas.

"We know the director of the U.S. Marshal Service wants its own, stand-alone building for the museum," O'Connell said. "So, we need to keep our eyes open for property so we can have some idea where the museum could go. When the committee does come here, we hope the people here will help us in showing off the city and its facilities."

O'Connell praised the U.S. Marshal's Service Descendants Day event held in Fort Smith on May 1, 2004 at the Fort Smith Historic Site's Frisco Station. Planned by the steering committee to encourage the U.S. Marshal's Service Museum to move here, the all-day open house attracted 500 participants from five states. O'Connell said U.S. Marshals Service historian David Turk, one of the guest speakers at the event, said he was "overwhelmed" by the enthusiasm for and participation in the event.

More than 73 descendants of U.S. marshals, deputy U.S. marshals, federal courts workers and others connected with the Marshals Service in the 19th and 20th centuries brought with them treasured artifacts to be photographed, scanned and/or recorded by Fort Smith National Historic Site staff and volunteers. About 100 oral histories also were recorded. All artifacts processed and recorded were immediately returned to their owners, and the Historic Site's museum technician is now cataloging the materials.

Among the artifacts logged in by Historic Site Park Ranger Tom Wing were an 1873 vintage rifle carried from 1893-96 by Deputy U.S. Marshal George Boggs; two authentic, 1880s badges; important documents and clothing worn by Deputy U.S. Marshal Cal Whitson, the real, one-eyed deputy marshal for Judge Parker's court believed to be the model for the Rooster Cogburn character portrayed in the movies True Grit and Rooster Cogburn.

Steering committee chairman Claude Legris sent 160 press releases about the event to media representatives in an area bordered by Oklahoma City, Little Rock, Springfield and Joplin, Mo., and Dallas.

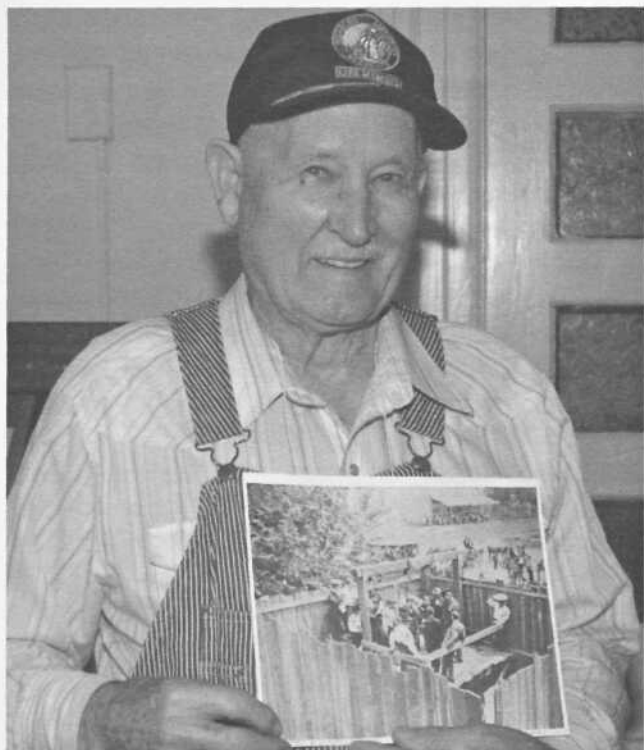
Wing said descendants who weren't able to attend the open house have continued at the rate of about three per week to call or come to the Historic Site to have their artifacts and stories documented.

"The benefit of all this information will go on for years," Wing said.

And while the first Descendant's Day



Under the watchful eye of a mural depicting Judge Isaac C. Parker, riders in period costume explain the role of deputies in bringing criminal suspects to trial in the Western District of Arkansas court.



Leonard Patton holds one of the historical artifacts recorded on Descendants Day – a photograph of a hanging in the late 1880s, in Clarksville, Ark. Patton, a Clarksville resident, is the descendant of three deputy U.S. Marshals: Prosper Horton Patton, Simon Floyd and Frank Patton. All three served in the late 1800s. The men being hanged are two brothers convicted of killing the local sheriff. Prosper, Patton's grandfather, is among those at the gallows.



The badge held by Ross Flanary of Fort Smith is the same worn by his great-great grandfather, Deputy U.S. Marshal Phillip Ross, in the photo of the 1908 Marshals reunion, above. Phillip Ross was also the grandson of John Ross, fourth principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation.

Photos by Brian McMahan

(Page 5 and above) The “yard-long” photograph of “The Last Reunion of Indian Territory Deputy U.S. Marshals” in 1908 is the one of very few known images of the lawmen who served in Fort Smith. On Descendants Day, many more artifacts held by family members of the lawmen were seen for the first time by historians and catalogued for further research. The 37 deputy marshals are named in a caption printed on the photograph, which also reads “These are the men who prepared Indian Territory for Oklahoma statehood.” The caption notes that 65 officers were slain in the line of duty.

specifically targeted families of those serving the U.S. Marshals Service in the Western District of Arkansas or Oklahoma/Indian Territory in the 19th century, there is also a great need for documenting descendants of those who served in the 20th century. The new U.S. Marshals Service Museum will cover the entire history of the service, from its creation in 1789 to the present.

"The sons of a U.S. Marshal of the Western District appointed by President Dwight Eisenhower were recently brought from Van Buren by a nephew to record their oral histories of their father and his co-workers," said Bill Black, superintendent of the Fort Smith National Historic Site. "And while our involvement with Marshals Service history pretty much ends with Judge Parker's death in 1896, all the information we receive will be passed on to the U.S. Marshals Service historian."

For more information on how to document descendant artifacts for this project, contact the Fort Smith National Historic Site at (479) 783-3961.

This story, originally published in the June 2004 issue of Entertainment Fort Smith Magazine, is reprinted with permission of the author, Linda Seubold, Editor.



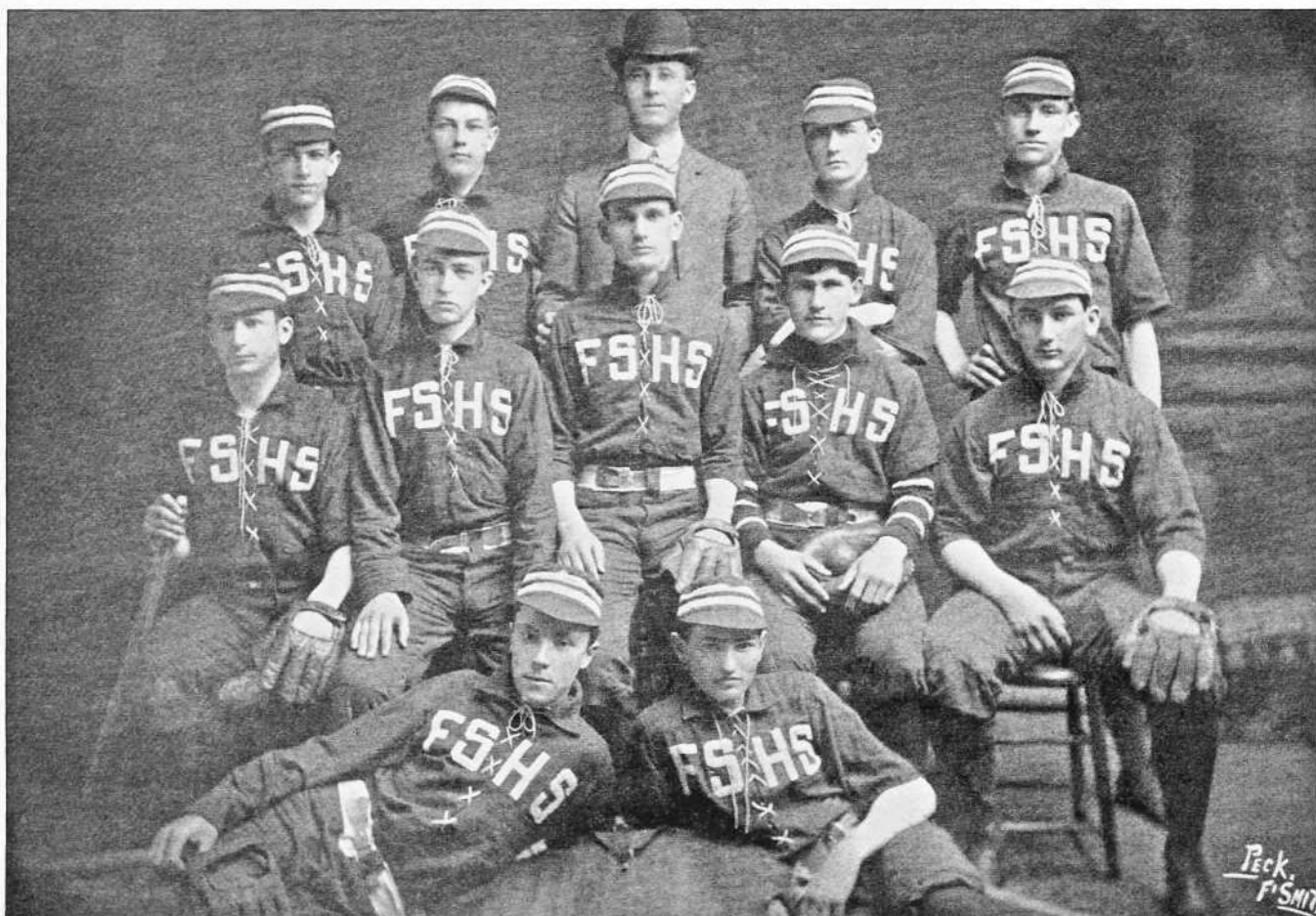
(top) Historic Site volunteer John Northrip, left, videotapes oral histories on Descendants Day.



(Left to right) Mayor Ray Baker of Fort Smith welcomes visitors Art Burton, author and historian, of Chicago; U.S. Rep. John Boozman and U.S. Marshal Service historian, David Turk.



The current U.S. Marshal for the Western District of Arkansas, Dick O'Connell, at left, and Claude Legris, director of the Fort Smith Visitors & Convention Bureau are two members of the steering committee working to attract the U.S. Marshal Service Museum to Fort Smith.



Pomp and Circumstance of 1904

by Rena Westbrook

Many of the Journal's readers have attended their own high school class reunions and enjoyed the delights found in stepping back into a segment of one's past, into that transition between the child-student living at home and adulthood.

As I turned the pages of a small volume I recently added to my library, titled *The 1904 Echo* (the yearbook for Fort Smith High School), I became enchanted with the youthful faces, some of whose surnames are still a part of the Fort Smith of today. Places like our elementary school buildings, a lumber company and an ice cream company were those I could easily connect with some of the students who were educated in the Fort Smith High School one hundred years ago.

This graduating class of forty-one students left the halls of a massive and striking high school building that had been completed in 1898, once located at the southwest corner of where the Darby Junior High School campus now sits along Grand

Avenue. Many were continuing their educations at colleges and universities. Some of them had business careers waiting and began families that have tied them with Fort Smith up to the present.

A yearbook was a novel undertaking for the FSHS Class of 1904; they were making traditions that those to follow would choose to honor, while energetically putting their distinctive mark on class stories, pranks and interests. In a journal of Fort Smith High School days they leave for us, the Class of 1904 wrote lavishly and humorously of their classes and teachers yet stood with serious faces for photographs of their school orchestra and sports teams that give only a slight clue about the fun of extracurricular diversions from Algebra and Latin.

Here are some of the faces of the Fort Smith High School Class of 1904, reflecting both the era during which their educations were completed and the hopes, friendships and secrets they held dear as they made their way out into the world.



Class Day Program, May 20, 1904

Address by President Vaile

Solo - Eleanor Boone

Class History - Katherine Barnes

Quartette - John Breedlove, John Vaile,

Maurice Garlick, Clarence Hunt

Grumbler - John Brizzolara

Solo - Lynette Kimmons

Recitation - Corinna Moore

Solo - Myrtle Christner

The Sweet Girl Graduate - Marguerite Saunders

The Sweet Boy Graduate - Clayton Burch

Solo - Eva Ward

Ode to Juniors - Maurice Garlick

Prophecy - Caroline Klingensmith

Quartette - Maud McMinn, Hazel Knoble,

Clarence Hunt, John Vaile

Declamation - Leo Bury

Solo - Lois Edmonds

Class Will - Mae Yadon

Class Song

Class of 1904

Katherine Barnes

Eleanor Boone

Louise Class

John Brizzolara

John Breedlove

Mary Dyke

Myrtle Dyke

Florence Green

Clayton Burch

Leo Bury

Bonta Carnall

Mattie Griggs

Hazel Hink

Lynette Kimmons

Paul Johnson

Clara Green

Hazel Noble

Caroline Klingensmith

Clarence Hunt

Maurice Garlick

Maude McMinn

John Geren

Corinna Moore

Elsie McKinney

Robert Moore

Loretta Robins

Dean Robins

Levi Moore

Marguerite Saunders

Lena Theurer

Grace Reynolds

Roberta Sheets

Eva Ward

Katherine Ware

Ernestine Wright

Mae Yadon

Myrtle Christner

Lois Edmonds

Robert Mackie

John Vaile

About the author: Rena Westbrook is a new member of the Fort Smith Historical Society board. She is an architect, historical researcher and volunteer at the Fort Smith Public Library, as well as a collector of portrait cabinet card photographs.

Opposite photo: 1904 boy's baseball team. Below: 1904 girls' basketball team, from the 1904 Fort Smith High School Echo.



When the Fiery Saint Came to Fort Smith

An Account of the Dr. Mordecai Ham Revival
in Fort Smith from April 18 to June 11, 1933

By Rev. Charles E. Smith, Jr.

On April 18, 1933, the Southwest American, Fort Smith's local newspaper's headlines read, "HAM WILL LAUNCH RELIGIOUS MEETINGS AT OLD COLISEUM." Would it be the same type of meeting that Dr. Mordecai Ham was used to? The preacher was of the Old School where sin was wrong, Hell was hot, and Salvation was only found in the person of Jesus Christ. These were the days of the depression when people were more worried about job security than everlasting life. Would Dr. Ham truly make an impact on the city of Fort Smith? Only the Campaign would show its fruit in the end to see if Fort Smith would walk down the "Sawdust Trail."

At this time in our nation's history the President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, talked to the people by radio in "fireside chats," to encourage, to soothe, and to build confidence. He said at one time, "This great nation will revive." Little did he know that revival was truly building in the heart of the Natural State. God's Hand was truly burdening the hearts of the pastors of Fort Smith at this time. Each of the pastors during the depression had closeness to their fellow ministers. There was unity that had not been there before.

In this unity the Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Dr. B. V. Ferguson, had an open heart to evangelism. It was under the auspices of the First Baptist Church that Dr. Ham had come to Fort Smith. Dr. Ferguson had come from the West Durham Church of North Carolina and he began his pastorate with the First Baptist Church on June 4, 1916. Dr. Ferguson, who was a leader in the Southern Baptist Convention, the Arkansas Baptist Convention and Concord Association, held several revival meetings throughout the country and was in great demand as a soul-winning preacher. He believed evangelism was a tool that needed to be used in Fort Smith, to see souls saved to the Lord.

Believing that evangelism was an effective tool, Dr. Ferguson contacted Dr. Ham, requesting that he hold a revival in Fort Smith. When Dr. Ham came to Arkansas, it would be a critical time in his ministry, for the Great Depression had hit the nation. Times were disastrous and dangerous. People yearned for better days. Before Ham came to Fort Smith he had held a campaign in Little Rock in which 3,800 people were converted. In April of that same year Dr. Ham came to Fort Smith. Usually, at the Ham meetings, large wooden

tabernacles were built to hold the tremendous crowds that came for the meetings. But for this meeting in Fort Smith the old Coliseum was secured. A skating rink located at South 9th Street and Parker Avenue, the structure was a "large, well-ventilated brick building, 107 feet wide by 300 feet long," said a program from a 1907 program for a Chautauqua meeting. A newspaper article from the day before the meeting stated, "Accommodations for 3,000 persons have been provided in the Coliseum building, according to Karl S. Rodgers, Campaign Director and Chorister."

Intense anticipation for the start of the meeting filled the air. On opening night there were approximately 1,300 persons sitting, listening to the service. It was in this first service that "Dr. Ham was welcomed to the city by Mayor J. K. Jordan. Mayor Jordan was introduced by Dr. Elbert Hefner, pastor of Central Presbyterian Church and in turn was introduced to Dr. B. V. Ferguson, pastor of the First Baptist Church. Opening prayer was by Reverend Victor Coffman, pastor of the Immanuel Baptist Church," so read the caption in the Southwest American, dated April 19, 1933. The music, under the direction of Karl Rodgers, was fervent. The messages Dr. Ham preached were fiery. These

messages by Dr. Ham were given brief mention in the newspaper, but not fully printed, as they had been in his earlier days.

The evangelist, Dr. Ham, made a great impression on his audience from the beginning, talking extemporaneously with much emphasis and heart-felt conviction. Besides the evangelist himself, the music was always a real drawing card. Rodgers' enthusiasm



Dr. Mordecai Ham



Dr. B.V. Ferguson

in directing the choir caused people to wonder where such quality came from. He was a live-wire and "on to" his job, for he knew how to get the music out of this choir. He was enthusiastic and active as the Chorister. Attendance was a major part of the revival as well. The Coliseum was filled to capacity during the revival. Ham did not just fill the pulpit at the Coliseum; he went from church to church in the Fort Smith area holding special services for the different denominations.

One notable service was held at the First Baptist Church of Van Buren on May 23. He preached that Sunday morning at 9:45 am so he could keep his 11 a.m. engagement at the Coliseum. From this meeting six people were saved and became candidates for baptism: Goldie Aleen Sageley, Clarence Addis, Ollie May Dotson, Frank Addis, Edwin Ray Garrett and Kemel Hogan. After this, Ham went back to the Coliseum to preach. Newspaper accounts confirm that there were at least thirty to eighty people converted in each service.

Of course, Ham also held special services for clubs, businesses, women, men, and children. On June 4, Ham led a religious parade composed of more than 3,000 persons from the Coliseum building on South 9th Street to 7th Street and Garrison Avenue. While there he spoke for a few moments before returning to the Coliseum for his regular sermon. On June 7, Dr. Ham was to speak on "How to Successfully Run in the Christian's Race." This message was particularly important because it was to be broadcast over radio station KFPW. It was very rare at that time to hear a religious rally on radio while it was going on. All in all, the revival in Fort Smith was a success and at the closing on June 11, Dr. Ham was extremely busy. The newspaper article read, "Bringing his campaign in Fort Smith to a close, Dr. M. F. Ham, evangelist, has mapped out a program covering the entire day Sunday."

He spoke that Sunday morning at 9 a.m. at the Central Baptist Church tent located on the lot back of the Lohmeyer Funeral Home. At 11 a.m. he spoke in a special rally service at the First Baptist Church. There he announced a special evangelistic message on "Lessons for this Age Drawn from the Sinking of the Titanic," to be given at the tabernacle at 2:30 p.m. At 7:45 pm his closing message in Fort Smith would be delivered on "The Great Salvation."

The closing service had in attendance 2,500 persons. Hearing Dr. Ham speak had them on the edge of their seats. Dr. Ham loved the sinner, loathed the (back) slider, and lifted the saint. It was through his efforts and apparent in his meeting that he desired God to move on the lives of the people. When the meeting came to a close, it did not close in the hearts of the approximately 3,500 persons who were converted. This

brought about a great change in the lives of the people in Fort Smith. This was just the beginning of a friendship as well, between the evangelist and Dr. Ferguson. In 1934, Dr. Ferguson invited Dr. Ham back to Fort Smith to hold a revival in the First Baptist Church. It was a great campaign with great results. In his biography, "Fifty Years on the Battlefront," the statistics show there were four hundred additions or converts in this meeting.

When Dr. Ham came to Fort Smith, it was a time of ruin, riot, and recklessness. But it was also time for revival. This fiery saint, Dr. Mordecai Ham, came to Fort Smith and held some of his best services during that time. In fact the revival is still felt in the lives of some people who attended Dr. Ham's meeting. Dale Thompson, the current pastor of the First Baptist Church on Grand Avenue, has said to me about this certain meeting, "The First Baptist Church still feels the power from that revival." There is something, then, that changed the way Fort Smith had seen evangelism and evangelists in the past.

Biographical Notes on Dr. Mordecai Ham

Dr. Mordecai Fowler Ham was born in Scottsville, Kentucky to Tobias and Ollie McElroy Ham on April 2, 1877. He was the descendent of eight generations of Baptist preachers. In a newspaper article about Dr. Ham the writer, Marjorie Taylor, points out, "One of Dr. Ham's forebears was Samuel Ham of England who met with John Bunyan and others to write the Baptist Articles of Faith in 1646. His ancestors settled first in the American colony of Rhode Island in 1650, and intermarried with the Roger Williams' family. In the early part of the seventeenth century the family moved to Virginia." Ham grew up under the strong influence of his father and grandfather's preaching, as well as their religious training.

In September 1901 Ham started preaching. On Oct. 11, 1901, he was ordained and began his first revival meeting at Mt. Gilead Baptist Church in Kentucky. Even though this was his first meeting it was his beginning in reaching the people with mass evangelism. He attended Ogden College in Bowling Green, Ky., and also attended Bob Jones College in Cleveland, Tenn., where he received his Doctor of Divinity Degree. He was not only a strong orator, but also learned in the law.

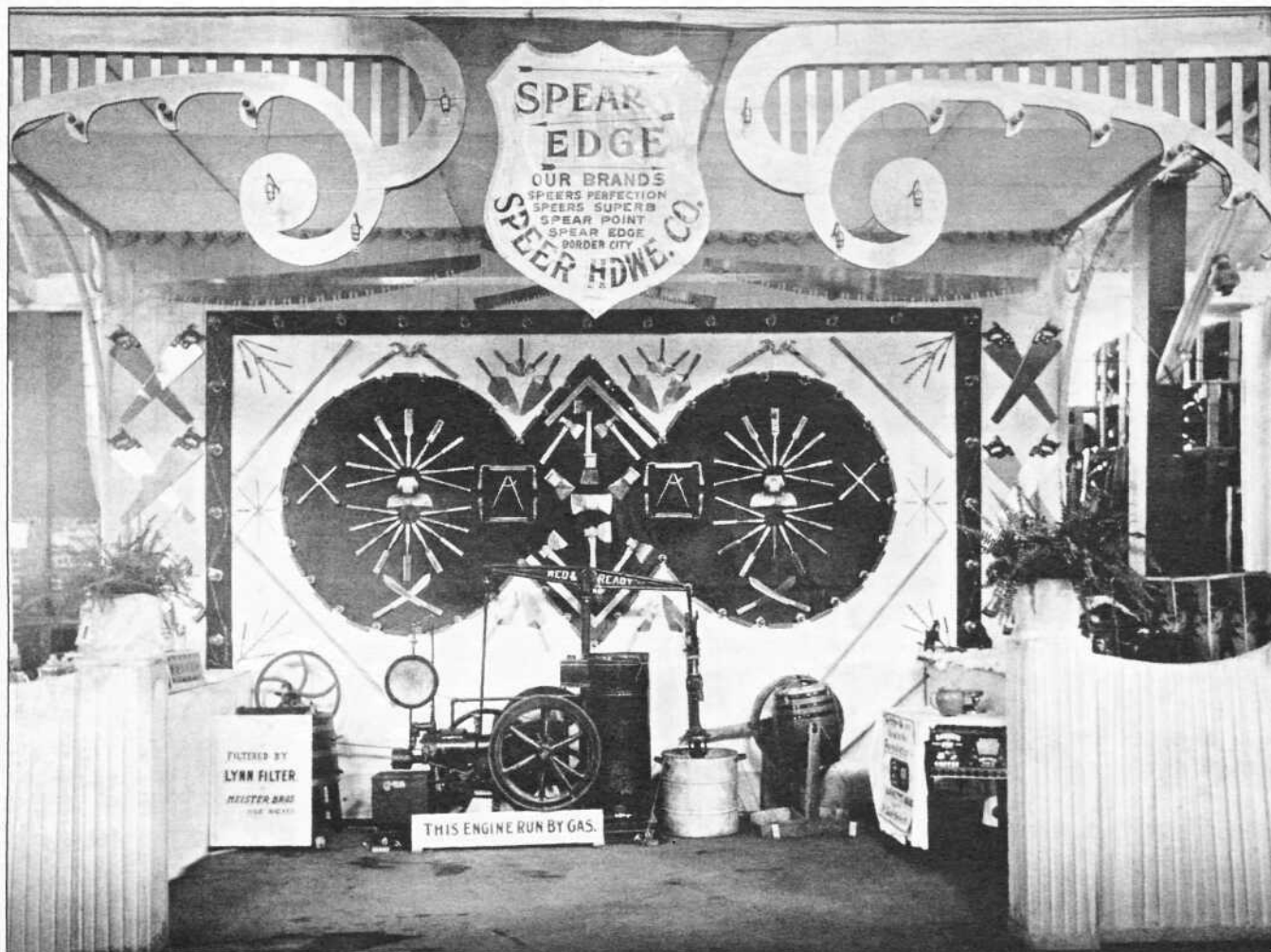
In 1934 Dr. Mordecai Ham went to North Carolina to preach and a teenager by the name of Billy Graham came into the tabernacle and was saved. Over 8,000 men entered the ministry under Dr. Ham's influence. E. P. Allredge once said of Ham, "Records show that over 325,000 were baptized into Southern Baptist churches from the Ham meetings between 1902 and 1940."

Rev. Charles E. Smith, Jr.

Rev. Charles E. Smith, Jr. is an ordained Free Will Baptist minister. He enjoys reading religious biographies and more history of revivals.

A History of Speer Hardware Company

by Melanie Speer Wiggins



In 1887 Fort Smith, Arkansas, a bustling town of slightly over three thousand, appeared to Dave Speer to be an ideal spot to set up a retail hardware business. The federal garrison on the Arkansas River in the 1840s had become an important supply depot for all government forts and military operations in Indian Territory and points west; and after the energetic Judge Isaac Parker came to town in 1875, the population increased, as did commerce.

With its convenient location on a major river, Fort Smith offered businesses the advantage of shipping by steamboat and flatboat to areas in the West that were being newly settled.

Railroad construction was progressing throughout the country by 1887, and that year Jay Gould, railroad magnate, arrived in town to inspect the Little Rock & Fort Smith Railroad, part of his system. Word spread that he was looking at Fort

Smith with the idea of making it a manufacturing center, and it is possible that Dave Speer, of Princeton, Missouri, read of Gould's plans, for in 1887 Speer moved his family to the Arkansas community.¹

Dave Speer brought with him his nephew, Clifford E. Speer, and the two of them set up a retail hardware store at 101-103 North 2nd Street at the corner of "A" Street, with Dave as president and Clifford as vice president and manager. Their trademark showed an axe head with the words "Spear Edge: Manufactured for Speer Hardware Company, Fort Smith, Ark."

Within the two-story, 6,000-square-foot space they stocked such items as wagon yokes and other wagon equipment, plows and plow points, logging bits, valves, grate baskets, coal heaters and coal stoves.²

An ornate display of the modern appliances available at Speer Hardware. Note the tools and flatware arranged on the back wall.

After about five years Dave and his nephew decided that they should switch to the wholesale end of the business, and in 1896 they built the four-story building at 206-208-210 Garrison Avenue (then a wide dirt street), next to Williams-Echols Dry Goods Company. Large white lettering on the upper facade of the edifice read, "1896" and below it: "Speer Hardware Co." Demand for hardware items was steadily increasing, with many settlers heading to Oklahoma and westward; and in 1893 the Speers managed to incorporate with \$60,000 paid up capital.³

Shortly after incorporating, Dave Speer rented three warehouses: one at 113 Rogers Avenue, another at 105 North 2nd, and a third at 310 South 3rd Street. An enormous amount of space would have been necessary to store the bulky cast iron stoves, big wagons, plows, tools, and everything necessary to set up a wilderness home and farm. A catalog cover dated 1903 proclaimed that the store carried "cutlery, guns, sporting goods, house furnishing goods, tinware, enameled ware, stoves, steam fittings, heavy hardware, etc., etc."

To reach retail clients in neighboring states, salesmen boarded local trains, then rented buggies at the railheads, and spent several weeks on the road visiting and taking orders at general stores and blacksmith shops. Cliff Speer, then vice president, was the moving force behind the establishment of the Midland Valley Railroad Company, which ran track from Fort Smith to Oklahoma City and established town sites like Spiro and Kinta every few miles along the way.

Thinking that the future of Fort Smith would continue to be bright, Dave Speer purchased land on Rogers Avenue in 1898. He chose a lot at 205 Rogers, across the street from the historic courthouse and jail and just behind his building on Garrison.

Land description in the deed, signed by President William McKinley on Dec. 17, 1898, read: "The lots D and E in Block 507 within the Old Fort Smith Military Reservation in the City of Fort Smith, Arkansas."⁴

By 1910, the Speers had built on their new property a six-story brick building with enormous white letters on the front, top, and sides saying, "Speer Hardware Co.: Wholesale Hardware." It

seems that the Speers had a penchant for oversized white lettering on dark brick buildings, and their scheme seemed to have worked well. The new store's location had the benefit of being close to the Arkansas River and the railroad station. A rail line ran behind the store, which meant freight could be delivered to the dock at the back of Speer Hardware.

Until 1917 Dave Speer served as company president, and in 1918 F. B. Dunlop succeeded him, remaining throughout the First World War and until 1922.

Fred Speer, Dave Speer's son, became president in 1923 and held the position until 1951. Meanwhile, in 1951 Ralph Speer, Sr., second son of Dave Speer, took over and stayed until 1955, when his son Ralph Speer, Jr., became president.

When Ralph, Jr. retired in 1971, Arnold O'Neal, who had arrived at the store as a sales trainee in 1950, became the last president of Speer Hardware.⁵

Betty Speer Morgan, daughter of Ralph Speer, Sr., remembered that as a child she occasionally went with her mother to pick up her dad after work, as the family owned only one car.

"She would go after him at five o'clock, but Daddy was seldom ready to go, so we'd sit in his office until he got ready, and I'd sneak off and ride the tricycles around the showroom floor. There was a place in front where three men sat: they would wait on customers who came in, and behind the men were the tricycles. They had buggies there, too," she said.

At the rear of the enormous wood-floored showroom there were two open-sided freight elevators: one went from the basement up to the sixth floor; the other connected the upper levels to the sample floor and was used to bring down wagons after they had been assembled.

"I was always kind of leery of getting close to those big openings where the elevators were, and they were scary things that went up and down on ropes," Betty said. Many years later, the obsolescence of the elevators caused the company to have to relocate.

Betty recalled that during the Depression, Speer Hardware "did quite a bit in helping to develop eastern Oklahoma by giving generous terms to the merchants while they were getting started. Speer Hardware would deliver whatever they needed and not make them pay for it bing-bang."⁶



Dave Speer, Sr.

Every member of the Speer tribe who came into the company was required to start at the bottom of the ladder, including my father, Ralph Speer, Jr., who had graduated from Sewanee in 1927 with Phi Beta Kappa honors. He entered the company in September 1927 as a stock boy, and by then he had already worked part-time during high school days sweeping floors and pedaling around town on a bicycle to deliver invoices. His sister, Betty Morgan, recounts one of my father's antics while working: Ralph and his cousin Eddie Merriman, who were the same age, would at times get worn out while hauling supplies of hardware to the various floors. When one of them got sleepy, he would curl up in a hiding place on an upper level and snooze away while the other made excuses for his absence. However, they were soon discovered and the naps ceased.

On another occasion the two young men happened to be looking out the window of the sixth floor when they spotted a big tornado roaring towards them on the Arkansas River. Instead of sounding an alarm and running for safety, they stood fascinated and watched it pass by.

After spending five years "learning the ropes," Ralph became a territorial salesman in 1932 and drove many miles in his Plymouth coupe to small towns in Arkansas to sell hardware. At the old Winslow summer resort near Fayetteville he met my mother, Melanie Holt from Galveston, Texas, and married her in 1933 at the lodge on the mountain. In 1946 he became assistant to the president, Fred Speer, and president in 1955.

When Ralph, Jr. had spent a few years heading the company, he initiated a program to help his retail customers remodel and modernize their stores, "to take them out of the dark ages," said Arnold O'Neal. Speer helped 100 retailers to remove the old tall, narrow, dimly lit aisles and install bright lights and pegboard displays. For this endeavor he was named "Hardware Merchandiser of the Year" in 1968 by *Hardware Merchandiser* magazine.⁷

In the early 1940s when I was a child, I remember going down to Speer Hardware on Sundays with Dad, and while he attended to some

business, my sister Betsy and I would jump onto gleaming new tricycles and race all around the showroom. We followed the wide path where customers could walk and look at the various

tractors, bicycles, stoves, refrigerators, fishing rods, guns, and many other items. We also took great glee in riding the freight elevator up and down, although it was somewhat frightening with its open sides and loud creaking noises. For us, Speer Hardware was a fascinating and mysterious place. (When my Aunt Betty and I discovered that we best remembered the tricycles and elevators in the store, we died laughing.)

Sadly, time took its toll on the ancient Otis elevators, and "by the early 1950s they were obsolete," explained Arnold O'Neal. "It was hard to get parts, and we even had to get some things made, like bearings and so on." Finally it became impossible to maintain the rickety lifts, and it was time to relocate the store. In 1966 Ralph, Jr. purchased the Williams Hardware Company at 320 Rogers Avenue, and during the next year he moved all the offices there, keeping the old Speer building for warehouse space. Again, the oversized white letters appeared on the front of the former Williams location announcing "Speer Hardware Co."

The federal government announced in 1969 that they wanted to purchase (under threat of condemnation) the obsolete Speer building at 205 Rogers, and arrangements were made for a sale that year. "By using the condemnation method," said Arnold O'Neal, "we could accept the money without paying taxes on it, because the building was completely depreciated out. We were able to take the money we received from the federal government and put it into the new building out on 6th Street." Since plans had been made to convert the original Speer building property into part of the Fort Smith National Historic Site, the government in 1980 tore down the seventy-year-old structure. When the time came for the actual tearing down, the demolition company had to expend a great deal of effort getting the heavily constructed edifice to fall. During the process they removed many twelve-by-sixteen solid oak beams, and a restaurant developer purchased them to be used in California eateries.



Fred Speer



Ralph Speer, Sr.

After Speer Hardware disappeared from Rogers Avenue, a team of archaeologists from Pea Ridge National Park Service began to excavate the basement area, thinking that this section might have been part of the second original fort foundation. However, after they studied tool marks on the stone and made chemical analyses of the mortar, they concluded that the Speer building had been constructed near the second fort but not on it. A photo in the Southwest Times Record showed a goggled and helmeted worker tapping on the old stone wall, with a sign behind him saying "13 Oliver." Those cryptic words turned out to have been part of a merchandise label for Number 13 Oliver (brand) plow points, which had been stored in the hardware company basement for decades.⁸

After moving over to the former Williams Hardware building in 1967 and selling their Rogers place to the Federal Government in 1969, Speer Hardware officers realized that they needed a newer and larger facility. At North 6th Street near the Arkansas River they built a new place and moved into it in 1971. Readers might like to know that no huge white letters saying "Speer Hardware" were painted on the side of the building. That same year Ralph Speer, Jr. retired, and Arnold O'Neal then took over as president and CEO.⁹

As for the outdated 1907 Williams building, Speer sold it to the Old Fort Museum for \$175,000 on April 2, 1978. In a news photo Arnold O'Neal is shown handing the keys to Nancy Cloninger, with Edell Wortz looking on, and the building in the background. With this purchase the museum board released its one-hundred-year lease on the historic commissary building (on the grounds of the Fort Smith National Historic Site) and began preparations to move to their new quarters. Since 1978 the museum has remained in place, with several expansions to upper floors.¹⁰

"When we bought the Williams building," recalled Arnold O'Neal, "we got a Remington Arms display board that had all the shells and bullets they ever made. They were the Remington distributors." Speer Hardware had been the Winchester

distributor and already owned a big display board of a similar type. Arnold wrote to Winchester and Remington and asked them for an appraisal of the historic boards, and the answer came back that their value would be very high, explaining that the boards were examples of maybe one or two of the original displays that they knew of. "The Winchester board had things like four-gauge shotgun shells," said O'Neal. My mother, Melanie Speer, wanted the two displays for the museum's collection (she served on the Museum Board) and, of course, she soon obtained them.

During the 1970s business methods were drastically changing, with wholesale companies being forced out of business by discount stores that bought directly from factories. It was no surprise when American Hardware Company of Butler, Pennsylvania, bought Speer Hardware in 1986; however they let the name remain as "Speer Division," and they allowed my father to occupy a large private office in the North 6th Street building in honor of his many years with the company. American Hardware then merged with True Value Hardware, and in 1996 Speer Hardware ceased to exist.¹¹

From 1887 to 1996 the company had survived and thrived 109 years, keeping pace with the burgeoning of Fort Smith and the expansion of the great West. The Rogers Avenue site, purchased in 1898 from the Federal Government, finally reverted to its original national park status, and today green grass covers the spot where Speer Hardware once stood.



Ralph Speer, Jr.



Arnold O'Neal

¹ Edwin P. Hicks, *The Fort Smith Story*, 53.

² Collection, Arnold O'Neal; Interview by telephone with Arnold O'Neal, March 6, 2004; "Speer Firm Expands Over Years," Southwest Times Record, Oct. 14, 1962.

³ Fort Smith City Directory, 1890; O'Neal Interview; Stan Kujawa, Garrison Avenue, Fort Smith, Arkansas, 62.

⁴ Previous information from O'Neal Collection.

⁵ O'Neal interview.

⁶ Interview with Betty Speer Morgan, Conway, Arkansas, November 3, 2003.

⁷ "Speer steps down as firm head," Southwest Times Record, January 27, 1972.

⁸ "Mortar may be from second fort," Southwest Times Record, n.d.

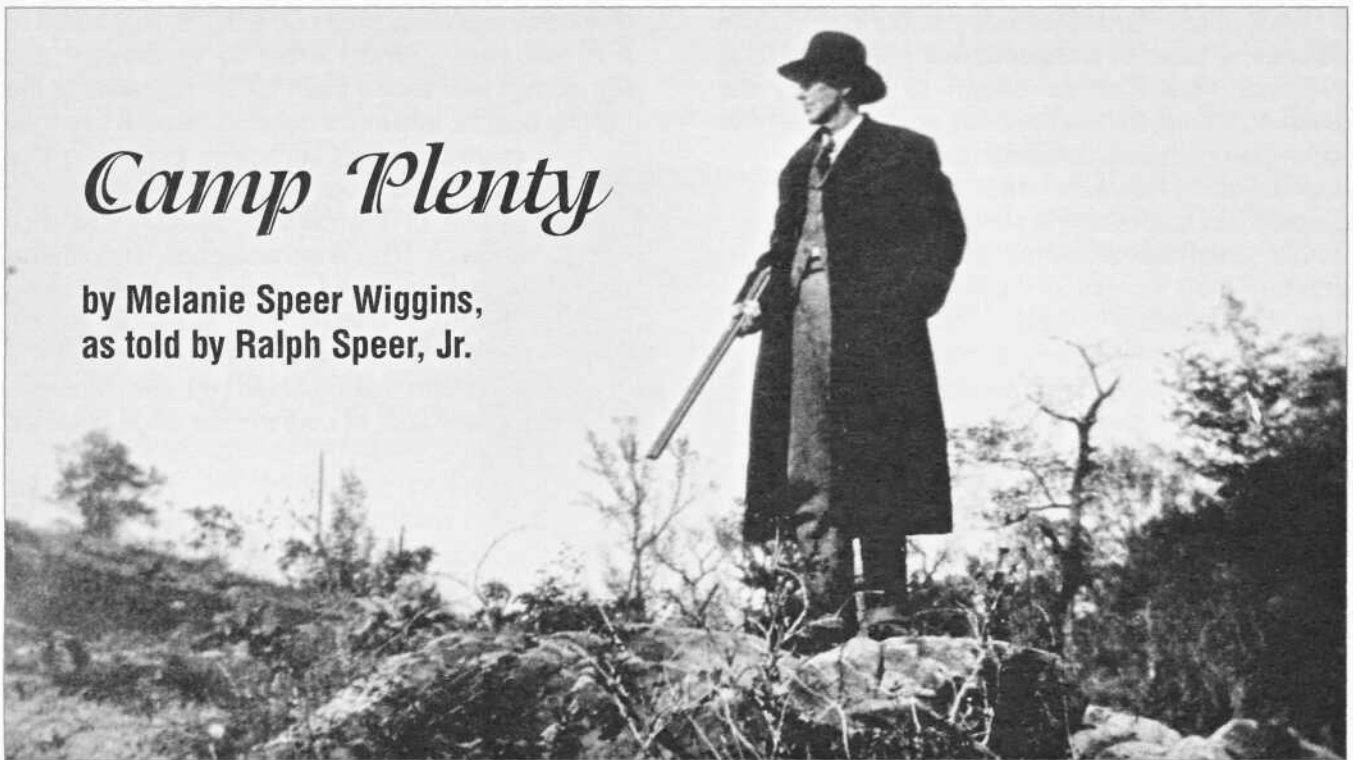
⁹ "Speer Hardware changing hands," Southwest Times Record, June 17, 1986.

¹⁰ "Old Fort Museum to move to new home," Southwest Times Record, n.d.

¹¹ O'Neal Interview.

Camp Plenty

by Melanie Speer Wiggins,
as told by Ralph Speer, Jr.



Dave and Cliff Speer had arrived in Fort Smith in 1887 and established Speer Hardware Company. In 1903 they instituted hunting and fishing trips in the wilds of Oklahoma for company officers and employees. Twice yearly, once in the spring and once in the fall, the party collected great piles of equipment and set out to enjoy themselves (away from wives) for almost two glorious weeks.

To reach their destination, the crew boarded a train at the Frisco Railroad station, headed south to Antlers, Oklahoma, and got off somewhere north of Broken Bow in the Kiamichi Mountains.

When the train stopped, all the equipment was removed from the baggage car and loaded onto a mule-drawn wagon that had arrived to meet them. "Then they'd drive about four or five miles on a small dirt road back to the Kiamichi River, to the camp site," explained Ralph Speer, Jr., "and they'd stay ten days to two weeks. They couldn't go just for overnight. A couple of the photos show the helpers setting up the camp."

Ralph recalled that the group took along supplies

for two weeks: pancake and biscuit flour, plenty of butter and molasses, eggs, bacon, and staples like potatoes. There was no need to carry meat, as the game and fish were abundant. The cooks made bread and biscuits every day. Sometimes the campers landed catfish weighing forty pounds. "They lived off the land pretty good down there."



"They had good camping equipment, including a big cook tent and a tent that they slept in. I think there were eight men there at one time, and they had springs and mattresses that they put

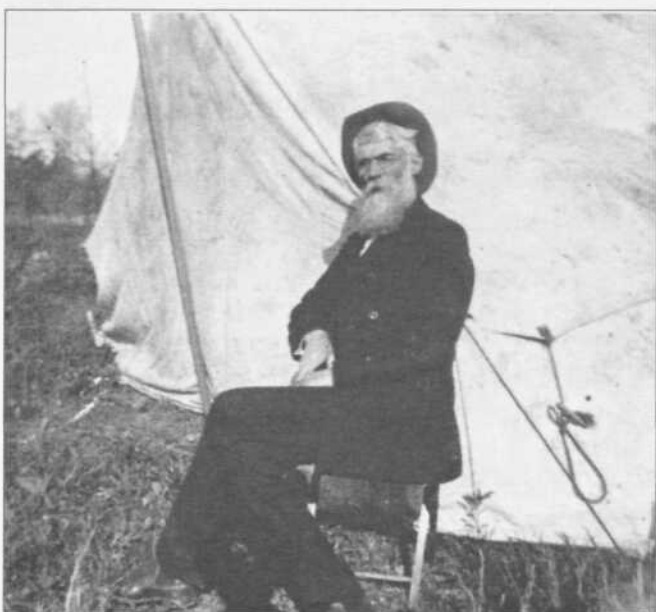
on the ground. They slept comfortably." In the cook tent they had a wood burning stove and a dining table with chairs; but sometimes in fair weather the men ate outdoors. The black employee (thought to have been called "Van") prepared all the meals and served as camp handyman as well. One of the photos shows Van shaving a camper.

"They went to Camp Plenty in the spring and the fall. The spring trip was the time for turkey hunting—around the first of April, when the turkeys start gobbling. In the fall, they hunted deer and other things. They fished in both seasons," Ralph recalled.



Hunting attire varied. Ralph Speer, Sr. (opposite page) often wore a tie. The poker players, (inset, opposite page) are in shirtsleeves but wore vests and the group in front of their tent (above, left) shows the range of attire favored for camp. The Kiamichi River camp offered abundant fish and game. Dave Speer, (above, at left) and a companion with catfish and a wild turkey.

A gentleman named Middleton (left) was a welcome guest because he was an excellent outdoorsman. Below, left, R.E. Vick with a turkey and right, Ralph Speer, Sr. with a hunting dog and duck decoy.



Dave Speer, founder of the company, spent most of his time around the camp, when he wasn't fishing. He usually wore a bowtie, suspenders, and small hat. Hunting attire varied considerably, all the way from business suits to rugged pants, vests, jackets, and a hat. Camouflage clothing was unknown in those days. No one ever smiled in the photographs, giving the impression that this camping was a serious business.

"Playing cards was something they enjoyed—they played poker. They also kept themselves shaved and stayed in pretty good shape. One of the pictures shows the stove with a turkey in a pan, ready to be baked (the stove had an oven) and the big old coffee boiler."

Looking at a shot of his father, Ralph exclaimed, "Oh, Lordy. There's Dad

with what looks like two or three turkeys hanging off his back. You could kill all you wanted. They had turkey callers that consisted of a piece of slate that they scratched with a stick that was poked through a corn cob."

"One time Dad got into a bunch of turkeys and killed six at one time." The story went that Ralph, Sr. spotted a group of the wild birds in a ravine — all lined up so that it looked like one bird. He blasted off a shot, and the first turkey toppled over dead. When he walked closer, he discovered that there were five more turkeys flopping around, making a total kill of six.

The elder Ralph Speer had become a local baseball player and boxer of note, and in two of the pictures he shows off his muscled form. As one of the better hitters who whacked many home runs, he would walk up to bat in a blue and white uniform (he had bright red hair), and the crowd would yell, "Go, Old Glory."

Aside from Speer Hardware Company employees, occasional friends would accompany the group. One of the photographs shows a gentleman with long white beard named Middleton. "He was a favorite guest because he was an excellent outdoorsman."

"The camp was there in the Kiamichi Mountains, on the Kiamichi River, and the river had good, clean, sparkling clear water, fit to drink," explained Ralph. "It provided good fishing, and there was lots of game around. I suppose it was just mountain land; maybe it belonged to the government, but it was open land without any fencing around it. It was just there, like God made it."

Ralph, Jr. had the privilege of going to Camp Plenty only once as a youth. The camping trips originated in 1903 and continued until around 1915, or the start of World War I, and Ralph, who was born in 1905, was invited to go along when he was seven or eight years old.

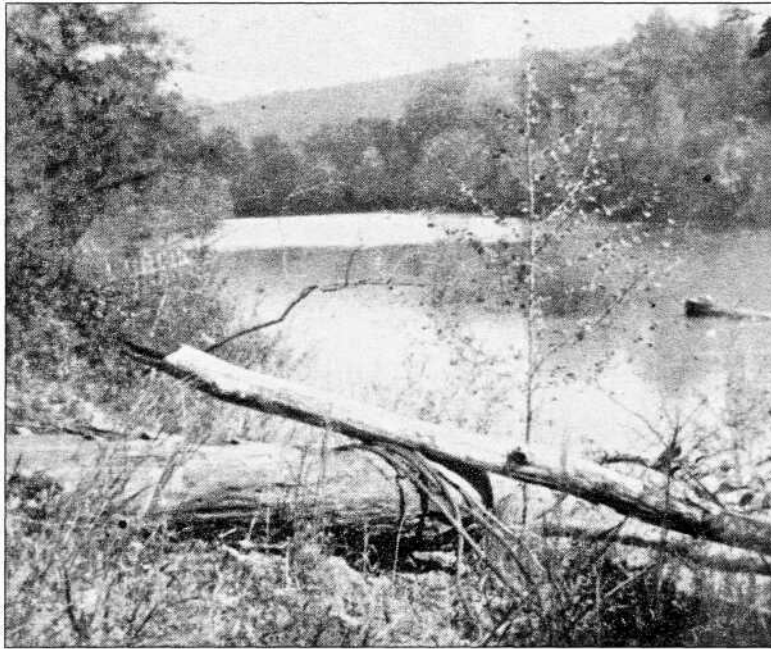
"We got off the train late in the afternoon, and it was almost dark. The wagon that was there to meet us

couldn't make it up the first hill because the mules kept slipping on the muddy road, so we had to spend the night." They pitched a tent beside the railroad track, and young Speer settled in for a welcome rest. "I had just got snuggled down and was sleeping pretty well, when here came a big old freight train, snorting and blowing, and scared me to death."

Other than the train episode, Ralph did not remember much about the camping experience, except that he ate many large meals and got to go fishing for a couple of days. "They put me on a train and sent me back home."

"Very few people could afford to go for a two-week hunting and fishing trip on their own. For Speer Hardware, it didn't cost a lot of money in those days because they had plenty of equipment. You could hire that cook for a dollar a day, and you got all you could eat and a place to sleep. Money went a long way, and of course no one had much money, either," Ralph said.

Finally the safari-like expeditions ended. The original Speer officers were getting old, World War I was looming, and eastern Oklahoma was becoming more populated.





Ralph Speer, Sr., displays his athletic physique. He was a popular baseball player and "a boxer of note."

"They also kept themselves shaved and stayed in pretty good shape," recalled Ralph Speer, Jr.



All photos, courtesy of the Speer family.



As proprietors of Fort Smith's best-stocked hardware store, the Speers provided their hunting camp with many a civilized comfort, from iron cookstoves to bedsprings and mattresses in the tents. The gear was hauled by train and wagon to the wilderness.



In this undated photo taken some time between 1903 and 1915, Ralph Speer, Sr. is top, left. Beside him is Nate Merriman. On the second row, right, is Dave Speer, and center, bottom, Fred Speer.

Melanie Speer Wiggins, daughter of Ralph Speer, Jr. and Melanie Holt Speer, was born and raised in Fort Smith. She attended Newcomb College for two years and graduated from Hollins College, Virginia, with a BA Degree. Currently residing in League City, Texas, she is a member of the Galveston County Historical Commission and has written three books: **They Made Their Own Law: Stories of Bolivar Peninsula**; **Torpedoes in the Gulf: Galveston and the U-Boats 1942-1943**; and **U-Boat Adventures: Firsthand Accounts from World War II**.

The Man from Rich Mountain

by Maula Jalaliddin

William Simpson stood six feet, four inches tall, with broad shoulders, large hands and large feet to carry his more than two-hundred-pound frame. His deep-beaded eyes, thin lips, and very dark complexion contrasted dramatically with his gold-lined teeth. Sometimes when I picture him in my mind, I can still see the way his teeth glistened in the sunlight when he smiled. You could see a line of gold sparkling across his face as if you were looking at stars on the Milky Way. This is how I remember my dad.

He told me he never went to school. All that he knew was taught to him by a man called Maleetai who raised Dad on Rich Mountain. We never knew who Maleetai was, nor did Dad ever tell us whether he was a black or white man. I always assumed he was a white man. Dad's parents were from Logan County, Arkansas, where he was born April 4, 1871. They were children of slaves, but he never knew his grandparents. He could always see his family but he spent most of his first twenty-one years with Maleetai, growing up learning about farming; raising cattle, chickens, hogs — well, anything that lived on a farm. Maleetai taught him about machinery, "ciphering" and money matters: all that he needed to know to run a farming business. Maleetai said, "You won't find these things in your books." What he really meant was that the black school could not teach Dad the things he was teaching him. The books didn't have the things in them for the black children that were in the books for white children.

When he was growing up, little boys wore knickerbockers and pullover shirts. They mostly wore hides wrapped around their feet. Dad said he watched the cobbler make his first pair of shoes. His first suit was even custom-made by a tailor. He told me that little girls wore long skirts or dresses, with long sleeves. With a serious look on his face, he'd sometimes tell the stories of old. He said, "You know, I never got a chance to see any girls' arms or legs until after I was married." By the time he turned twenty-one, he had ventured out looking around at the ladies in the valley, Greasy Valley, where he met his first wife, Minnie Vaughns. When he met her, he was considered a rich, young man and because of that it was not hard to convince her to marry him. After getting the marriage license, Dad purchased land for a farm. There was already a house on one



particular plot of land, so he moved there from Rich Mountain with a team of mules, one rooster, nine hens, a milk cow, one steer, two gilts, one boar, and quite a bit of money still left in his pocket.

During the first year they were married, he had to hire extra farm hands to help with the cotton and corn. He raised lots of vegetables, which his wife canned and put away from one year to the next. To this union there were eleven children born. Soon after the last child was born, Dad and Minnie separated and divorced. About this time he met his second wife-to-be, Myrtle Thomas, my mother. He said he knew she was too young for him; she was only 15 or 16 years old, and he was 54. He thought just maybe he could "raise" him a wife. He still had money, gold pieces and good clothes, so he moved to LeFlore County in Oklahoma and married my mother. To this union, three children were born: two girls and a boy; I am the oldest of the three. Dad and Mom separated and divorced after their last child was born, and the court gave Dad custody of all

three of us. From this point on we grew up with Dad. I remember how deeply I admired Dad; and always thought he could do anything. I never remembered him going to bed the first few years of my life. He was always up early milking the cows and feeding the stock. He taught us to work hard, and always assigned some kind of work to us.

Usually on Saturday morning, Dad would flag down the train and go to Fort Smith and stay all day. We would walk to the train stop with him. How proud I was of my Dad when he stepped in the middle of the tracks, lifted his big wide brim hat from his head and, with his long arms outstretched, started waving it back and forth while standing between the tracks until the conductor blew the train whistle. He would keep waving until the trainman blew one long whistle then two short ones (which meant that he understood to pick Dad up.) We would all stand back and watch as the conductor lowered the steps for boarding. Dad would step on and wave goodbye. Although it was a long walk back home, we looked forward to the late afternoon because he would be coming home when the train returned.

On Sunday, we always came home from church service to a big meal of fried chicken and gravy or baked chicken and dressing with all of the trimmings. In preparation for Sunday chicken dinner, we cooped up the chickens for a week. (Dad said this cleaned them out.) We talked about hard times during the Great Depression but in spite of all the hardships, life was good.

In those days we amused ourselves by creating plenty of our own entertainment. We played all kinds of games: "Mama peg"¹, hopscotch, jump rope, horseshoe pitching, and marbles. We also had playhouses. Dad did not allow us to play cards, checkers or dominoes. These were big sins to Dad. On warm weather nights when the moon was shining bright, Dad often played the fiddle until we gave out dancing. Our family, including Dad's first family, loved music.

Before we were old enough to work in the fields, we played in our playhouse and ate. Dad always left enough food for us while he was away at work. I recall how he cooked every morning before he went off to work. He made the best "hoecake" bread to eat with fried ham or shoulder, or sometimes with a strip of lean and a strip of fat bacon, potatoes, eggs, butter, and sugar syrup or sorghum molasses. He could bake bread like a pro, and we always had good food.

Can you imagine in one room, three children sleeping in the same bed, with their Mom and Dad

in another bed? How about, waking up in the morning to find snow on the windowsill inside of the house or even sometimes on the bed? Yet we were so closely huddled together in our bed that we all kept warm. Think about small children walking three miles to catch the school bus. I remember the first high snow banks on the north side of our house. It was so pretty when the sun would shine on the snow. It seemed to glow like thin little lights blinking at you. With my big dishpan and long handle spoon, I would start from the top of the banks and fill my pan with snow. This would make snow ice cream with a little cream, sweet milk, sugar and vanilla.

Dad managed to keep us in school and keep up the house, and did a good job with our upbringing. I always thought of my Dad as a very wise person... the things he said made so much sense. Our school only lasted four months at a time because of the cotton harvest. School closed at cotton chopping time and all children who were old enough had to work. We for sure did because Dad did not believe in sharecropping. He always rented his land, and what he made from it was his. When cotton-picking time came, we went to school most times. The student body of our school was very small. Although most of the children didn't come to school regularly, they were still smart.

I can still remember some of Dad's do's and don'ts. They went something like this:

1. When you see the chickens, horses and cows coming to the barnyard, don't be a fool and stay out there. You come to the house; a storm is coming. (Especially when you are out in the field working the cotton.)

2. When you got your hand in a lion's mouth, don't start pulling, hitting and acting crazy. You work easy with that fellow until he lets you go. Then run fast and don't look back.

3. When you plant seed, plant three. One might die, the bug might get one, and then there is one left for you.

4. When looking for a husband, consider the parable of shopping for a dress. Don't buy the first one you see; shop around. Sometimes the first one you see will suit you best. Go back and get it.

5. Go to school and be educated.

6. Never sharecrop with the white man. Rent or buy his land and do your own farming.

7. Two men can roll a log better than one, but be careful in money matters (speaking of our family).

Dad knew a lot about "doctoring." His "medicine cabinet" included such ingredients as mullein, catnip, red onions, red peppers, sage, clover, sulfa, coal oil, sassafras and even hog hooves.

In the spring and summer, Dad would spend a lot of time in the pastures and woods gathering herbs. He used various herbs and had an extensive knowledge of which ones were good for which ailments. Mullein was used to relieve the swelling from the body. He would steep the mullein then put the mullein-soaked hot packs on the swelling. It always worked. If we stepped on a nail, Dad would clean it out with coal oil. For colds, he administered nine drops of turpentine on a teaspoon of sugar. He kept us from catching many childhood diseases, such as whooping cough and measles, by burning sulfa in little lids. However, if we did get any of the diseases, he would mix sulfa and lard and rub our infected skin with it. He would also give us red onion tea. Once in the spring every one had to take, as he called it, "a round of Callama," a laxative. Because of Dad's knowledge of home remedies, visits to the doctor were rare.

One of my fondest early childhood recollections is that of a big store called the Peno Mercantile where all of the people bought their food, clothing and whatever else they needed. I remember walking to the mercantile and buying "Uncle Sam kisses" when I was a little girl. I could buy ten pieces of candy for one penny. I also recollect the use of "bean checks," instead of cash. Bean checks were a form of paper money paid to workers by the landowners so that the workers could only spend their earnings right there on the farm at the store run by the landowners. In Peno, where we grew up, there were two farms, the Gearen farm and the one we lived on, the Hamilton farm.

Keep in mind, when we were growing up, Dad was almost of retirement age, yet he did not shy from constant hard work. There was a season for everything on the farm. In the wintertime, the men on the farm shelled corn for feed and planting in the spring. Dad had twenty acres on one plot and ten on the other. He would plow the land and have it ready for crop planting when the weather was right. He always planted according to the Farmers Almanac. In addition to the crop, he planted big vegetable gardens for our family. For meat, eggs and dairy products we had hogs, chickens and, usually, two cows. In the early spring I could hardly wait until it was time to go out with Irene, Aunt Minnie or, sometimes, my mother and whoever wanted to pick wild turnips, mustard greens and wild onions. We had to be very careful not to pick the crows foot which looks very much like wild onions but is poisonous. These greens were so good with cornbread and baked sweet potatoes, fresh buttermilk and butter. Also, in the late spring, we

would listen closely to hear the first turtledove crow. Oh, boy, that meant that we could go barefoot!

Dad had one small area for his sugar cane for our molasses. He would plow up the potatoes, pull up turnips, hang onions, shell peas and beans, and take corn to Fort Smith to a mill to be ground into corn meal. The only things I can remember buying were staples like flour, salt, sugar, black pepper, baking powder and soda.

For storage of our root crops we dug a keel to keep them cool. Let me tell you how we did the keel. We dug a pretty good-sized hole and lay down a few sheets of tin into the hole. We covered the tin with straw and placed turnips on one end and potatoes on the other end. Another layer of straw then covered the turnips and potatoes. A layer of tin, the straw, and finally, all of the previous layers were covered by a hill of dirt. This kept the turnips and potatoes fresh from one season to the next. He always put red pepper in the dried peas, beans and corn meal to keep bugs like weevils out. Dad also canned vegetables of all kinds. Dad used the pressure cooker until my sister accidentally opened it while it was still under pressure and was badly scalded by the escaping steam. After that, Dad went back to his old method of boiling.

Another time I cherished was hog-killing time. This meant a lot of men would come to help. Dad would get up before daybreak and start a fire under a big barrel propped on large rocks. It took the water a long time to get boiling hot. Soon after sun up everyone started getting up. The women arrived with their hair tied up and wore long dresses and aprons with big pockets and big heavy shawls around their shoulders. They would have their dishpans and buckets ready. They called Daddy the "sharp shooter," because he could aim and hit the hog right between the eyes. After shooting the hog, Dad would cut its throat and let it bleed. The men would then drag it over to the barrel and push it up and down in the hot water. After scalding the hog, they would lay it on a large piece of tin and scrape off all of the hair. They would then cut small slits in front of the hamstrings on the back of the hog's legs to serve as convenient "holds" for hanging the carcass. A big heavy stick was slipped through the holds and all of the men would hang the hog on the strong rafters they had made. The hog was then gutted over a big tub that was used to catch everything.

Uncle Frank always wore an apron, as he was the designated cook. He would cut the liver away from the heart, kidneys, and "melts".² Everything was then handed over to the ladies. They first

unraveled the "chittlins" and cleaned them by soaking them in a big crock of salty water. The men would then take the hog down and cut it up into hams, bacon and back bones. The head was set aside, along with the feet and ears. The head was used for hogshead cheese. Everyone loved pig feet and tails. The fat was cut up in little chunks and then rendered for lard. The hooves were saved for hog hoof tea. Some of the meat was used to make sausages.

Uncle Frank had a big cast iron skillet balanced on rocks with a fire ready to cook the liver. But, first, he cooked his biscuits baking them inside the lid-covered skillet with hot embers sprinkled on the lid. They were rather small and they were called "catheads." After he fried the liver, Uncle Frank made a big skillet of gravy. Although there were precious small pieces of liver to go around, there was always plenty of gravy. I remember standing around until I could get a sandwich.

It was nothing for the men to kill three or four hogs on the first day. On the second day, the women would make a big fire around the big black kettle to render the fat. They took turns standing and stirring. When the pork rinds began floating to the top, they were called "crackling." These crackling were carefully dipped out and placed in flour sacks to drain out every drop of lard. The lard was then ladled into five-gallon cans to be used until the next hog killing time. The hair from the hog was used to stuff "croaker" (gunny sacks) for sitting pillows. Daddy would put together the lights³ in a big pot with chopped onions, red peppers, salt, and a little sage and slowly cook them all day on the back of the stove. When they finished cooking, it was a tasty layer of gravy formed just above the lights. Dad would make a big pan of corn bread. There was also fresh churned buttermilk and butter.

Dad had a recipe for making the best-tasting sausage using red pepper, salt, sage and a secret liquid ingredient that he poured from a bottle. Some of the sausage was canned, and some was crammed into little salt bags. Everything in those days came in cloth bags: sugar, salt, flour, meal and feed for the hogs and cows. These sacks, or bags, were of pretty prints. After enough of them were saved up, Mama would use them to make nice dresses for Emma and me.

When Dad eventually met and married his third wife, Irene Wilson, we were pleased as we now had someone to stay with us while Dad was away at work. During the time of the Great Depression, he was working for the WPA. He would leave before daybreak every morning and return home after dark

each night. Often we were afraid to be alone. After two or three years, Dad starting growing truck patches. Dad grew large quantities of peanuts, popcorn, onions, sweet potatoes and Irish potatoes. I especially enjoyed shaking the dirt from the peanuts. I remember many times Dad would go hunting. He made trap boxes to catch skunks, opossums and squirrels. On the other hand, he didn't trap rabbits. Most times he would shoot the rabbits. He would kill them, stretch the hides and nail them to a board to dry. After they were dried out he would take them to Fort Smith to sell.

About twenty years before Dad passed away, he began to lose his eyesight and to slow down considerably, but he was never bedridden. He was blessed with a good mind, even at 91 years of age. About two weeks before Dad passed away, I recall coming home one morning from work, and his telling me, "The red light has got me, and I got to stop." He went on, "When a clock finally winds down it's tick-tock-tick-tock, then it stops."

Dad would have been proud of the Simpson family today. He always wanted the children to be educated, and we have quite a few who are now. Several of Dad's descendants are teachers, nurses, and some are in college furthering their education. On February 14, 1962, Dad passed away with many of his loved ones from Paris in attendance. He and two of his wives are buried in Oak Cemetery in Fort Smith. Dad left his mark, his legacy, and his love. Long live the family of William Simpson: a husband, father, grandfather, uncle, cousin, neighbor and a friend to all that knew him.

1 This game was played with a pocketknife and was also called mumbley peg.

2 The spleen.

3 The heart, kidney and melts were often referred to as the "lights."



Maula Jalaliddin, also known as Benella Simpson, was born in Peno, Oklahoma, October 7, 1925. She was in the first licensed practical nursing nursing class for black women in Fort Smith, graduating in 1941. She worked for many years at Twin City Hospital and Crawford County Hospital. In 1975, she embraced Islam. Maula Jalaliddin died May 27, 2004, in Fort Smith.

The Veins are Thick! Coal Mining in Sebastian County *in the 1880s-1940s*

By Dave Ross

In August of 1867, the Arkansas Gazette printed a report from J. W. Washbourne, a geologist. It said, in part, "...the whole of Sebastian County is underlain by coal. The thickness of seams varies from 16 inches to 4 feet, growing thicker as you go deeper. The coal is everywhere, easy of access...they are of the greatest value...from Fort Smith out to the "May place" about 4 miles south, on the verge of the Massard Prairie, we noticed many coal shales along the road. In and around Jenny Lind are numerous coal banks, about 6 feet below the surface, but easily quarried."

At the time the entire nation depended on coal. It powered industries, heated houses, and ran railroads. And as it turned out, the "easily quarried coal" lay just under the ground from near McAlester in Indian Territory all the way to Clarksville in west-central Arkansas. South Sebastian County was near the center of the vast deposit!

But for unknown reasons, the eventual coal boom was surprisingly slow in coming. Perhaps it was the devastation and near-poverty that had been left on the county by the Civil War and Reconstruction. Maybe reports of the vast coal deposits were not taken seriously. Mostly likely it was the absence of track and railroad cars necessary to haul out the heavy loads of coal. In any event, it would be nearly two decades before widespread mining began in the area.

The Little Rock-Fort Smith Railroad was completed to Sebastian County in 1876, and seven years later the St. Louis and San Francisco line was completed to Fort Smith. Others quickly followed, linking Fort Smith to the rest of the nation by rail. Soon after, strip-mining began here and there in the south part of the county. Even then, it took years for the mining of coal from the area to become a commercial success.

But as word of the discovery gradually spread, soon spur rail lines were being laid directly to the digging. In Hackett City, one of the first true deep mines in the county began operation in 1882 with the arrival of the Midland Valley Railroad, and the town mushroomed. The M-T Coal Company laid out the future town of

Huntington in 1887, and opened a huge mine within a year. The future town of Mansfield, also sitting atop the coal, was platted the same year. The West Mining Company started a large operation not far from Jenny Lind at a site they named "New Jenny Lind." Bonanza began in 1896 as a mining camp of the Central Coal and Coke Company.



Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division

In the 1890's and early 1900's, the rivalry between Sebastian and Johnson/Logan counties for the most area coal production reached a near frenzy. East of Fort Smith, both strip and shaft mines were operating in thriving towns like Spadra, Coal Hill, Alix, Denning, Hartman, Clarksville, and Ouita – not far from Russellville.

Companies in Sebastian County were opening new mines almost monthly. The Central Coal and Coke Company had mines at Hartford, Prairie Creek, Bonanza and Huntington. Other mines were running in communities like Midland, Excelsior and Jenny Lind. Some towns had several mines in operation at the same time. By 1912, the Choctaw and Midland Valley Railroad served more than 15 mines and reportedly had near 1,800 coal cars alone.

Behind the miners, many of them immigrants – all eager to earn decent wages by descending into the dirty and dangerous darkness of the deep shafts – came their hopeful families. Following them came the merchants, storeowners, and saloonkeepers, eager to turn a profit from the influx of humanity into rough-and-tumble towns where nothing had existed before.

The following official populations of these coal towns in the 1910 Census have been thought to be far below the peak various estimates – also shown – of the days when coal was king in western Arkansas.

Bonanza	811	(1,500)
Hackett	363	(3,500)
Mansfield	816	(2,500)
Hartford	1,780	(4,000)
Midland	639	(1,200)
Huntington	1,700	(2,800)

As the Sebastian County coal-mining industry grew more competitive after the turn of the century, subtle changes were taking place. Wages and working conditions were disputed, some men were talking union, some mines tried to lure other workers, and – fortified by alcohol readily available in the boomtown saloons – miners were involved in more acts of violence against each other, as well as the general population.

Some Sebastian County miners organized to take part in a general mining strike in 1888 that hurt the coal industry. Another took place in 1894. Shortages, and the increasing refusal of the miners themselves to work long hours for low pay in horrible conditions, caused the mine owners to finally submit to the demands of the United Mine Workers by about 1903. But this in itself bred more violence in Sebastian County, because some miners were against the unions.

Perhaps it was only coincidental to the escalating violence, but after a fire destroyed the old wooden Greenwood county jail about 1890, the Quorum Court allocated \$5,000 to build a new sturdy stone four-cell, two-story jail on the south side of the square. The huge stone blocks were quarried from Backbone Mountain after holes were drilled into stone and then filled with water. During the winter, the water froze and cracked the stone into manageable size. It's reported that mental patients were once housed there when the hospital was full. The stone jail is now the Sebastian County Jail Museum.

In the sticky spring of 1914, many union miners became angered over the employment of non-union workers at the Bache-Denman Mine #4 near Midland. (Related article on following pages.)

Yet the area's coal production continued unabated into the 1920s, when more than 20 separate mines were still operating in Sebastian

County. Even more mines were still producing in nearby Johnson County, especially at Coal Hill and Spadra. Reports show that in the late 1880's, Coal Hill supposedly shipped 90 percent of Arkansas' coal for two straight years.

But as early as the late 1880's, another by-product of the same ancient forces that created the area's coal veins just below the surface was discovered. Geologists had long suspected that with the coal, there also could be pools of natural gas buried deep underground. In 1887, the Natural Gas and Power Company was organized in Fort Smith with that very thought in mind.

The next year, the company sank a nearly 14-hundred foot well near the present-day Darby Junior High School, and produced an amount large enough to light a flame. A few months later, a well twice as deep near the site of the Civil War battle on nearby Massard Prairie 25 years earlier, brought in an estimated 200 pounds of natural gas pressure. A celebration was on!

But it was premature, because no more reserves were discovered until 1901, when improved drilling technology brought in a big well near Mansfield. Within two years, the area around Mansfield was producing gas commercially, and geologists realized that Sebastian County was at the center of a vast deep pool of natural gas known as the Arkhoma Basin.

Ironically, the natural gas would spell a gradual end to the prosperity that coal production brought to rural Sebastian County by the late 1930's and early 1940's. Many of the mines were boarded up, shanties torn down, and over the years people just moved away or died. Some of the early Sebastian County towns – not all of them mining communities – are now just a cluster of small homes or sadder yet – just memories. Among them Montreal, Milltown, Auburn, Dayton, Frogtown, Beverly, Chocoville, Excelsior, Burnville, Cornish, Washburn, Slaytonville, Ursula, Jenson, and Arkola.

About the author:

Dave Ross and Gail, Iowa natives, moved to Fort Smith in 1973. Ross is a writer, broadcaster, researcher, advertising man and playwright.

Coal Mining in Northwest Arkansas

By John G. Ragsdale

Coalfields in Arkansas are located in the Arkansas River Valley between the western border of the state and Russellville. The area that contains these fields is only about thirty-three miles wide and sixty miles long. The thickness of the coal beds rarely exceeds nine feet. The fields are often small because the coal beds are lenticular and may have been folded, faulted, or eroded during or after deposition.

Arkansas Valley coals vary from low-volatile bituminous coal in the western portion of the area to semi anthracite in the eastern portion. One of the principal advantages of Arkansas coal is that it gives off little smoke when it burns. Another advantage is a low sulphur content, compared to many coals mined in the United States. Arkansas coal was first mentioned in written records in 1818; however, the first recorded mine output in the state was 220 tons in 1848. Railroad installations and extensions in the late 1800s encouraged shipping of the coal and this resulted in extensive coalmine development.

Coal may have first been mined from strip mines or open pits. As production increased, it became difficult to mine the remaining near-to-the-surface coals and underground methods were developed. One underground method was by use of slope mines, where the mining followed the slope of the natural coal bed, gathering and extracting the coal as the slope shaft continued to follow the coal bed. Steel tracks could be laid and the coal removed by coal carts pulled from the mine.

If the use of a slope mine was ineffective, another underground method was to dig a vertical shaft from

the surface to the coal bed, extract the coal from rooms out from this shaft, and then remove the coal by lifting it up the vertical shaft. All significant coal mining was by underground methods until 1918 when surface mining produced substantial amounts. Since about 1950, surface mining increased and underground mining decreased.

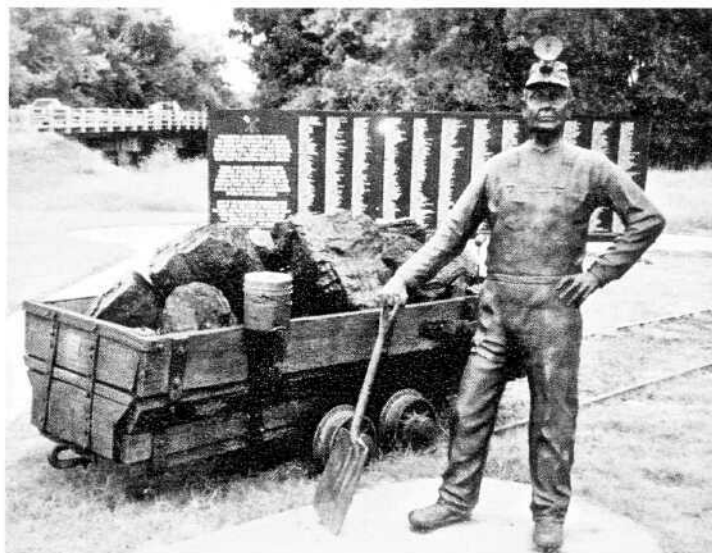
Records of coal production exist from 1880. The year 1907 was the peak year of coal production for the state, when nearly 2,700,000 tons were mined. Cumulative coal produced through from 1880 to 2002 is over 106,000,000 tons.

Principal coal mining in Arkansas has been from Franklin, Johnson, Logan, Pope, Scott, and Sebastian counties.

The portion of coal reported from these counties is:

County	Percent of Total Coal Production ⁴
Franklin	14
Johnson	17
Logan	10
Pope	3
Scott	1
Sebastian	55

In the 1922 Centennial History of Arkansas, there are several towns listed with references to coal mining: Bonanza with "large coal mining interests;" Midland with "seven coal mining companies;" Hackett where "coal mining is the principal industry;" Coal Hill where "the principal business is coal



Miner Monuments

A very realistic coal mining memorial site stands east of the Sebastian County Court House in **Greenwood**, on State Highway 10. The site has a statue of a miner and a coal cart on tracks that were so familiar in removing coal from the mines of the area. The coal cart came from a local mine. Names of miners in this Sebastian County area are engraved on stone markers at the site.

A statue of a coal miner, with lunch bucket and pick, is erected in **Altus**, and the names of many of the miners are etched on adjacent stone columns.

mining;" Greenwood where "coal mining is an important industry;" Hartford where "sixteen coal mining companies have offices;" Huntington which "is the headquarters of ten coal mining companies;" and Paris which "is the headquarters for ten coal mining companies." From 1880 to 1920, coal ranked first in value of Arkansas mineral and fuel output. Since 1922, the value of oil production has exceeded the value of coal.

An interesting book, *Arkansas Coal Miners*, was published in 2001 by the Altus Historical Society. The book is an extensive collection of interviews, stories, and photographs about coal miners and their families in the Altus and Franklin County area. Coal mining was prevalent in the area from about 1880 to 1950.

Like most industries, coal mining has vocabularies or jargon that define actions and assist in daily operations of the workforce. One such phrase was "fire in the hole" which was the title of a book by The South Sebastian County Historical Society. A method to break coal pieces from the wall of a mine was to chisel a deep, round hole in the wall of the mine and then pack the hole with dynamite powder and a fuse at the end of the hole. When the fuse was ignited, the cry, "fire in the hole," was given and everyone was thus warned to seek cover until the dynamite exploded, the debris stopped falling, and the dust settled. The coal could then be gathered and removed.

A few coal-mining definitions used were:

Blossom- the decomposed outcrop, stain, or indication of a coal bed

Bony Coal- coal mixed with slate or rock

High Coal- a coal of a thick seam

Low Coal- a coal of a thin seam

Pillar- the portion of a coal bed left to support the rock over a mine

Diggers- miners paid by the ton of coal produced

Tipple- a device for emptying a coal cart

Fire Damp - an explosive mixture of mine gases

Worked Out - the condition of the mine when all usable coal had been recovered and the mining was finished.

Sizing of the coal pieces developed many descriptive words by the miners and the subsequent commercial users of coal. The larger pieces could be lump or fancy lump coal. Lesser size could be bar coal or grate coal. Then, smaller yet, the sizes could be egg coal, nut coal, or chestnut coal. The smallest pieces often were slack coal. I expect many other local names also existed for the descriptions of the coal pieces.

Currently, one underground mine and one strip mine are in operation, both in Sebastian County. Coal deposits remain across the developed area, but the reserves are a factor of economics of recovery of the deposits. A relatively small area of the state contained the coal deposits; however, it was a classic mineral production industry from 1880 to the current date.

Sources

1. Bush, William V., "2003 Keystone Coal Industry Manual," in *Coal Age Magazine*: pp. 488-49.

2. "Coal," Arkansas Geological Commission, 20 July 2003.

<http://www.stte.ar.us/age/coal.htm>

3. Haley, Boyd R., *Resources of Low-Volatile Bituminous Coal and Semi-anthracite in West-Central Arkansas 1978*. (U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 1632): p. 54.

4. Bush, William V. and Lonnie B. Gilbreath, comp. *Inventory of Surface and Underground Coal Mines in the Arkansas Valley Coal Field*. Information circular 20-L. Little Rock, 1978: pp. 1-13.

5. Minton, Mark., "Bits of Coal Still Fueling Firms' Hunt," *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, 30 June 2002: 1G+.

6. Herndon, Dallas T., ed. *Centennial History of Arkansas*. Chicago-Little Rock: The S. J. Clark Publishing, 1922: p. 806+

7. Frame, Fran (Canady), comp. *Arkansas Coal Miners*. Altus: The Altus Historical Society, 2001.

8. Alvarez, H., G. *Fire in the Hole*. (Greenwood: The South Sebastian County Historical Society, 1983).

9. Steel, A.A., *The Geological Survey of Arkansas: Coal Mining in Arkansas Part 1*. (Little Rock: Democrat Printing & Lithographing Co., 1910).

About the author:

John G. Ragsdale is a registered, professional engineer, retired after forty-five years work in the oil and gas industry, working for the Lion Oil and the Monsanto Companies in several states and Canada. He had a consulting office in El Dorado, until his retirement in 1992. Mr. Ragsdale has written articles about the petroleum industry, local history, foods, outdoor cooking and history of Dutch ovens, for magazines and historical journals.

'Never Take a Coal Man':

Labor Unrest in Sebastian County, 1914
By Ben Boulden

They were wearing masks, but no one said, "Boo!" They didn't need to. Things were already scary enough.

Halloween 1914, men, some wearing black masks, surrounded Tom Black, a U.S. deputy marshal in Hartford Valley, Sebastian County. He was preparing to take back to Fort Smith 15 men who were suspected of participating in violence related to a lockout of miners. One of the men in the small mob around the deputy marshal told him, "Whenever you want a bootlegger down here, we'll see that you get him, but you'll never take a coal man from this country." They left with their liberated compatriots without a fight. The deputy was simply outnumbered.

The lockout was related to a conflict between open shop and closed shop unionism. In 1944, Arkansas voters passed the "Right to Work" amendment to the state constitution. Amendment 35 mandated that all union locals be organized on an open shop basis. An open shop is one in which all memberships are held voluntarily.

Before the passage of Amendment 35, union locals in an Arkansas workplace could be organized as open shops, modified union shops or closed shops. A closed shop was one in which all rank-and-file workers, usually the hourly employees of a business or company, were required to be members of the union and pay dues to it.

For a variety of reasons, the "Right to Work" amendment passed easily in 1944. Anti-union sentiment was at an all-time high and many working men were away fighting in World War II. Since that time, unions, while still a presence in Arkansas, have not been the force they were.

Many Arkansans think of the labor union as an institution that was never enthusiastically embraced in the state. People accepted the open shop requirement with ease because they never liked trade unionism in the first place. That was not always the case. In fact, one of the best examples of the popular failure

to adopt the open shop as a wide-standard is found in the labor struggles in the coal mines of south Sebastian County. Coal miners fought hard to retain the closed shops they had in those mines in affiliation with the United Mine Workers. It was a fight that often was violent and protracted. The miners did not give up easily and Fort Smith played an important role in their struggle.

Headquarters of the Bache-Denman companies that owned and ran the mines was in Fort Smith. Most of the civil and criminal legal cases associated with the conflict were adjudicated in the city. Support for the miners and "scabs" working against them came out of Fort Smith. In short, the story of the fight was almost as much a Fort Smith story as it is one of the county as a whole.

An examination of all the important aspects of the struggle between Bache-Denman and the UMW is beyond the scope of this article. What can be accomplished here is a summary of the events and a preliminary study of two aspects: the violence that occurred, what it means and the extent of local support for the miners beyond the coal mining communities of south Sebastian County.

Lockout: The struggle begins

Owner Franklin Bache and his companies still had a contract with the UMW to operate on a closed shop basis. That contract was not set to expire until July 31, 1914. All UMW miners were locked out of and not allowed to work in Bache's mines on April 2.

The first major outbreak of violence occurred on April 6, 1914. Rioting at Prairie Creek coal mine erupted following a mass meeting of Hartford miners that was held at the Prairie Creek school house. The meeting had been called to discuss the opening of the mine on April 2 as an open shop mine. Furthermore, Bache-Denman had announced its intent to operate all its mines on an open shop basis.

A crowd of between 1,200 and 1,500 men

took possession of the mine, assaulted two guards, drew down the boilers and ran off the 20 nonunion miners who were working at the mine when the riot took place.

On May 15, federal judge Frank A. Youmans granted an injunction barring union miners and leaders of the union from interfering with the operation of the Bache-Denman mines. Less than a month later, Peter R. Stewart, James Slankard, Moro Colo, Foster Bean, Sandy Robinson and Frank Gripando were indicted for violating the injunction. All the men were union miners except Slankard, who was constable of the town of Hartford.

His role at this stage of the battle is not entirely clear, but circumstantial evidence and some testimony points to Slankard as a central player in the violence surrounding the UMW dispute with Bache. At the very least, he was accused of this. Slankard was present at the April rioting, although he would later claim he was attempting to mediate and keep order but was unable to do so against a crowd of such size.

Battles erupt between union men and scabs

Despite this action on the part of federal law enforcement, the situation only grew more tense and civil order continued to deteriorate. On July 17, a six-hour gun battle with high-powered rifles ensued between union and nonunion miners. Three mines, Prairie Creek Coal Mines Nos. 1, 3 and 4 were dynamited and set ablaze. Fighting in a guerilla fashion, the union miners shot into nonunion encampments and the "scabs" returned fire until their ammunition was exhausted. Many of the nonunion workers were run off. Telephone lines between the towns of south Sebastian County and to Fort Smith were cut.

Two nonunion employees were shot and killed. In an affidavit in federal court at Fort Smith, a nonunion miner named Sam Thomas told how he and eight men were captured by union forces and imprisoned in a log house.

While being held there, John Baskins and Clarence Sylesberry were shot to death. Later, their bodies were placed in the log house and the structure was set ablaze. Their charred bodies were recovered on July 20. Clarence Sylesberry was the 23-year-old son of J.W. Sylesberry, a mine boss at Prairie Creek Mine

No. 4 under the open shop there.

Slankard turns up here as well, either as a member of the mob according to some or as a ringleader.

U.S. Cavalry called to keep order

The third and final outbreak of large scale violence occurred on Oct. 28, 1914. Several camp houses were destroyed by fire and nonunion employees of the mine and U.S. marshals were driven out in another battle at No. 4. The battle started at around midnight after the telephone lines were again cut. A newspaper account said that as many as 2,000 shots were fired and the houses were riddled with bullets. Earlier in the week, the company had begun repairs and preparations to resume mining at No. 4.

This third and final battle produced decisive action on the part of federal authorities. Since local law enforcement officials and the marshals had failed to keep the peace, four companies of U.S. Cavalry were sent to south Sebastian County. The troops arrived at 11 a.m. on Nov. 6, 1914, and remained until January 1915 at an encampment they called Camp Garrison.

A climate of violence and tension

During the more than six months of the conflict between the UMW workers and the Bache-Denman companies, it appears that a general climate of violence and tension pervaded Sebastian County between these events and probably lingered for a time thereafter. So bent on defending the closed shops and strength of the UMW organization were the miners here, that only the presence of the Army could quell it. When Bache locked them out of the mines and attempted to run them with nonunion workers, the miners determined that if Bache would not allow them to work in the mines then no one would be employed in them. Their use of dynamite shows the length to which they were willing to go to achieve this goal.

The miners did not exist in isolation though and neither did their anger. In part, they saw themselves as acting defensively against Bache and the federal government. Gunfire didn't occur in the first riot. The miners did not use rifles or any

other firearm. They did in the riot in July and the last one in October. One reason for this difference was that according to the miners, Bache had escalated things. Following the April incident, Bache was never able to employ a large number of guards that could cope with the large mobs.

So, to increase their ability to intimidate and defend the mines with the small numbers he hired, Bache made sure they were armed. The UMW men and their families saw this as a provocation and a hostile act.

It should be kept in mind that this strike occurred at the same time as the infamous Ludlow, Colo., strike. In mid-April 1914, more than 9,000 miners were on strike in Colorado. At Ludlow, national guard troops were called out and one day at dawn a shot was fired. No one knows from which side or by whom. In response, guardsmen machine gunned a tent city the miners' families had set up. Several strikers were killed. The guardsmen then proceeded to torch the tents. Two women and 11 children were burned alive.

UMW officials arm the Arkansas workers

On May 25, 1914, Peter Stewart, president of District 21 of the United Mine Workers, was in Midland and spoke in front of McGee's Drug Store to a crowd of men. Accounts differ between witnesses as to what Stewart said to the men about trouble with Bache and how the UMW would respond. Some said he threatened violent reprisals. Stewart didn't recall his remarks that way but didn't contradict the witnesses either. In a deposition in federal court, he stated:

"As near as I can remember, I had some information that a guard named Bailey and some guards had insulted some girl, and, of course, that made me pretty mad. I don't deny that because it was the one who had insulted me previously in another county and I got to Midland and got to talking to some of the people there. And, I said it was reported that some women and children had been insulted by such men and we couldn't get any protection. It was my idea to arm the men in the Hartford Valley so that they could protect the women and children. I didn't have any

idea in saying that that I was violating an order of Judge Youmans. I didn't have any idea that I was violating the injunction by saying that. If I thought I was violating the injunction by saying that, I wouldn't have said it. I thought it was the right any American citizen would have to protect the homes and the wives and children, that is, for the members of our organization. I had remembered the Ludlow affair when our women and children were murdered and I didn't think there should be any such thing out there. ... I don't think men should be brought in who are ex-convicts and then go around carrying arms, and I think they all ought to be disarmed, and that when one side carries arms themselves and the other side carries arms, the homes are going to be shot into in the night and are afraid of their lives to live there and request us to ship guns out there."

From his actions, Bache seems to have viewed the superior numbers of the miners as a threat to his property and businesses. In turn, the miners seem to have viewed his armed guards as a threat to them, if Stewart is taken at this word.

Of further interest is the response of local legal authorities to the labor conflict. Accompanying Stewart to Midland was Sebastian County Prosecuting Attorney Paul Little. In his deposition, Little confirms that he had an arrest warrant issued for the guard in question, Riley Bailey, for disturbance of the peace "by using abusive language towards a young lady over there." Bailey was later shot and injured.

Local and federal authorities at odds

Judge Youmans in his decision later wrote that he thought Stewart was using the incident between Bailey and the girl as an excuse to arm the UMW men. The judge cites the testimony of a deputy marshal who said he heard Stewart in a conversation with him on a local train say, "Damn the injunction. The national government is against us but the people are with us and we don't aim to let them

dig coal." Of course, there is no real conflict between the desire to stop Bache and a perhaps genuine feeling of the need for miners to defend themselves, especially in the wake of Ludlow.

Around June 17, a shipment of arms arrived in Hartford from McAlester, Okla. Fred Holt, secretary-treasurer of District 21, sent the arms. He said that the civil authorities were powerless to afford them protection. What seems to emerge from the historical record is a labor conflict with local legal authorities on the side of the UMW and federal authorities on the side of Bache.

Bache and his men were arming themselves in May if not earlier. Judge Youmans cites an incident in May as evidence of Little's partiality in the dispute. Saying "Let's rock them scabs," a miner named Foster Bean and a teenage boy threw stones at some of Bache's men in Midland who were guarding a supply wagon. When the men brandished their guns, a town marshal arrested them. Little prosecuted them for disturbing the peace. Youmans wrote, "It cannot be said that so far as charges against the company's employees were concerned that he did not act promptly. In that regard, his course is in strong contrast with his action with reference to alleged violations by members of the union, or their sympathizers."

Youmans also gave great weight to the incident in which Sylesberry and Baskins were murdered as evidence that the use of weapons by the miners was not purely defensive. Baskins and Sylesberry were, at least by the time they were killed and by all accounts, unarmed when they were shot. Although Slankard may have intervened to prevent more shooting, he seems to have used his authority as constable to aid the union miners.

Little and Slankard's actions are evidence of official support from them and that support may extend beyond them to other elected officials. More research is needed. From this preliminary research, it appears popular support was widespread. The Times Record newspaper generally appears to have been supportive of the miners while not shying away from criticism or reporting of the violence on both sides. Merchants ran an advertisement in the paper listing all the stores and business

that were friendly to labor. Hartford businesses supported the union miners in resisting the open shop.

Convicted men receive short sentences

Ultimately, Franklin Bache's mines were ruined. He retired to Philadelphia. The unemployed miners more than likely went to work in other area mines, eventually found outside mining or left the area. Seven men were convicted of conspiracy against the government in violating the injunction. All were fined and six received short jail sentences, including Slankard. By 1927, all the mines in Sebastian County were operated on an open shop basis.

The Times Record said in an editorial of Jan. 21, 1915, "Probably the great majority will not feel disposed to analyze very closely their feelings, views or sympathies, but give vent to a sigh of relief that the matter is one of the things of the past and that the undeserved stigma of this county has borne as one given over to anarchy and violence shall be erased."

Sources:

1. Times Record newspaper articles from April 1914 to January 1915;

2. "In the District Court of the United States For the Western District of Arkansas, United States v. Morrow Colo, Foster Bean, Sandy Robinson, Blue Johnson, James Slankard, P.R. Stewart, Frank Gripando, John Manick, Clint Burris, Pink Dunn, George Burnett and Loyd Claborn — Defendants," a decision of Judge Youmans issued Sept. 1, 1914;

3. "This Is Union Man's Country, Sebastian County 1914," Samuel A. Sizer, p. 306-327, V. 27, 1968, Arkansas Historical Quarterly, Spring 1968, Fayetteville

About the author: Ben Boulden is a native of Fort Smith and has a master's degree in history. He has taught Arkansas and American history at the college level and currently works as a business reporter for the Times Record.

A History of the Blair-Amis House

By Larry Cantwell



William Blair would later tell a friend that the first time he saw Mary Brown, she literally took his breath away.

While attending a box supper at the Methodist Church in Fond Du Lac, Michigan, he glanced across the room and saw a young woman with sparkling eyes and light brown hair. When she smiled at him, he became even more determined to meet her. They began "keeping company" and announced their engagement during the summer of 1864. The couple agreed not to marry until the war had ended.

On May 31, 1865, William Blair and Mary Brown were united in the same church where they had first met. They purchased a small home in the farming community of Rosedale. A daughter, Minnie Lorena, was born on May 25, 1866. Blair, always the entrepreneur, opened a business with a Mr. Putnam and together they manufactured sashes, doors and blinds.

William Blair was a restless man. When he heard that there were business opportunities in Kansas, he moved his family to Concordia where he opened a terminal for the shipment of grain and flour milling.

The Blair House during the autumn of 1903 shortly after the transfer to the John C. Amis family. James Westerfield Amis is seen on the front steps.

In 1885, Minnie Blair married Emery Haskett at the Methodist Episcopal Church in Concordia. Haskett and his father-in-law opened the Haskett-Blair Bank, later renamed the First National Bank of Russell. Blair was appointed president of the institution and Haskett named head cashier.

During the spring of 1887, William Blair made a trip to Fort Smith on banking business and was excited by what he saw.

As he stood on Garrison Avenue, he marveled at the incredible expansion and construction taking place all around him. The city's flourishing commercial district boasted a recently completed Grand Opera House, a lavish hotel, The LeFlore, and dozens of newly opened businesses. Handsome homes and an impressive public school were attracting families to the Belle Grove District and there was even talk that a new bridge was being planned to connect Fort Smith with Oklahoma. The entire area reflected both unbridled optimism and a can-do spirit that appealed to Blair. Blair returned to Concordia and soon the Blair and Haskett families were making preparations to leave Kansas.

Blair returned to Fort Smith in September of 1887. He used some of the money he had earned from the sale of the bank in Russell to build a flour milling business and invest in a lumberyard. He reasoned that grain could be shipped from Kansas to Fort Smith to be processed and the lumberyard would be an ideal enterprise because of the area's big building boom.

Blair found a small cottage in the 300 block of Third Street and returned to Kansas for his wife. Minnie Haskett, who was having a difficult pregnancy with her second child, remained temporarily with Mr. Haskett's parents in Kansas. Both Blair and Haskett invested in the American National Bank of Fort Smith where Blair became an officer and Haskett named head cashier.

Haskett found an Eastlake Victorian home for his family at 321 N. 8th. In a letter to his wife written during the summer of 1888, he advised her that the weather in Fort Smith was "awful hot," he was enjoying "lots of plums and peaches" and missed both her and his young son, Roscoe, and their new baby, Don.

By 1889, the Blair and Haskett families were settled in Fort Smith and getting acquainted with their new community.

The next few years were not without difficulties, however. Both the Blair flour mill and lumberyard burned and the national economy soured. The building boom of Fort Smith, which had seemed so promising, slowed to a trickle.

Shortly after the birth of William, his third child, in 1891, Emery Haskett began experiencing crippling headaches. When they became so severe he couldn't function, he sought medical help, first in Fort Smith and later in Missouri. While being treated at St. Vincent's Hospital in St. Louis, Haskett had a seizure and died early during the morning of Sept. 26, 1892. He was 33 years old at the time of his death. Doctors later claimed that a brain tumor had been the cause.

Haskett's body was returned to Fort Smith where an elaborate funeral was held at the family home on 8th Street, followed by burial at Oak Cemetery.

The death of Judge Isaac Parker four years later created a vacancy at the American National Bank. The surviving directors, Dr. E.H. Stevenson, Isaac Cohn, Fred Titgen, T.J. Smith and Stephen Wheeler, elected William Blair its president.

In September of 1895, William Blair began secretly constructing a new home for his wife near the corner of 7th and G Streets. He intended to present it to her as a Christmas present. The structure he planned and built was one of classical revival style, with frieze decorations on the porch gables, gambrel-shaped dormer roofs and an upper balcony with columns



Mary Blair



William Blair



Street Scene, Fort Smith, Ark.

The American National Bank, the building with the onion-domed roof, is depicted in a postcard image. Although the top floor has been removed, the structure remains in the 600 block of Garrison Avenue.

and balustrades. Another unusual feature of the house were triple columns placed at the various corners of the house and stone lintels positioned above each window. The interior and exterior woodwork had carved designs of holly leaves and iris blossoms to both celebrate the approaching holiday season and honor Mary's favorite flower.

That Christmas eve, Blair wrapped his wife in a fur robe and took her for a short carriage ride, from their modest cottage on Third Street to the new house on Seventh. He revealed his secret by carrying Mary over the threshold and into their new home. The house still has many features left behind by its original owners. For example, there is a mirror in an upstairs hallway so that Mary Blair could check her petticoats each day before coming down stairs and a buzzer connects the master bedroom with the kitchen to summons morning coffee.

When William Blair began experiencing heart problems in 1902, he visited a clinic in Mexico. His condition worsened and while en route back to Fort Smith, he died Jan. 26, 1903, in Mineral Wells, Texas. His funeral was held at the home of his daughter and he was buried beside his son-in-law in Oak Cemetery. Mayor Henry Kuper requested that all businesses close during his funeral as a sign of respect.

Mrs. Blair found the larger house on 7th Street was lonely without her husband. She sold the property in 1903 to Dr. John Amis, and moved to 8th Street to live temporarily with her daughter and three grandsons. In 1905, the two women decided they needed a fresh start. The Haskett house was sold and Mrs. Blair and the Haskett family moved to Pasadena, California. The two women would never return to Fort Smith, even for a visit. Both died in California, Mary Blair in 1924 and her daughter Minnie, in 1941.

Even after the passage of more than a century, both the Blair and Haskett houses in Fort Smith survive. The Amis family continued to live at 708 North 7th until the death of the last surviving member in 1970, Dr. James Amis. The house changed ownership at least three times before being purchased by Larry Cantwell in 2003. Restoration of the house is nearing completion. The Haskett house, also under renovation, is currently owned by Blake Young and Wayne Maples.

About the author: Larry Cantwell, born in Fort Smith in 1942, is the great grandson of General William Bluford Cantwell, one of the city's pioneers. Cantwell is a syndicated columnist for King Features and a member of the Belle Grove Historic Commission.



Emery Haskett



Minnie Blair Haskett



Left to right: Mary Blair and her daughter, Minnie Haskett, were both widowed and moved together to California in 1905. Here Mary (left) and Minnie (center) are pictured with Minnie's son Blair and his child Billy.

Hangin' Times in Fort Smith



By Jerry Akins
(Part VIII)

Part I of *Hangin' Times in Fort Smith*, published in Volume 25, Number 2 of *The Journal*, covered the seven hangings that occurred prior to May 1875 when Judge Parker's term began.

Part II, published in Volume 26, Number 1, began with Judge Parker's address to William J. Whittington, the first man he sentenced to hang, and eight men convicted of murder in the spring session of the Western District Court.

Part III, published in Volume 26, Number 2, covers the 1876 executions of:

Aaron Wilson	Isham Seeley
Gibson Istanubbee	Orpheus McGee
Osey Sanders	William Leach
John Valley	Sinker Wilson
Samuel Peters	

Part IV, published in Volume 27, Number 1, examines the two years following 1876, when there were no hangings, but the Court of the Western District of Arkansas was trying criminals for every crime within the court's jurisdiction. It continues with the hanging of John Postoak and James Diggs on December 20, 1878.

Part V: September 5, 1879 - June 30, 1882. Seven men were sentenced to hang. Arena Howe, a woman, was sentenced to prison. The executed men were:

Henri Stewart	William Elliott Wiley
George W. Padgett	William T. Brown
Patrick M. McGowen	Amos Manley
Abler Manley	Edward Fulsom

Part VI covers the court and executions of 1883. Robert Massey, Martin Joseph, William H. Finch and Te-o-lit-se were hanged. Belle Starr and Sam Starr and Sam Paul were convicted.

Part VII Six criminals were sentenced to be hanged on July 11, 1884. Fanny Echols, first woman to be convicted of a capital crime in Parker's court, and Dan Jones had their sentences commuted, Mat Music received a pardon. Those hanged were: John Davis, Thomas L. Thompson and Jack Womankiller.

Execution of William Phillips

Wholesale Commutation of Death Sentences
(Elevator, April 17, 1885)

THEY SLIPPED THE HALTER

"On Saturday night last [Apr. 11, '85] the hearts of Mason Holcomb, Fred M. Ray and William Meadows, three of the men to be hung next Friday, were made glad by the news that President Cleveland had commuted them to imprisonment for life." On the following Monday evening, April 13, 1885, William Dickson had the same reason for rejoicing when news of his commutation arrived. William Phillips, however, had only hope of reprieve, which he held onto until the last hours of his life on April 17, 1885.

All of the five men mentioned had been convicted of murder. Holcomb's and Dickson's were not unusual cases and Phillips's was a case of man kills father-in-law. The case of Ray and Meadows, though, was a little different than the typical murder case and deserves commentary before the story of the ill-fated Phillips.

In November 1884 Fred M. Ray, his son Joe (age listed variously as 12 and 15) and William J. Meadows (aged variously 16, 17 and 18) were on trial for the murder of an old negro man in the Cherokee Nation about August 1st of that year. According to the Nov. 28, 1884 edition of the Fort Smith Elevator, reporting the trial proceedings after the jury verdict, all of the principals in the case lived at a farm rented by Henry Meadows. The owner, George Alberti, employed the victim, Finn Morgan, a man of about 80 years known as Old Finn to do small chores and it was rumored that Old Finn carried a considerable amount of money. It was for that money that either Ray or Meadows killed him.

There were several articles in the papers descending in sensationalism to the final piece after the trial that is probably nearer the truth. One article has Fred Ray, Joe Ray and Meadows confronting Finn and demanding his money and

the father encouraging the son to fire the fatal shot. In a later article Fred Ray goes to the house and asks William Meadows if he wants to make some money and tells him to bring a pistol. They go out to where Finn is doing his chores and young Ray, observing the proceedings, runs back to the house and when the report of the gun is heard cried, "They've killed Old Finn." That version is disputed by Meadows in his testimony. After killing Old Finn they buried him in a shallow grave and a day or so later hogs or other animals had "exhumed the body" so they attached a rope to the body and dragged it to a lake, weighted it and threw it in. The murder occurred on Friday and on Monday Ray went to a barbeque being held by the black residents in the area and inquired after Finn, saying that he had been missing, and Ray was the most diligent in a search for him. When the body was found circumstances indicated that Ray might be the murderer. Young Joe Ray was said to have confessed immediately, the statement being taken down by Deputy Marshal Mershon. That statement is not on file at the National Archives with the other depositions concerning this case and later testimony shows that all Joe could have confessed to would have been knowledge of the crime.

William Meadows, according to the newspapers, was also supposed to have confessed after Joe Ray did but his deposition, on file at the National Archives, denies his guilt. In that statement William Meadows, citing Florence Meadows as witness, claims that Fred Ray came to him in the Meadows home and induced him to go with him to make some money, not stating his intentions. He says that when they found Finn Morgan, Ray killed him without Meadows participation. Fred Ray, in his testimony, disputes Meadows saying that the only pistol on the place belonged to Meadows. Ray claimed to have been asleep on the porch and was awakened by the gunshot and cited Florence Meadows as witness to his veracity, saying that she was in the kitchen talking to his son Joe.

Whatever the truth might have been the jury made its own deductions and acquitted Joe Ray, who was reported to have appeared unconcerned during the trial, sitting with his attorney chewing his gum and observing the proceedings. But they convicted both Fred M. Ray and William J. Meadows. And on Saturday, Jan. 31, 1885 Judge Parker sentenced both men to hang on April 17, 1885.

The attorneys for both men immediately applied for a new trial and in Ray's case secured petitions signed by many acquaintances in a county in Missouri and one in Arkansas, where he had lived for about ten years in each county, attesting to his good character. In Meadows' case a petition was

obtained from a minister and acquaintances who had known him for ten years. Those petitions apparently had the desired effect, for as stated before both men's sentences were commuted to life in prison at Detroit. However, the date in the Elevator appears to be wrong. Speaking on April 17, it states, "on Saturday night last..." which would have been April 11. The existing copies of the pardons and commutations read, "Done at the City of Washington, this Fourteenth day of April, A. D. 1885, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and ninth. (signed) Grover Cleveland". In the case of Meadows the President cites his age as a reason for the commutation and in Ray's case, lack of conclusive evidence. Both men signed their acceptance of the terms on April 22 and were accepted into the prison at Detroit on April 26, 1885.

William Phillips

On the morning of April 17, 1885 William Phillips still hoped for the message that never came from the president. He had been convicted of the murder of his father-in-law, William Hill.

Phillips and Hill had previously lived in Franklin County, Arkansas where Phillips had persuaded Hill's fourteen year-old daughter to run away with him. The couple had come to Fort Smith where a minister had "pronounced them man and wife on the famous 'Grem's Green.' Mr. Hill didn't approve of the marriage or Phillips, but to make the best of it and to be near his daughter he moved to the area where Phillips had already located, near Fort Smith in the Cherokee Nation. The two rented jointly, but life near Phillips became so intolerable for Hill that he moved to another part of the same farm. One day Hill went to get some farm implements that Phillips had and a violent argument erupted. The old man ran across a field and as he did Phillips fired at him, wounding him in the ankle. Hill went to the U. S. Commissioner at Fort Smith and filed a complaint for assault with intent to kill. Phillips was indicted by a grand jury and bonded out and continued to make violent threats. Then on the night of Sept. 8, 1884 a murderer went to the home of William Hill, put a shotgun through a crack in the house and shot him in the head while he slept.

As soon as the murder was discovered Phillips was arrested along with a man named Lackey and William Hill's son, Bob. Bob was a suspect because he had had an argument with his father some time before and was living at another location at the time of the murder. However, Bob Hill and Lackey were released by the court and became witnesses against Phillips. Phillips maintained until the end that it was Bob Hill and not he who had done the

killing, but he and his attorneys were not persuasive enough. On Jan. 19, 1885 the case was given to the jury and on Jan. 20 they returned a verdict of guilty. The court wasted no time in sentencing and on Saturday, Jan. 31, 1885 Phillips was sentenced to hang.

Phillips had been so sure that he would receive a commutation that he "made no preparations to meet his fate." But on his last day, when all but he had received commutations he sent for a minister. Rev. T. J. Hendrickson responded but still Phillips didn't give up hope until about 11 o'clock when a dispatch arrived from the president saying that he would not intervene. Phillips then sent for Col. Walthen, one of his attorneys, with whom he had a long conference. He asked Walthen to have his body taken to the home of a Mrs. Gann where Mrs. Phillips was staying and then shipped to Ozark to be buried beside his first wife. He instructed Walthen to sell a cow that he had over at Gabe Payne's place to cover the expenses. "About 11:30 o'clock a first class dinner was sent over to him by order of Col. Walthen and he ate heartily, devouring most all that was sent and appeared to enjoy it." The time of execution had been set for 3 o'clock and Phillips spent the remaining time "in religious exercises" and visiting with his friends.

Just before 3 p.m. the jailor, Deputy C. M. Barnes, entered the cell and read the death warrant. Phillips said his good-byes and "marched forth to death" accompanied by Rev. Hendrickson on one side and Deputy Barnes on the other. On the scaffold proceedings were brief, the minister offered a prayer, the condemned man stepped onto the trap and when asked if he had any last words replied that he had not. The black cap and noose were adjusted and at that time he seemed to realize "his awful condition and certain doom" for he began to recite the Lord's Prayer and as the words "Thy will be done" were uttered the trap fell. His neck was broken and in fourteen minutes he was pronounced dead.

Just before going to the gallows Phillips had given Chief Deputy Boles a lengthy written statement still asserting his innocence and blaming Bob Hill. Bob Hill, he claimed, had done the deed using Lackey's shotgun and several witnesses had sworn falsely. On the gallows Phillips had handed jailor Barnes a folded note intended for his wife. The note read, "Mary, my slippers is to tite. i want you to take them of to knight and lay them in the coffin. it is the last request i can make of you, don't fail to take me back tomorrow. Long farewell."

James Arcine, William Parchmeal (Executed June 26, 1885)

The gallows got but a short respite. After disposing of William Phillips in April it was again called to duty on June 26 for James Arcine and William Parchmeal. The case of Parchmeal and Arcine had actually gone to trial before Phillips but through delays and retrials the cases had leap-frogged each other until Phillips verdict and execution had preceded Arcine and Parchmeal.

Henry Feigel, referred to in the newspapers variously as German, Swiss or Swedish and in testimony as "the Dutchman", had been known around Tahlequah, C. N. for about fifteen years. On Nov. 25, 1872, after having his boots half-soled, he had left Tahlequah walking in the direction of Fort Gibson. The next day he was found brutally murdered; shot, his head crushed with a rock, his boots, coat and overshirt taken. He had been dragged off the road into the brush. The murder aroused attention for a while but since the victim had no relatives in the area interest waned and the case was nearly forgotten. However, there were some in the area who had information that they had not forgotten. And in 1883, Deputy Marshal Elias Andrews, who was working in the area, became interested in the case and began work on it. After some investigation he arrested James Arcine on March 30, 1884 and lodged him in the U. S. Jail at Fort Smith. Andrews continued work on the case and on Aug. 4, 1884 brought in William Parchmeal.

Both Parchmeal and Arcine were full-blood Cherokees and all statements and testimony were given through interpreters. Several of the half-dozen or more witnesses were also Indian and their testimony was taken through an interpreter. Two of them complained of being misquoted or misunderstood but in the end everything seemed to be clarified.

Parchmeal, when arrested, confessed to being a witness to the crime and took Andrews to the spot where it had occurred. But he claimed that he was only an unwilling witness and that Arcine planned and carried out the whole affair. And that he, Parchmeal, had had no part in it except to help drag the body off the road. Arcine, according to Parchmeal, had told him that he knew where they could make some money and persuaded him to go along. When they spotted Feigel on the road Arcine said that there was their game and when they approached Feigel Arcine shot him. In fact, Parchmeal said that he had tried to run when Arcine shot Feigel but he threatened to shoot him too. Arcine then smashed Feigel's head with a rock and the two of them dragged him off the road. Feigel had only twenty-five cents, which Arcine

took along with the boots, coat and shirt.

Arcine denied, from the beginning and through the trial, any involvement in the event and blamed Parchmeal for the whole killing and robbery. The case came to trial in the November 1884 term of court, twelve years after the crime. Arcine said that he was only a boy at the time and his attorneys attempted to prove through witnesses that he would have been only about eight or nine. However, his mother said that she could not testify to his exact age, but that he was born sometime before the war. When he was brought into jail he gave his age to the jailor as thirty-three and that age was entered, thus making him about twenty-one at the time of the murder. Arcine denied as false the testimony of other witnesses who said that he had told them of killing Feigel and having his boots. Those witnesses described in detail when and where Arcine had told them that he had killed a white man on the Gibson road. Thomas Horn testified that he had asked Arcine why he had done it and he had replied, "Because I am man."

The case went to trial Dec. 24, 1884 and lasted through Jan. 5, 1885, having consumed thirteen days, when it was given to the jury. The jury was out until "a late hour in the evening" on Thursday, Jan. 8 when they were discharged, having reached no agreement. They were deadlocked ten for conviction, two for acquittal. The trial was then rescheduled for March 15 according to the Elevator. However, March 15, 1885 was a Sunday so that is probably an error on the part of the reporter. Whatever the case, on Saturday afternoon, March 28, 1885 another jury returned a verdict of guilty after a trial that lasted about ten days. Parchmeal and Arcine were sentenced shortly thereafter to hang on June 26, 1885.

The Elevator reported after that trial, when somewhere near the facts were known, that the killers had overtaken Feigel about two miles southwest of Tahlequah where they killed and robbed him. Arcine had taken the hat and boots and Parchmeal took the coat and overshirt. The twenty-five cents they took back to Tahlequah and bought ammunition, which they divided and went their separate ways.

Testimony by the defendants was about the same in both trials with each of them proclaiming his innocence and blaming all on the other. Attorneys for both men did their best to convince the jury of their client's story. Arcine was defended by Marcum, Tiller, Wolfberger and Hallum. Marcum spoke for five hours trying to convince the jury that their client was not at the scene at the time of the murder and that Parchmeal "was trying to save his own neck by placing that of Arcine in the noose." But in the end prosecutors Clayton and Grace

prevailed. Defense attorneys immediately filed appeals for a new trial listing six reasons including error in charge to the jury and that the verdict of the jury, "was contrary to the law and not supported by the evidence."

On June 24, two days before the execution date, Arcine sent for one of his attorneys, Judge Tiller, "to make his last statement on earth." In it he claimed that Price Cochran and Parchmeal had committed the murder and went on to describe two other murders that Cochran had committed. Parchmeal made no statement until June 26, the morning of the execution day when he sent for Chief Deputy Barnes and admitted that he had hatched the plan and gotten Arcine to go along. But, he said that Arcine had done the shooting. "Then Arcine came to the front and knocked all the romance out of his previous statement by acknowledging that he was guilty." He said that Parchmeal had the pistol and gave it to him to shoot Feigel, which he did four times, then Parchmeal smashed his head with a rock. The two of them then dragged the body into the brush and he took only the hat, which he wore for about a year, then gave away.

Both men had been baptized on Tuesday of the week of their execution by Rev. Sam Dean, who accompanied them to the gallows.

At 2 o'clock on the afternoon of the 26th the prisoners were taken from the jail and "proceeded to the place of execution during the prevalence of quite a heavy shower" that had started while the death warrants were being read to them. They ascended the scaffold "with the indifference and stoicism so peculiar to the Indian race evincing no sign of nervousness or fear." After a hymn and a prayer by Rev. Sam Dean they stepped onto the trap. Facing the moment of their impending death they both confessed their guilt and said that they were ready to accept the consequences. The statements were taken down by the court stenographer, Prof. Saunders.

All preparations made, arms and legs pinioned and black caps in place the trap was dropped and the necks of the two men broken. After they were cut down the bodies were taken to the city cemetery for burial.

By: Jerry Akins

Sources:

Fort Smith New Era

Fort Smith Elevator

National Archives

1904 Newspapers

FORT SMITH ELEVATOR

Jan 1, 1904 – June 24, 1904

*(Abstracted from microfilm in the
Fort Smith Public Library
by Dorothy Doville)*

*(Editor: Spelling, punctuation and grammar appear
as printed in Fort Smith Elevator)*

JULY 1, 1904

THE ELEVATOR
by Dorothy Doville

J.D. Newton, the Frisco engineer who makes music with the whistle of his engine, bought the E.L. Brown property on North Fifth street last week, paying \$2,250 for it.

B.D. Crane says the coming flower show will lay all its predecessors in the shade. The home exhibit will be larger than usual, and the exhibitions from abroad will also be more extensive than usual. The show will be held at the rooms of Lee Bros. Seed store.

JULY 8, 1904

The \$500 table cover controversay has been settled and Mrs. Cole, the winner, is in possession of the work of art.

As a result of the strikes of the transfer drivers of St. Louis last week, street cars may now be chartered to haul the effects of theatrical companies between depots and opera houses.

James Gray and John Salee got mixed up with the officers last Friday for bathing in Mill Creek in defiance of the protests of people who live in the neighborhood of the swimming hole.

Charles A. Birnie & Company are in receipt of an up-to-date funeral car, which will supercede the hearse they have had in use for several years.

Sunday night there was a row at the joint of Trixie Golden on Front Row between Bert and Lester

Woods, Frank Rutledge and another fellow, and as a result, Rutledge was badly cut in the neck and shoulder and right side. Rutledge's home is at Marble City, I.T. Lester Wood was arrested after the affray, but Bert managed to get away.

JULY 22, 1904

Judge Sam Edmondson lost \$20 last week. Feeling in need of a little fresh country air he drove out to the County farm to spend the night, and while asleep someone cut the screen of a door and made a raid on his pantaloons, taking the wad of the esquire's hard earned money. Mrs. Edmondson's watch lay on a table near the pants but was not touched.

The military company just organized in this city has been assigned to the First Battalion of the First Regiment, and will be known as Company K.

AUG. 5, 1904

While Mr Lyon Sanders and his family were sitting on their front porch one evening last week somebody sneaked into the back part of their house and got away with a good hat and several pair of shoes.

AUG. 12, 1904

Mr Fred Hines, who for the past year has been an attache of the Elevator, and Miss Dessie Barrett, formerly of Greenwood, were married last Saturday afternoon by Esq. R. M. Fry and at the latter's residence on North Tenth street. Mr Hines is a steady, sober young man of excellent traits, and his bride a winsome and attractive young lady. The happy couple left Wednesday for Ardmore, I.T. where they will reside hereafter.

The energy of the lady managers of Belle Point Hospital has been rewarded by the completion of quarters for the nurses, which consist of two large rooms for the night and day nurses and a

private room for the assistant superintendent, with private bath for the nursing corps. All the rooms and the hall are bright and cheerful, well ventilated and exceedingly attractive and home like.

AUG. 26, 1904

Mr W.C. Bollinger has bought a piece of ground on the corner of North Fifth and G streets, upon which he proposes to build a residence.

Harry Kelly is preparing to sink another gas well on Mazard Prairie. It will be drilled about 1000 yards northeast of where gas was struck recently on the Wilkinson Place.

SEPT. 2, 1904

The Midland Railroad is now completed twenty miles beyond Muskogee, and will probably reach Tulsa about the middle of the month.

Judge Rowe returned Monday from the World's Fair, which he visited with his wife and son, and says he is prepared to believe the show to be the greatest thing on earth.

SEPT. 9, 1904

Sebastian's representation in the next Democratic convention will look worse than 30 cents.

SEPT. 16, 1904

Prairie township, Franklin county, gave Davis 56 votes at the recent election and Meyers 86. Will fletcher, one of the Democratic candidates for representative, ran like a scared wolf, getting 141 votes.

Mary Chapman, one of the most notorious women of Van Buren, and sentenced to the penitentiary a couple of months ago upon conviction for receiving stolen property, was pardoned last week by Governor Davis.

SEPT. 23, 1904

E.D. Bedwell, of the Arkansas Valley coal Company denies that there will be a general advance in the price of coal next month.

The public schools opened Monday with an enrollment of 2,073 pupils, an increase of 89 over the first days enrollment last year. Of this number 555 are colored.

SEPT. 30, 1904

Gov M.J. Watts is erecting two five-bedroom cottages at 900 and 902 South Sixth street.

Last week W.R. Woolridge sold Charles A. Boyd 40 acres of land near Lemert park, the consideration of \$2,500.

Last Friday, Henry M. Wallace a blacksmith who has a shop on the block just south of the post office, was struck on the head with a rock by a teamster he got into a row with in Fagan Bourland's wagon yard. His injury was quite serious for the time.

OCT. 7, 1904

W.F. Latham has bought from Tom Taylor, the property occupied by Will fox and Coffey Williams as a saloon, paying \$14,000 for it.

The Greenwood Democrat says G.W. Rowland, of Burnsville, has a 3 month pig that weighs 96 pounds. It was raised on buttermilk.

The Searle property on Towson avenue near Texas corner was purchased last week by O'Shea and Hiner for \$9,000.

OCT. 21, 1904

The comptroller of the currency last week granted permission to W.J. Echols, J.S. Miller, R.T. Dickens, C.E. Smart and Owen Kennedy to establish a national bank in Hartford. The capital of the new bank is \$25,000.

OCT. 28, 1904

The Oklahoma Vinegar Company of this city received a gold medal for its display of vinegar at the World's Fair

NOV. 4, 1904

Bruce Ward, a carpenter, had the misfortune last week to break his leg by the fall of a scaffold at the Mill Creek school house.

NOV. 11, 1904

Last week Henry Surrat sold his property on North 12th street to J.L. Dean. The price was \$3,000.

J.K. Barnes, United States District Attorney, has purchased the house in which he's been living for several years. The price was \$6,000.

H.E. Kelley reports striking gas in his well on the Wilkinson farm on Mazard Prairie, and says the last find is the best he has reached. The vein struck at 1,140 feet.

NOV. 18, 1904

Robert L. Johnson and Mrs Nellie Yadon were married in this city Wednesday, November 9th by Esq. Sam Edmondson.

NOV. 25, 1904

Mr Ed McKenna, the wheelhorse of Poteau, I.T. spent Wednesday in the city.

The grave of the late Judge I.C. Parker in the National Cemetery was decorated profusely on Thursday, November 17.

Mr Wortz, president of the Biscuit Company, says the plant destroyed last week by fire will be re-established upon a more extensive scale.

DEC. 9, 1904

John Bills, who conducts a store on the Fort Towson road about two miles south of the city, was fined \$50 last Saturday by Esq. Edmondson for violating the state wine laws. He sold wine made of berries which he had not grown.

Dr. J.G. Eberle contemplates erecting a two-story brick business house on his property near the corner of Garrison Avenue and Ninth street.

Friday night chief Fuller received orders to raid the premises of several persons who were operating slot machines, and the result was a bonfire on the Reserve.

DEC. 16, 1904

Sam Weaver, a driver for the Fort Smith Commission Company who was charged with making away with three cases of butter belonging to his employees, plead guilty in Judge Edmondson's court last Friday and was fined \$10 and sentenced to ten days imprisonment in jail.

DEC. 23, 1904

The Chronicle says Deputy Marshal Webb destroyed 300 bottles of whiskey, at Bokoshe last week, thereby putting a quietus to a good deal of anticipated Christmas fun.

DEC. 30, 1904

Tuesday morning Fort Smith woke up to find herself in the clutches of a blizzard, the thermometer having dropped to 14 degrees above zero.

Last week S.J. Rosemond bought from Miss Buford Wheeler two lots on the corner of North Fifteenth and D streets paying for them \$2,000. The lots are what are termed "gilt edged", being two of the choicest in the city.

Index

- NOTES: # - some sort of graphic is used, other than a portrait.
 * - a portrait of the person(s) named is on page indicated.
 (- - -) - for such as title, marital status, degree, etc.
 "- - -" - for nickname or special emphasis.
 (-) - dash between page numbers indicates the name of the person, place, etc. is carried throughout the story.
 (gp) - group picture
 (pc) - postcard

1904 Echo (yearbook), 8
 1904 Fort Smith High School Baseball team, 8*
 2004 Frontier Achievement Awards, 2*
 63rd Annual Conference of the Arkansas
 Historical Association, 3

-A-

A Secret Word, 4
 Addis, Clarence, 11
 Addis, Frank, 11
 Akins, Jerry, 36, 39
 Alberti, George, 36
 Alix, Arkansas, 24
 Allredge, E.P., 11
 Altus Historical Society, 27
 Altus, Arkansas, 26
 Amendment 35, 28
 American Hardware Company, 15
 American National Bank, 33, 34
 Amis, James Westerfield, 32*
 Amis, Dr. James, 34
 Amis, John C., 32
 Andrews, Deputy Marshal Elias, 38
 Antlers, Oklahoma, 16
 Arcine, James, 38, 39
 Ardmore, I.T., 40
 Arkansas Baptist Convention, 10
 Arkansas Coal Miners, 27
 Arkansas Gazette, 24
 Arkansas River Valley, 26
 Arkhoma Basin, 25
 Arkola, Arkansas, 25
 Arnold, Jack, 3
 Auburn, Arkansas, 25

-B-

Bache-Denman, 25, 28, 29
 Bache, Franklin, 28, 30, 31
 Backbone Mountain, 25
 Bailey, Riley, 30
 Baker, Mayor Ray, 2, 7*
 Baptist Articles of Faith 1646, 11
 Barnes, Deputy C.M., 38, 39
 Barnes, J.K., 42
 Barnes, Katherine, 9
 Barrett, Dressie, 40
 Baskins, John, 29, 31
 bean checks, 22
 Bean, Foster, 29, 31
 Bedwell, E.D., 41
 Belle Grove Historic Commission, 34
 Belle Point Hospital, 40
 Beverly, Arkansas, 25
 Bills, John, 42
 Black, Bill, 7
 Black, Tom, 28

Blair-Amis House, History of, 32
 Blair, Mary Brown, 32, 33*, 34, 45*
 Blair, Minnie Lorena, 32
 Blair, William, 32, 33*
 Bokoshe, I.T., 42
 Boggs, George, 5
 Boles, Chief Deputy, 38
 Bollinger, W.C., 41
 Bonanza, Arkansas, 24, 25, 26
 Boone, Eleanor, 9
 Boulden, Ben, 3, 28, 31
 Bourland's wagon yard, Fagan 41
 Boozeman, U.S. Rep. John, 7*
 Boyd, Charles A., 41
 Breedlove, John, 9
 Broken Bow, Oklahoma, 16
 Brown, E.L., 40
 Brown, William T., 36
 Brizzolara, John, 9
 Bunyan, John, 11
 Burch, Clayton, 9
 Bury, Leo, 9
 Burnville, Arkansas, 25
 Burton, Art, 7*
 Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, 3

-C-

Callama, 22
 Camp Plenty, 16, 17 (gp)
 Cantwell, General William Bluford, 34
 Cantwell, Larry, 2, 4, 32, 34
 Carlee, Harold, 2
 Carnall, Bonta, 9
 Carr, Della James (Meek), 2
 Carr, Della Mae, 2
 Carr, Jack Meek, 2
 Carr, James Andrew, 2
 Carr, Margaret Stanhope, 2
 Carr, Pansy Romaine, 2
 Carr, Andrew, Detective, 2*
 Centennial History of Arkansas, 26
 Central Baptist Church, 11
 Central Coal and Coke Company, 24
 Central Presbyterian Church, 10
 Chapman, Mary, 41
 Charles A. Birnie & Company, 40
 Chautauqua, 10
 Cherokee Nation, 37
 chitlins, 23
 Chocoville, Arkansas, 25
 Choctaw and Midland Valley Railroad, 24
 Christner, Myrtle, 9
 Clarksville, Arkansas, 6, 24
 Class, Louise, 9
 Class Day Program, May 20, 1904, 9
 Clayton and Grace, 39

Coal Hill, Arkansas, 24, 25, 26
 Coal Mining in Northwest Arkansas, 26
 Cochran, Price, 39
 Cogburn, Rooster, 5
 Cohn, Isaac, 33
 Colo, Moro, 29
 Cloninger, Nancy, 15
 Coffman, Rev. Victor, 10
 Concord Association, 10
 Concordia, Kansas, 32, 33
 Cornish, Arkansas, 25
 Crane, B.D., 40
 Crawford County Hospital, 23

-D-

Darby Junior High School, 8, 25
 Davis, Governor, 41
 Davis, John, 36
 Dayton, Arkansas, 25
 Dean, J.L., 42
 Dean, Rev. Sam Dickens, 39
 Denning, Arkansas, 24
 Dickens, R.T., 41
 Dickson, William, 36
 Diggs, James, 36
 Dillard, Tom, 3
 District 21 United Mine Workers, 30
 Dotson, Ollie, 11
 Dotson, May, 11
 Doville, Dorothy, 40
 Dunlop, F.B., 13
 Dyke, Mary, 9
 Dyke, Myrtle, 9

-E-

Eberle, Dr. J.G., 42
 Echols, Fanny, 36
 Echols, W.J., 41
 Edmonds, Lois, 9
 Edmondson, Judge Sam, 40, 42
 Edmondson, Mrs., 40
 Eisenhower, President Dwight, 7
 Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and
 Culture, 3
 Excelsior, Arkansas, 24

-F-

Feigel, Henry, 38, 39
 Ferguson, Dr. B.V., 10*
 Finch, William H., 36
 First Baptist Church, 10
 First Baptist Church of Van Buren, 11
 First Battalion of the First Regiment,
 Company K, 40
 First National Bank of Russell, 33
 Flanary, Ross, 6*

Fletcher, Will, 41
 Floyd, Simon, 6
 Fond Du Lac, Michigan, 32
 Fort Gibson, 38
 Fort Smith Commission Company, 42
 Fort Smith Elevator, 36, 40
 Fort Smith High School, 8*
 Fort Smith Historical Society, 3
 Fort Smith Historical Society Office, 3
 Fort Smith National Historic Site, 3, 5, 7, 15
 Fort Smith Police Department, 2
 Fort Smith Public Schools, 4
 Fort Smith Secondary Social Studies Educators, 2
 Fort Smith Social Studies Educators, 36
 Fort Towson Road, 42
 Fox, Will, 41
 Franklin County, Arkansas, 26, 27, 37
 Frisco Railroad station, 5, 16
 Frogtown, Arkansas, 25
 Fry, R.M., 40
 Fuller, Chief, 42
 Fulsom, Edward, 36

-G-

Gann, Mrs., 38
 Garlick, Maurice, 9
 Garrett, Edwin Ray, 11
 Garrison Avenue, 33, 34
 Gearen farm, 22
 Geren, John, 9
 Golden, Trixie, 40
 Gould, Jay, 12
 Graham, Rev. Billy, 11
 Grand Avenue, 8
 Grand Opera House, 33
 Gray, James, 40
 Greasy Valley, 20
 Green, Clara, 9
 Green, Florence, 9
 Greenwood, Arkansas, 25, 26, 27
 Greenwood Democrat, 41
 Grem's Green, 37
 Griggs, Mattie, 9
 Gripando, Frank, 29

-H-

Hackett, Arkansas, 24, 25, 26
 Ham, Dr. Mordecai Fowler, 10*
 Ham, Ollie McElroy, 11
 Ham, Samuel, 11
 Ham, Tobias, 11
 Hamilton farm, 22
 Hardware Merchandiser magazine, 14
 Hardscrabble Country Club, 4
 Hartford, Arkansas, 25, 27, 31
 Hartford Valley, Arkansas, 30
 Hartford Valley, Sebastian County, Ark., 28
 Hartman, Arkansas, 24
 Haskett, Billy, 35*
 Haskett, Blair, 35*
 Haskett, Don, 33
 Haskett, Emery, 33
 Haskett, Minnie Lorena Blair, 32, 33, 34, 35*
 Haskett, Roscoe, 33
 Haskett, William, 33
 Haskett-Blair Bank, 33

Hefner, Dr. Elbert, 10
 Hell on the Border Jail, 3
 Hendrickson, Rev. T.J., 38
 Higgins, Dr. Billy, 3
 Hill, Bob, 37, 38
 Hill, William, 37
 Hines, Fred, 40
 Hink, Hazel, 9
 Holcomb, Mason, 36
 Holt, Fred, 31
 Hogan, Kemel, 11
 Horn, Thomas, 39
 How to Successfully Run in the
 Christian's Race, 11
 Howe, Arena, 36
 Hunt, Clarence, 9
 Huntington, Arkansas, 24, 25, 27

-I-

Immanuel Baptist Church, 10
 Istanbul, Arkansas, 36

-J-

Jalaliddin, Maula, 20, 23*
 Jenny Lind, Arkansas, 24
 Jenson, Arkansas, 25
 Jerry E. Wagner, DDS, 4
 Johnson County, Arkansas, 25, 26
 Johnson, Paul, 9
 Johnson, Robert L., 42
 Jones, Dan, 36
 Jordan, Mayor J.K., 10
 Joseph, Martin, 36

-K-

KFPW radio, 11
 Kelley, H.E., 42
 Kelly, Kelley, Harry, 41
 Kennedy, Owen, 41
 Kiamichi Mountains, 16
 Kiamichi River, 16
 Kimmons, Lynette, 9
 King Features, 34
 Kinta, Oklahoma, 13
 Klingensmith, Caroline, 9
 Kuper, Mayor Henry, 34

-L-

Lackey, 37
 Latham, W.F., 41
 Leach, William, 36
 Lee Bros. Seed store, 40
 LeFlore County, Oklahoma, 20
 LeFlore Hotel, 33
 Legris, Claude, 5, 7*
 Lemert Park, 41
 Lewis, Sanford, 2
 Little, Paul, 30, 31
 Little Rock & Fort Smith Railroad, 12, 24
 Logan County, Arkansas, 26
 Lohmeyer Funeral Home, 11
 Ludlow, Colorado, 30

-M-

M-T Coal Company, 24
 Mackie, Robert, 9
 Maleetai, 20

Manley, Abler, 36
 Manley, Amos, 36
 Mansfield, Arkansas, 24, 25
 Marble City, I.T., 40
 Marcum, Tiller, Wolfberger and Hallum, 39
 Maples, Wayne, 34
 Massard Prairie, 24, 25
 Massey, Robert, 36
 Martin, Amelia, 3
 Martin, Dr. Art, 3*
 May place, 24, 26
 Mazard, Massard Prairie, 41, 42
 McAlester, Indian Territory, 24, 31
 McGee's Drug Store, 30
 McGee, Orpheus, 36
 McGowen, Patrick M., 36
 McKenna, Ed, 42
 McKinley, President William, 13
 McKinney, Elsie, 9
 McMinn, Maude, 9
 Meadows, Florence, 37
 Meadows, Henry, 36
 Meadows, William J., 36, 37
 Methodist Episcopal Church, 33
 Merriman, Eddie, 14
 Merriman, Nate, 19*
 Mershon, Deputy Marshal, 37
 Meyers, 41
 Middleton, 17*, 18
 Midland, Arkansas, 24, 25, 26, 30
 Midland Railroad, 41
 Midland Valley Railroad Company, 13, 24
 Mill Creek, 40
 Milltown, Arkansas, 25
 Mill Creek school house, 42
 Miller, J.S., 41
 Miner Monuments, 26*
 Mineral Wells, Texas, 34
 Mitchell, Bob, 2
 Mitchell, Donna, 2
 Monsanto, 27
 Moore, Corinna, 9
 Moore, Levi, 9
 Moore, Robert, 9
 Morgan, Betty Speer, 13
 Morgan, Finn, 36, 37
 Montreal, Arkansas, 25
 Mt. Gilead Baptist Church, 11
 Music, Mat, 36

-N-

National Archives, 37
 Natural Gas and Power Company, 25
 "Never Take a Coal Man," 28
 New Jenny Lind, Arkansas, 24
 New York University, 4
 Newton, J.D., 40
 Noble, Hazel, 9
 Northrip, John, 7*

-O-

Oak Cemetery, 2, 23, 33, 34
 Ogden College, 11
 Oklahoma Vinegar Company, 41
 Old Coliseum, 10
 Old Fort Museum, 15

Old Fort Smith Military Reservation, 13
 Ozark, Arkansas, 38
 O'Connell, Dick, 5, 7*
 O'Neal, Arnold, 13, 14, 15*
 O'Shea and Hiner, 41

-P-

Paddock, Anita, 4
 Paddock, Ben, 4
 Paddock, Jennifer, 4*
 Padgett, George W., 36
 Parchmeal, William, 38, 39
 Paris, Arkansas, 27
 Parker, Judge Isaac, 3, 5, 6, 7, 12, 33, 36, 37, 42
 Pasadena, California, 34
 Patton, Frank, 6
 Patton, Leonard, 6*
 Patton, Prosper Horton, 6
 Paul, Sam, 36
 Payne, Gabe, 38
 Pea Ridge National Park Service, 15
 Peno Mercantile, 22
 Peno, Oklahoma, 23
 Peters, Samuel, 36
 Phillips, William, 36
 Pitcock, Cathey, 2
 Postoak, John, 36
 Pope County, Arkansas, 26
 Poteau, I.T., 42
 Prairie Creek, Arkansas, 24
 Prairie Creek Coal Mines # 1, #3, #4, 28, 29
 Prairie township, Franklin County, Ark., 41
 President Cleveland, 36
 Princeton, Missouri, 12
 Putnam, Mr., 32

-Q-

Quita, Arkansas, 24

-R-

Ragsdale, John G., 26, 27
 Raney, Chuck, 3
 Ray, Fred M., 36, 37
 Ray, Joe, 36, 37
 Remington Arms, 15
 Reynolds, Grace, 9
 Right to Work amendment, 28
 Rodgers, Karl S., 10
 Robins, Dean, 9
 Robins, Loretta, 9
 Robinson, Sandy, 29
 Roosevelt, President Franklin D., 10
 Rosedale, Michigan, 32
 Rosemond, S.J., 42
 Ross, Chief John, 6
 Ross, Dave, 24, 26
 Ross, Gail, 25
 Ross, Chief John, 6
 Ross, Phillip, 6
 Rowe, Judge, 41
 Rowland, G.W., 41
 Russellville, Arkansas, 24, 26
 Rutledge, Frank, 40

-S-

Sageley, Goldie Aleen, 11

Salee, John, 40
 Sanders, Lyon, 40
 Sanders, Osey, 36
 Saunders, Marguerite, 9
 Saunders, Prof., 39
 Scott County, Arkansas, 26
 Searle property, 41
 Sebastian County Jail Museum, 25
 Seeley, Isham, 36
 Seubold, Linda, 7
 Sheets, Roberta, 9
 Simpson, Benella, 23*
 Simpson, William, 20*
 Slankard, James, 29, 31
 Slaytonville, Arkansas, 25
 Smart, C.E., 41
 Smith, Rev. Charles E. Jr., 10
 Smith, T.J., 33
 Southern Baptist Convention, 10
 Southwest American newspaper, 10
 South Sebastian County Historical Society, 27
 Spadra, Arkansas, 24, 25
 Speer, Betsy, 14
 Speer, Clifford E., 12, 16
 Speer, Dave, 12, 13*, 16, 17*, 18, 19*
 Speer, Fred, 13, 14*
 Speer, Melanie Holt, 14, 15
 Speer Hardware Company, 12, 16, 18
 Speer Hardware Display, 12*
 Speer, Ralph Jr. 13, 14, 15*, 16, 18, 19
 Speer, Ralph Sr., 13, 14*, 17*, 18, 19*
 Spiro, Oklahoma, 13
 Stephens, Ben, 2
 Stewart, Peter, 29, 30
 Story, Judge William, 3
 Starr, Belle, 36
 Starr, Sam, 36
 St. Louis and San Francisco line, 24
 St. Vincent's Hospital, 33
 Stevenson, Dr. E.H., 33
 Stewart, Henri, 36
 Surrat, Henry, 42
 Sylesberry, Clarence, 29, 31
 Sylesberry, J.W., 29

-T-

Tahlequah, C.N., 38
 Taylor, Marjorie, 11
 Taylor, Tom, 41
 Te-o-lit-se, 36
 "The Man from Rich Mountain," 20
 "The Veins are Thick! Coal Mining in Sebastian County," 24
 Theurer, Lena, 9
 Thomas, Myrtle, 20
 Thomas, Sam, 29
 Thompson, Rev. Dale, 11
 Thompson, Thomas L., 36
 Tiller, Judge, 39
 Titgen, Fred, 33
 Toliver, Sherry, 2
 True Grit, 5
 True Value Hardware, 15
 Turk, David, 5, 7*
 Twin City Hospital, 23

-U-

United Mine Workers, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31
 Ursula, Arkansas, 25
 U.S. Cavalry, 29
 U.S. Marshal, Western District of Ark., 5
 U.S. Marshal Service Museum, 5, 7
 U.S. Marshals Descendants Day, 5
 U.S. Marshals Service, 7

-V-

Vaile, John, 9
 Valley, John, 36
 Vaughns, Minnie, 20
 Vick, R.E., 17*

-W-

Wallace, Henry M., 41
 Walthen, Col., 38
 Ward, Bruce, 42
 Ward, Eva, 9
 Ware, Katherine, 9
 Washbourne, J.W., 24
 Washburn, Arkansas, 25
 Wasson, Joe, 3
 Watts, Gov. M.J., 41
 Weaver, Sam, 42
 Webb, Deputy Marshal, 42
 Webster, Barbara, 2
 West, Dr Elliot, 3
 West Durham Church of North Carolina, 10
 West Mining Company, 24
 Western District Court, 36
 Westbrook, Rena, 8
 Wheeler, Miss Buford, 42
 Wheeler, Stephen, 33
 Whittington, William J., 36
 Whitson, Cal, 5
 Wiggins, Melanie Speer, 12, 16, 19
 Wiley, William Elliott, 36
 Wilkinson farm/ Place, 41, 42
 Williams, Coffey, 41
 Williams-Echols Dry Goods Co., 13, 14
 Wilson, Aaron, 36
 Wilson, Irene, 23
 Wilson, Sinker, 36
 Wing, Tom, 5
 Womankiller, Jack, 36
 Woods, Bert, 40
 Woods, Lester, 40
 Woolridge, W.R., 41
 World's Fair, 41
 Wortz, C.H., 42
 Wortz, Edell, 15
 Wright, Ernestine, 9
 WPA, 23

Y

Yadon, Mae, 9
 Yadon, Nellie, 42
 Yoes Allstate Plaza, 3
 Youmans, Judge Frank A., 29, 30, 31
 Young, Blake, 34