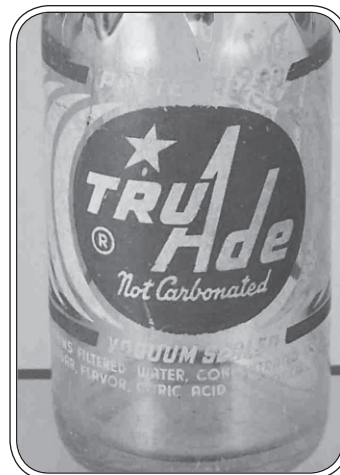




The JOURNAL



From Berlin To Fort Smith:
Nicol Wintory's Journey—Part I



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The JOURNAL

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COVER: **Main photo:** (Nicol Weinberger) Wintory with his father, Israel Weinberger, at a Baltic Sea resort. Photo courtesy of Cora Wintory Klahn.

Top right photo: A bottle of Tru-Ade noncarbonated soft drink. Photo courtesy of Anita Snoddy Paddock.

Lower right photo: Scissors manufactured at the Solid Steel Scissors Company in Fort Smith.

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News & Opportunities

Mark Your Calendars!

The Fort Smith Historical Society Quarterly Meeting

will be held
Wednesday, October 10, 2012
6:00-8:00 p.m.
at the Fort Smith Public Library
Community Room.

The public is welcomed. Please come, and bring a question.



LOCAL BROADCAST EXHIBIT
AT THE FORT SMITH MUSEUM OF HISTORY

The Fort Smith Museum of History Announces New Exhibit The History of Local Broadcast Media

**An exhibit featuring local radio and television
stations, and broadcasters,
their tools and their influence in our lives**

This exhibit has been designed by University of Oklahoma graduate student Dian White and covers the history of broadcast in Fort Smith from 1922. It features the collection of local radio and television veteran, Carl Riggins.

The exhibit will run through December 31, 2012.

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The Journal Wins Awards

The Journal of the Fort Smith Historical Society won the following state awards for 2011 from the Arkansas Historical Association:

Walter L. Brown County and Local Journal Awards

❖ **Best County or Local Journal:** *The Journal*, Fort Smith Historical Society Inc.

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“Alphonso Trent: Influential Man of Music and Local Legend”

The Journal, Fort Smith Historical Society Inc.

❖ **Best Edited Document:** Carole Barger, editor
“Marvel Rhyne: Letters to Joe,” *The Journal*, Fort Smith Historical Society Inc.

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When making a gift to honor or remember someone important to you, please remember the Fort Smith Historical Society. Gifts may be made in memory of a loved one, or in honor of a birthday, graduation, anniversary or other event.

If you particularly enjoyed a feature in *The Journal*, show your appreciation for a subject you found interesting by making a contribution in honor of the writer.

Memorial gifts are a beautiful and lasting way to honor those who are dear to us. All memorials and commemorative gifts are acknowledged with a letter to both the donor and the family of the person honored.

A contribution to the Fort Smith Historical Society supports the publication of *The Journal*, which is placed in libraries and schools, and becomes an important part of the historical record of this area.

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In Memoriam

Harry Pelot McDonald, M.D. September 1, 1923 - April 15, 2012

Harry Pelot McDonald, M.D. was born September 1, 1923, in Sumter, South Carolina. He was the youngest son of Samuel James McDonald, Sr. and Adelaide Palmer McDonald. His father worked for the railway postal system, taught at Claflin College and was president of the Sumter NAACP. He instilled in his son a keen appreciation for education and social responsibility. His father was celebrated posthumously forty-five years after his death in a ceremony officiated at by Hillary Clinton commemorating South Carolina's two most distinguished civil rights leaders. His mother was a music teacher and homemaker.

Dr. McDonald came from a long line of educated and accomplished ancestors on the McDonald and the Palmer side. His second cousin was Mary McCleod Bethune, founder of Bethune Cookman College. His grandfather was Robert J. Palmer, an entrepreneur and a South Carolina legislator whose eight surviving children were college educated. Dr. McDonald graduated valedictorian of his senior class at Lincoln High School in Sumter, South Carolina. He earned a B.S. degree with honors from Morehouse College. At the age of twenty-two, he earned an M.D. degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee. He completed an internship at Harlem Hospital in New York and began a residency at Kansas City General Hospital in Missouri.

Dr. H. P. McDonald began general practice in Fort Smith, Arkansas, in 1949. He interrupted his practice to serve as an Air Force captain in Ashiya, Fukuoka, Japan from 1954 to 1956. Upon returning to the United States, Dr. McDonald married Margaret Bowling, a college professor of Columbia, South Carolina, in 1956. They settled in Fort Smith in 1957, where they raised four children, Jan, Anita, Palmer, and Maria before divorcing in 1970. Dr. McDonald would later marry Ruby Bultman, a schoolteacher from Sumter, South Carolina, in 1976.

Dr. McDonald became a giant in helping his local and state communities. He was active as a lay leader and trustee of Mallalieu United Methodist Church in Fort Smith. He served for over a decade as president of the local NAACP, leading the civil rights effort to racially integrate the school system. Using



DR. HARRY MCDONALD AND RUBY MCDONALD

a combination of local and state coalition building, his work, along with the efforts of Arkansas civil rights activist, Daisy Bates, and renowned civil rights attorneys, Wiley A. Branton, Sr. and George Howard, Jr., laid the groundwork that culminated in the landmark *Aaron v. Cooper*, U.S. Supreme Court decision, (called the "other shoe dropping" after the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling, both declaring school segregation unconstitutional,) and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

McDonald personally integrated parks, movie theaters, skating rinks, civic clubs, and many more local institutions. He led sit-ins of local restaurants and often risked his life in the process, once held at gun point for trying to eat at a whites only bar. He helped coordinate the legal defense for several African Americans wrongly accused of crimes, working with the legal civil rights luminaries of the day. He found jobs for countless African Americans, paid for schoolbooks for others, began the local head start program, and helped many

young adults advance in their careers.

He was responsible for desegregating the nursing training program at Sparks Hospital so that blacks could become registered nurses. He worked closely with local industries Gerber, Dixie Cup, and Whirlpool to remove the barriers for African Americans to become supervisors and middle managers. He communicated with Arkansas governors as far back as Governor Winthrop Rockefeller and wielded considerable influence on job creation and civil rights so that economic opportunity for blacks became a reality.

Dr. McDonald was a staff member of St. Edwards, Sparks, and Crawford County Hospitals. He was a member of the Sebastian County Medical Association, the Arkansas State Medical Association, the American Medical Association, the National Medical Association, and the Arkansas Medical, Dental, and Pharmaceutical Association. He held a lifetime membership in the NAACP. At the request of Rosa Parks, McDonald's name was placed on the Wall of Tolerance in the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama, designed by Maya Lin. There Harry McDonald's name is memorialized as one of the nation's heroes along with other titans of the civil rights movement. McDonald was a member of the Human Relations Council of Arkansas, the Fort Smith Progressive Men's Club, and the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

Dr. McDonald was appointed to the Arkansas State Board of Education in 1978 by Governor David Pryor and reappointed in 1987 by Governor Bill Clinton. Governor Clinton appointed him to the Criminal Detention Facilities Review committee in the Twelfth judicial district in 1984. In 1990, Clinton would honor his friend, Harry McDonald, as the keynote speaker of his retirement celebration. After retiring from medical practice in Fort Smith, Dr. McDonald became a medical missionary providing free health care in the Hospital Bienfaisance in Pignon, Haiti, under the Christian Mission of Pignon.

In 2006, Harry and Ruby McDonald moved to Richland, Washington, where his youngest daughter, Maria McDonald McNamar and son-in-law Edward McNamar, cared for him through his twilight years. He passed away peacefully in his sleep on April 15, 2012 at the age of eighty-eight. Dr. McDonald's wife, Ruby Bultman McDonald, passed away on July 21, 2012. Harry P. McDonald is survived by his four children: Jan McDonald, M.D., Anita McDonald Austin, M.B.A., M.Ed., Palmer McDonald, M.B.A., Ph.D. and Maria McDonald McNamar, M.I.T., and six grandchildren: James Nelson Austin, Christopher Palmer Austin, Edward DesChamp McNamar, Perry Allan McNamar, Arlyn Tipton Brown, and Nina Tipton Brown.

— By Carole Barger

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Nicol L. Wintory

“From Berlin to Fort Smith, Arkansas, in 1938-39”

PART I

Interviews conducted for the Pebley Center Oral History Program, University of Arkansas Fort Smith

Interviewee: Nicol L. Wintory

Interviewers: Billy Higgins and William Hargis

Interviews conducted at the Museum of Fort Smith History

Introduction

Earlier this summer, I read a news story about a Jewish award. Titled the Genesis Award, it was created by well-intentioned Russians and Israelis to honor an individual whose contribution to society could be traced back to their Jewish values. In addition to the international prestige of earning the award, the winner would also receive \$1 million! Although it was created to foster positive relations among nations and to influence a younger generation of Jewish people, my thoughts went directly to the purse. A million bucks? Surely there was some way my stepdad, Nicol L. Wintory, could qualify.

Primarily a local celebrity among the religious circles of the Arkansas River Valley, Mr. Wintory, or Poppy, as he is called by his many grand- and great-grandchildren, has certainly contributed a large amount to our community over the last sixty years. Surely this selfless service could be attributed to his strong value system. Did I mention that his is a Jewish value system? Cha-ching!

As part of our family for the past thirty years, Mr. Wintory has had to develop strong character values, to say the least. Without a doubt, these include being patient, kind, and wise. Whether he is explaining Jewish traditions to a group of Episcopalian teenagers, teaching Hebrew, or sharing parenting advice, his method is deliberate and thorough. Never one to leave out an important detail, he disseminates information with honesty and a subtle humor. Certainly raising a family (twice) would earn us, I mean him, bonus points toward the award application.

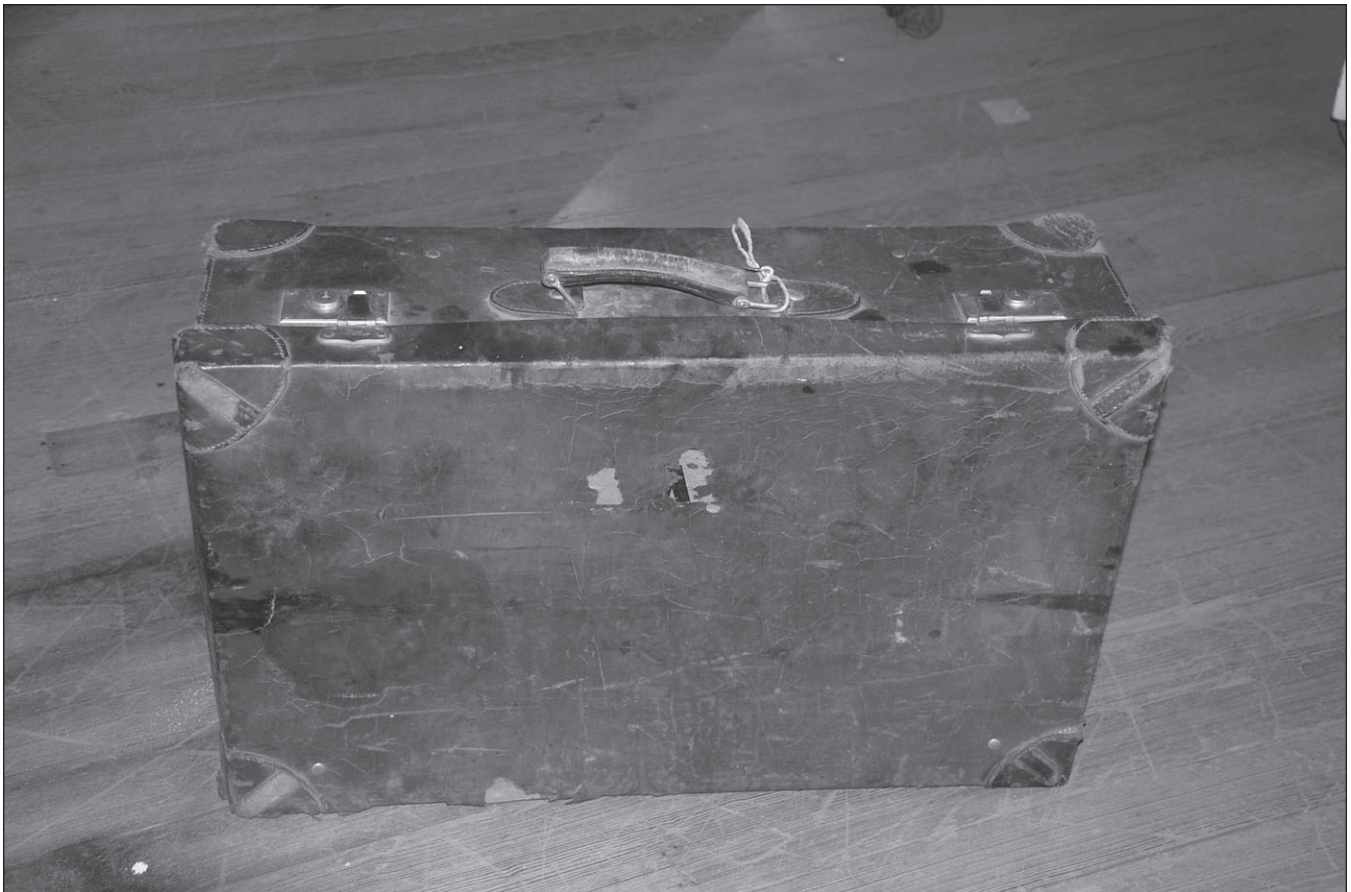
But I wondered what sets aside a Jewish value from a family value or Christian value. After reviewing some sources on the subject of “Jewish values,” I found several lists both in English and Hebrew, long and short. And the good news was, they were not at all different from the list of moral values that most of us try to live by daily. Love your

neighbor. Support your community through education and volunteer work. Be nice. OK, Nic Wintory most certainly would qualify.

Now that we had the values section completed, what about Nic’s individual contribution to society? Although I could recount a tremendous amount of good deeds from our long life together as father and daughter, his personal influence seems greatest in the areas of education, family, and faith. Did his actions contribute to world peace? Was he a change maker in the area of international politics? Well, maybe not. But this I know is true: The lives that have been positively affected just by knowing Mr. Wintory are too many to list on any curriculum vitae.

Recently, I took my youngest son out for some well-deserved ice cream. As we were entering the store, he asked, “Mommy, why do Spanish and Japanese people live here in Fort Smith?” Ah, the curiosity of a six-year-old. As I conjured up a quick fix answer (for freedom, opportunity and to be closer to family who already live here) I shared the story about how Poppy (Nic) and his family immigrated here to the United States at the turn of the century, fleeing religious and cultural oppression in search for a better life. If adversity builds strong character, or in Poppy’s case, strong Jewish values, then surely he would be bumped to a finalist for the Genesis Award. Obviously, he has my vote.

Frankly, his story speaks for itself. In an eighty-six page transcript derived from eight one-hour interview sessions conducted by the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith Pebley Center Oral History Program, Mr. Wintory has narrated the story of how he and his family emigrated from Nazi Germany in 1938 and stayed here to become such a large part of our community. Shared in a series of articles through the next few issues of this journal, Mr. Wintory explains how one event in our world’s history, the Holocaust, had such a direct impact on his life and how he was able to use that experience to influence



NICOL WINTORY CARRIED THIS SUITCASE *from Berlin to Fort Smith just before World War II.*
 PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF LYNLEY PARKER WRIGHT AND THE MUSEUM OF FORT SMITH HISTORY

his daily decisions in family, work, and faith. Each time I hear this story, something shifts within me. A million bucks notwithstanding, I think how incredibly richer my life is today having had Nic Wintory for my dad all these years. Shalom, my friend, shalom.
 — Eden Buerghler

Interview No. 1 **Tuesday, July 13, 2008**

Billy Higgins: I'm Billy Higgins, associate professor of history at the University of Arkansas—Fort Smith, and today, July 13, 2008, a Tuesday, we are at the Museum of Fort Smith History, and we are interviewing Mr. Nicol Wintory. Mr. Wintory first would you tell me, sir, when and where you were born.

Nicol Wintory: Okay. I was born in Berlin, Germany, on February 22, 1923.

BH: And your parents?

NW: My mother was born in Berlin as well. She died in 1971 [in California].

BH: And her name was?

NW: Well you wouldn't believe that, but her maiden name was [Charlotte] Deutschland.

BH: [laugh]

NW: Which is hilarious when you get to thinking about the fact that the German government, after the Nazis came to power, made her shorten her name to "Land." They didn't want a Jew by the name of Deutschland.

BH: So she was a Jew.

NW: We were all Jews.

BH: And your father?

NW: Yes. He was born in what was Austria. [That area] became Poland after World War I. And he migrated at a very young age, in fact immediately after World War I, he migrated. He was in the Austrian army during the war. And after the war he migrated to Berlin because three of his brothers had preceded him there. So, he came to Berlin and subsequently met my mother and they got married.

BH: And what was his occupation, Mr. Wintory?

NW: Well, he and his three brothers were all associated in a large food business in Berlin, in fact, the largest of its kind in Germany. It was a combination of import, manufacture, distribution, of food items, particularly, [pause] well, it was so



ASIW DELIVERY TRUCK, BERLIN 1929. Three Weinberger brothers, Adolf, Silo, and Israel owned the company and their initials provided the acronym and name of the company – ASIW(einberger)

PHOTO COURTESY OF CORA WINTORY KLAHN

diversified it is hard to talk about. They had two cheese factories. One in Bavaria and one in North Germany, which is now, by the way, a town that, had always been in Germany but is now in Poland.

BH: Oh, yes.

NW: It was called Stettin and now Szczecin, Poland. And the other one was in Ulm, Germany, which is a good area. Then they had a large rendering plant in Berlin in which the only thing that they lost was the hog's [inaudible]. I mean, they ate everything. [laughing]

BH: Yes.

NW: They even sold the hide for something.

BH: Lost only the squeal, as they say.

NW: Right. That's the only thing that was left. In those days, lard was still used largely as cooking fat. You know, that was before we all got so conscious of cholesterol and what have you.

BH: They processed meat.

NW: Only pork. In that rendering plant, pork was the only meat item—the only association of meat altogether. They had a margarine company. They had an egg outlet and a hundred and one grocery stores. So, it was a very large operation.

BH: Yes.

NW: At which each of the brothers had a different

function. One of the brothers was in charge of the retail operations. One was in charge of imports and buying. One was the CEO, and my father was the one that was in charge of personnel, distribution, labor negotiations, and things of that nature. You know, anything that pertained with distribution and sales.

BH: And did you give me his full name?

NW: Well, he changed his name to Joseph Wintory. All of our names were changed, by the way, when we came to this country. It was kind of strange. As we were on the boat on the way over. My mother was seasick from the time she got on the boat until she got off. In fact, the joke in our family was that they, my father and mother, on their honeymoon rented a boat to visit the Isle of Capri, a row boat, and she got seasick in it. So, [laughing] she could look at a boat and get seasick.

BH: When did this name change come about?

NW: On the ocean between Copenhagen and New York City.

BH: And what had been the previous name?

NW: Our name was Weinberger. W-E-I-N-B-E-R-G-E-R. My first name is the same. Mother's first name is the same. Daddy's changed. I don't know why Daddy's name was changed. His first name was Israel Weinberger. And Mother decided to change it to

Joseph Wintory. I don't know why she liked Joseph better than Israel. I, was the only one not seasick, and all I know is that I went to see my mother in her stateroom one day and she said, "I just want you to know as of today you are Nicol Wintory." I said, "Oh, that's interesting to know." [laughing]

BH: And you have been that ever since.

NW: Ever since. In fact, we boarded the boat under one name and got off the boat under another. And all of our papers were immediately changed.

BH: What was the year that you were taking the passage on the boat?

NW: 1939.

BH: Would you say in 1939 when you got on the boat, you were refugees?

NW: Of course.

BH: Yes, yes.

NW: We escaped by the, you know, skin of our teeth.

BH: Can you remember the circumstances of your escape?

NW: Sure. You know, it's not like I was a child, you know. I was 15 when we left. I was 16 when we got to this country. And we spent seven months in Denmark. You see, in those days you couldn't just swim the Rio Grande and say, "I'm here." [laughing] You actually had to get permission from the United States to immigrate which, in our case, took from June of 1938 to April of 1939 before we got permission. In fact, we were getting very, very worried that we might get caught in a war in Europe because it was evident to everybody, other than the people in the United States, that war was totally imminent. And, you know, we barely escaped, I mean war started within three or four months after we left. So we escaped Germany just . . . In fact, there were interesting circumstances. To explain that I would have to go back. I don't know how far back you want me to go.

BH: I would like for you to go as far back as you can remember.

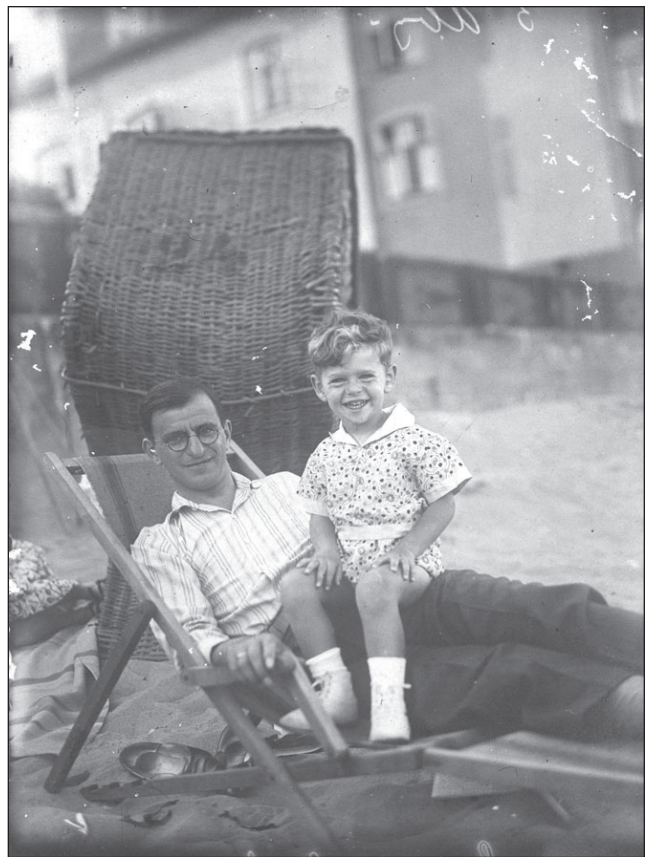
NW: My father was a naturalized German citizen. You know, he had been in Austria. And, the thing was, at the time that Poland became a country, you know, after World War I, the citizens of that country had the option of remaining Austrians or becoming Poles.

BH: Yes.

NW: But they had to make an election [a choice].

BH: Yes.

NW: My—if you didn't make an election, you became a Pole because that's what the country had become. But you could remain an Austrian. My father did neither, since he was already living in Berlin when all of this came about and he had already



NICOL WITH FATHER, ISRAEL, *on a Baltic Sea resort beach*

PHOTO COURTESY OF CORA WINTORY KLAHN

applied for German citizenship. So he became a German citizen. And the laws in Europe are entirely different, you know. Right now, when a Latino comes to this country and has a child, that child is automatically an American. In Europe, the family becomes the citizens of the country of their father, of the man in the family. It makes no difference where you were born. So, he became a German citizen and that made it fine because mother and I were born in Berlin anyway. But, subsequently, after the Nazis came to power, they removed my father's citizenship by reason of him being Jewish. We became what is known as stateless, what's known as "the man without a country." The tragedy was that you could not travel anywhere, because no country will accept a stateless person because they can't get rid of you. If you're a citizen of any country, you can always be shipped back to that country, but if you are stateless, you're out of luck.

NW: My father, with a bribe, had gone to the Austrian embassy in Berlin and explained how he just failed to make the option at the time.

BH: Yes.

NW: That he had always wanted to remain an

Austrian. And with enough money, they agreed that that was probably true.

BH: That election was in Galacia?

NW: It was right after World War I after which Poland became a country. And my father, he was born in a part of Poland known as Galacia, which borders the Czech Republic.

BH: Yes.

NW: If you would walk over the mountain you would be in what is now the Czech Republic. He explained that he always wanted to remain an Austrian, but he just failed to do so. But like I say, the several thousand German marks helped tremendously. And all of a sudden, lo and behold, we all became Austrians, which however, the German government did not know. They thought we were stateless. So, in a sense, we were their prisoners. The thing that is funny about that, if anything can be funny, is that this happened four days before the Germans marched into Austria and everybody became German. And that is a citizenship they couldn't take away from you, although we still had our Austrian passports. And, they didn't expire until December 31 of 1938. At which time, you could trade them in for a German passport. Things got progressively worse in Germany starting in 1933 when Hitler came to power. The first of April of that year they had this first boycott of Jewish businesses where they took buckets of red paint and large, like four-inch, brushes and smeared them all over store windows of Jewish-owned retail stores.

BH: Was the rendering plant so attacked?

NW: The grocery stores were. It attacked all professionals, like Jewish doctors. They just came on with smaller brushes and put, wrote "JEW" across in all the buildings. But the whole operation was really not affected that much because you couldn't really know. This [plant] was a large building with three courtyards, one behind the other. It was like three buildings connected.

BH: You employed German workers, too, non-Jewish Germans?

NW: Oh sure. I mean, there were some family members involved in sales, and so forth, but all the workers were non-Jewish.

BH: Nicol, were you going to school at this very time? You were about ten years old or so.

NW: Well, I was. Actually I started school in Switzerland. I had been quite ill. I think it was scarlet fever. The doctor recommended I go into some high elevation so I started my schooling in Saint Moritz, Switzerland, in a boarding school. After eight months, I returned home and Mother enrolled me in a public school. And public schools somehow or another were not my cup of tea. So, Mother took me



YOUNG NICOL on his first day
of school in 1929 in Berlin

PHOTO COURTESY OF CORA WINTORY KLAHN

out shortly. I have memories to this day—I'm 85—of a teacher with a large ruler [laughing] hitting the kids on the fingers and you know.

BH: They were trying to, maybe, enforce a little good behavior.

NW: Well, I was never a misbehaved child; I will assure you of that. But you didn't have to be misbehaved, you could just be slow or do something and you got hit. In fact, I was never hit but the environment was not my cup of tea. So mother found a private school where it had five students, and we were all taught by a lady who was very capable. I don't know what her education was, but I immediately started French, and of course, German.

BH: Mathematics?

NW: Oh, that, the whole—everything you know. I mean it was a regular school environment. We even got grades for handwriting and all that stuff.

BH: How long were you in Switzerland?

NW: The first time I was there eight months and I returned the next year for three more months at Saint Moritz.

BH: What were your boyhood memories of

Berlin? Was that a friendly, a good place for you?

NW: Oh, it was terrific.

BH: Did you go to the Berlin Zoo?

NW: Sure. Did everything. Berlin prior to Hitler was a fabulous place. It was a very liberal city with all the wonderful movies and a huge zoo and a fabulous planetarium and great eating places. Coffee shops were a big thing in Europe, where you can sit and drink coffee for hours and have great cakes and cookies and pies and what have you.

BH: You had a certain affluence and you were comfortable in Berlin? Can you remember the first time that you personally experienced prejudice because of your religion or culture?

NW: I personally was never attacked, except one time. I ended up living in France for two years. When I came back, all the Jewish kids had been kicked out of public schools. I mean, so when I came back, I had to attend a Jewish high school, which was a blessing in disguise because not too many ten- or eleven-year-olds get college professors as your teachers. See, not only were the kids run out, the professors and teachers of all of the schools, whoever was a Jew could not teach. So I had college professors as some of my teachers, and I remember one particular history teacher. Virtually all of my teachers had a Ph.D. of some sort.

BH: Do you happen to remember the history teacher's name, Mr. Wintory?

NW: Yes. His name was Heinz H-E-I-N-Z. His last name was Warschaur, which is, actually what it means is Worsovian, you know, someone from Warsaw. It is spelled W-A-R-S-C-H-A-U-R.

BH: Was he able to escape Nazi Germany, too?

NW: I never found out. Another former student who I ran into many years later, both of us tried to find out, in fact, so much so I read an article in a Jewish magazine about a Dr. Warschaur in Montreal or Toronto. It happened to have the phone number and I called thinking, "Boy, he escaped, you know." I talked to him and it just tickled him to death but he said, "I am not who you are looking for but I think it is so nice of you wanting to find someone." This is when I was already in my forties or so. The education you got was fabulous, but the pressure was much greater than a typical grade school or high school because a college professor, as you should know, they don't bring you along and pat you on the back. It's there; you can either take it or can leave it. Now, if you ask for help, you could get it on a given question, but it's there for you to take, and if you flunked you flunked. They couldn't care less. That's just one less student to worry with. So that's not the typical attitude of a high school teacher. But you got a tremendous education because they were very demanding. Well, let me tell

you, digressing for a moment, I am probably the only tenth-grade dropout who has ever taught at the University of Arkansas. [laughing]

BH: I have heard about your teaching, which is excellent.

NW: Well, you know, I taught at Westark for years. I taught German; I taught Hebrew; I taught Fashion Merchandising.

BH: Where in Berlin were you living at the time you returned from Switzerland and were going to this high school for Jews?

NW: I know where we lived then. I remember three places, actually four places where we lived. I remember where I lived as a small child because that was a very interesting place. It was called a colonnade. There was an inlet street and then an oval kind of like a racetrack, with buildings all the way around it, apartment houses. They were all like about four or five stories tall. And this was a very wonderful place to live because, you know, there was no traffic and so forth, and it was within about three blocks of one of the busiest intersections in Berlin, and in fact, it became later, the headquarters of the Luftwaffe, which is the German Air Force. I mean it was totally sealed off, you know, because it was easy to do.

BH: [Hermann] Goring was there then. [Reich Air Ministry at Wilhelmstrasse 81-85, south of Leipziger Strasse]

NW: Yeah, that was Goring's headquarters. [pause] But, that was a fabulous place. That's where I lived, I guess, from birth. I really can't remember why we moved away from there, because that was still when things were good. We moved into a larger apartment house, I think we were on the third floor or something like that. Well, Mother found an up and down duplex in a suburban location in Berlin very near the famous botanical gardens. And we had the whole upstairs and the owner of the building lived downstairs. We had a separate entrance, separate place to park a car. And the whole backyard, which went from one street to another, was great for a kid to play in, it was just fabulous. With snow on the ground, you could take a sled and go down that thing. It was a great place.

BH: Now, did you have siblings living there with you?

NW: I was an only child until I was thirteen years old. So, in those days I was an only child.

BH: When you would take your sled and go sledding, would you have playmates? And who were they?

NW: Well, there is an interesting thing, because I was attending school and I had schoolmates who I was friendly with. But I had a first cousin that I was

sort of being raised with. His mother died when he was three years old. His [father] is one of my father's brothers, however not one of those that owned a business. He was also in the business, but not one of the owners. My father was the youngest of eleven. But he was the fifth youngest. My father and then one brother then another brother and then another brother, and he was the oldest of the five. He was not what you called a sharp businessman, but you know, they found employment for him. In fact, he was in charge of—do you remember S&H Green Stamps?

BH: Oh, yes.

NW: Well they had a program like that in connection with our margarine where they had coupons on the back of every package of margarine. And then they had a gift store where you could pick up gifts, and he was in charge of that.

BH: He managed the gift store.

NW: Right. He was a nice enough guy but I was never close to him. He had a daughter and two sons, and I was close to all of them except him personally. And I don't remember either of his wives. Of course, the first one died before I was conscious of anything. Their youngest child was a son who was two years older than I was, and he never could get along with his stepmother. So Mother like adopted him, and he spent every weekend with us, so he was like a brother.

BH: So you looked forward to him and do you remember his name?

NW: Yeah, it was, well his given name was Herman. However he immigrated to Israel, in fact I saw him and his father off, on their way to Israel.

BH: In the '30s?

NW: 1936. And he ended up in Israel and changed his name to Zvi, Z-V-I, last name Carmi, which was which was really kind of a translation of Weinberger. C-A-R-M-I

BH: OK. That is what I wrote.

NW: He and I were, just like I say, very very close.

BH: Is he still living?

NW: No. Unfortunately he died about four, four or five years ago.

BH: In Israel?

NW: In Israel, yeah.

BH: Did you ever return to Israel to visit?

NW: No, but I have seen him here in this country a couple of times. In fact, I saw him three times. After we separated, which in itself is a funny story, he served in the British 8th Corps, which in World War II was a Jewish Corps, in the British 8th Army. And he was a non-commissioned officer. And after he came home after World War II, he got an offer to go to work with the Israeli National Police. Israel

is set up a little differently in that, you know, [here] each state has its own, or each city has its own police department. In Israel, every policeman is a part of the national police. You may be stationed in Tel Aviv or you may be stationed in Jerusalem, so it's set up like an army, and it's not locally controlled. He ended up being the deputy commander, which had the rank of lieutenant colonel for the, I guess you call it state police. And the FBI invited him [to come to this country] in 1956. Imagine, the last time I saw him was in '36, so they invited him to come to New York to study police methods at the FBI training center in Washington to teach him, show him procedures and so forth. And then he said they were going to send him to Chicago and Los Angeles but they also said, "Now if you have any particular interest in any United States city and would like to see their police operations, feel free to ask, and we will send you there at no cost to you." He says, "I have a particular interest in Tulsa, Oklahoma." They looked at him and, "Tulsa, Oklahoma?" you know. Well he immediately called me from Washington and said, "I'm here, and I'm coming to Tulsa."

[laughing]

NW: So, I met him at the airport, and he says, "Now we should really go by and say something to the police, you know, in case they ask me." [laughing] So I took him to the police commissioner's office and told him the story, and they got so tickled. They said, "If they call, I will swear they were studying our operations." [laughing] So I was living in Tulsa at the time, and my parents were still living in Fort Smith. So he spent a day or two with me, and he spent a couple of days with my parents in Fort Smith, then he had to go on to Chicago. The next time I saw him again was about twenty years later when his son was at New York University getting a degree there. I heard he was there, and of course in those days, I was going to New York on business, you know, about five times a year, and I managed a trip so I could be with him. We spent two or three days, two or three evenings together.

BH: Back in Berlin, prior to 1936, you and Herman would sometimes go to the botanical gardens maybe, close to your second residence?

NW: Well, that is not anything a boy in particular enjoys, you know. I have been there with my mother, you know, she loved all of those fine plants. I could think of more exciting things to do.

BH: Such as?

NW: Well, just playing, you know, doing things. I loved to play chess, for example, with classmates. We had all kinds of activities at the school. I was involved in athletics, you know, mostly field type, like 100 meter runs, and all that kind of stuff. I

played soccer, which everybody in Europe plays. I even learned to play tennis. You know, stuff like that. We were fully involved all the time. That even continued after Hitler came to power. With the exception of, all of a sudden all of the activities had to be Jewish. But, you know, but we had, all of the Jewish private schools. The Jewish population in Berlin was large. It was several thousand. You know, it was a city of 4.5 million. And I don't know how many there were, but there was enough that we had like five private schools.

BH: Were your parents religious?

NW: No.

BH: Did they go to temple?

NW: Mother was a—[pause] To call her an agnostic is an exaggeration because that makes you think about it. That took too much time. She just—[pause] it really doesn't mean anything to her. Daddy, on the other hand, was raised ultra-Orthodox. In Poland, you know, that is where you see these people with the hair locks and all this. His father had all of that. His father had a full beard and you know, it was just a totally different culture. I visited them a couple of winters and had a great time with them, but you talk about [laughing] the huge difference between our way of life. To give you an idea, I personally did not attend a synagogue until I was ten years old, and that was after Hitler came to power. That was in 1933, when I was ten years old, although it was a month or so before.

BH: And you spoke German at home?

NW: Sure.

BH: When you went to your grandparents, did they speak—

NW: They spoke Yiddish. But Yiddish is essentially 15th century German with—

BH: Hebrew overtones

NW: With Hebrew and Slav, so there was a lot that I would not understand but I could understand enough. Of course, they could understand me perfectly because they have lived in Berlin for a while.

BH: Did your mother consider herself a German?

NW: Yeah, so did I. All of my uncles fought in World War I on the German side.

BH: That is a great irony.

NW: One of my uncles, who had emigrated from Germany earlier, got an Iron Cross, which is a [high] German decoration.

BH: Was there ever a consideration, after Hitler came to power, of your mother, of yourself, or any part of the family, of separating yourself from Judaism.

NW: Oh, no, no. Again, that is way too active for my mother to worry about. Her religion was not



NICOL WITH MATERNAL GRANDFATHER, Hugo
Deutschland, and his mother, Charlotte, on a Baltic Sea beach.
 PHOTO COURTESY OF CORA WINTORY KLAHN

an issue. It wasn't that she was against Judaism, she just wasn't for religion. My father, on the other hand, had a typical upbringing of Jewish children in Poland, where they went to a Hebrew school, and then also public school. It's a totally different environment. When he came to Germany, he had, you know, shaved his head. My father went through a huge change, and even changed, you know Judaism has three major subdivisions, which is a lot better than what Protestants do. There are about twenty-two kinds of them.

BH: At least

NW: Judaism has orthodox, conservative, and reform. I was raised conservative, which uses more Hebrew than reform, although reform, which I am now, is changing towards more conservative, but I was raised conservative. And my father became conservative and got rid of all that extra paraphernalia.

BH: Let me ask you a little bit more about your mom. Do you remember any of her friends, at the second residence that you had? How did she spend her days when your father was working and you were



AROUND THE TABLE CLOCKWISE from left are Ms. Doing, Charlotte Weinberger, Nic's tutor, Nicol, and Nic's boyhood friend, Hans Doing in Marseilles at an outdoor café, 1934.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CORA WINTORY KLAHN

at school.

NW: Well, she was just like any typical—now one thing about it is she did not drive. My father was well enough off that we had a chauffeur who could take my mother anywhere she wanted to go. She was like any typical cosmopolitan woman [who liked] shopping.

BH: And she had German friends, non-Jewish friends?

NW: Sure. It absolutely made no difference in those days.

BH: How did you move from the second residence to the third residence?

NW: Well, I moved to France. I went to live in France with my mother's sister and her husband who, by the way, was a cavalry officer in the German army during World War I.

BH: So they were close to Switzerland then

NW: No, this is much later. This is—now I am in 1933. And he, in fact the reason I went to France is because my uncle, like I said he was a former cavalry officer, was quite hot-headed and got into an argument with a Nazi Storm Trooper and cold-cocked him right on the subway platform [laughing] which was not the thing to do for a Jewish man, even though he might have been an officer in the army. So, we got quite concerned about what could happen if he was ever identified, so my aunt and uncle, my mother and father and I all took off for Paris and stayed there for about three weeks, and then we moved to the south of France on the famous French Riviera. However, not in Nice or Cannes or one of those famous places, this was a small village, much closer to Marseille. We rented a side of a duplex there, and after just a little while they enrolled me in public school there because I had already had French,



NICOL AND HIS AUNT HERTHA who emigrated to Fort Smith, lived here until her death in 1962, and is buried in the city's Jewish cemetery.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CORA WINTORY KLAHN

enough French that I could speak it. Then after the summer was over, I was in that place for about three months or so and then we moved to—my parents went back, had to go back to Germany because my father was still in business there, that was still 1933. So my parents left, I guess that fall, and I moved in with my aunt and uncle, and I would have to say that I was probably as close to my aunt as I was nearly to my own mother. They were childless, and I had known her since birth. I was very close to her. She, in fact, is an interesting, very interesting woman because she was, you know, I mean in those days women weren't, didn't have executive positions of any kind. She was the executive director of the German Automobile Club. It was in a big office in Berlin. She, in fact, was in charge of managing and operating the annual automobile exposition, which was a huge event just like we have in this country: New York and Chicago and you know. That is where all the cars from all over the world showed their new models and all. Well, it was a total anachronism because women just weren't having these kinds

of jobs at that time. So we can see that she was an extremely capable woman, in fact, [laughing] probably a little more capable than her husband was. He was an officer, and he was a very sharp guy and all, but he didn't have what you would call a huge head for business. He worked for my father or others, like I say, other relatives were involved. I don't really know what his job was; I think he might have been a salesman. But he was a very interesting man, and very well read. Like I say, he was not the most practical of people, but when we moved to France, when I moved in with them in France of course, it was a major problem. France has a system where foreigners can't get what we call a "green card" of this country. It is practically impossible to get a work permit, so the only thing you could be is a salesman because you were self-employed as a salesman. So he, for some crazy reason, ran into some people and became a salesman for bakery goods, like food dye and yeast, and whatever you would need as a bakery, and he started serving bakeries with his products and got friendly with a baker. And he got interested in baking, and this guy taught him how to bake. And he became a fantastic cookie maker, and he didn't bake bread or anything like that, it was all dessert-type baking. So anyway, I stayed with them and he made a living, and at the end of 1935, my father, who had been supporting me by sending money, the German government reached a point where it would not permit money to be sent out of the country, they were hoarding currency. You understand? In preparation for war, of course. So my father could no longer support me there, and my uncle and aunt decided to go to what was then Palestine. And, so I had to come back to Germany at the end of 1935. In fact it was the winter vacation of 1935, and I got back to Berlin right at first of January. And, like I say, by that time we had all been kicked out of public schools.

BH: That was a dangerous year too, 1935. Did you consider going to Palestine with your aunt and uncle?

NW: No. I was not going to separate from my parents. That was never even considered. When I got back [pause] my parents had moved to a wonderful apartment in Berlin, which was probably the nicest place where we lived. In fact, I still receive a German-language magazine from Berlin a couple of times a year, and they just had a whole article on the park that we lived across from. That was just a lovely apartment. Unfortunately it was far from school.

Interview No. 2 Tuesday, July 22, 2008

BH: Well, Mr. Wintory, once again this is interview number two. I will give today's date which

is July 22, it's 10:30 A.M. We are at the Museum of Fort Smith History. I am Billy Higgins, the interviewer. William Hargis is the technician for us in this oral interview, and we have our subject of the interview, Mr. Nicol Wintory. Last time we were talking about, we had talked about relatives in Israel and how they came to the United States for a visit once. We were, I believe, back in Berlin from your days in France, in school, and you said the year was 1935.

BH: And so can you remember that winter of 1935?

NW: Yeah, I sure do, because it was a whole new experience because I was enrolled in a Jewish school, Jewish high school at the time. I told you about it last time that all the kids and all the teachers and professors were all kicked out of public schools and universities. So, my problem was that I was fluent in French at the time, and they put me into a class of second-year French. I spoke it more fluently than the teacher, and was promptly escorted to the principal [laughing].

BH: Did you correct his French?

NW: Well, the kids egged me on. In the south of France they speak a dialect called langue d'oc. I, of course, was familiar with it. They were reading some little old story, and you know, so the teacher said "who would like to read," and all the kids [said] "let him read." So I read the story partially and the teacher just picked me up by my hand and walked me to the principal's office and said, "This boy doesn't need second-year French." So the principal said, "That is fine, we will put him into something else for the remaining of this particular quarter" or whatever it was, "then he will start third year English in April."

BH: Now, you were around thirteen years old at this time?

NW: Right.

BH: So you were precocious?

NW: Well, languages were always my strength. My hope as a child was to get a degree in philology. Use it in international economics or something like that. None of which came to fruition, as you know. So, my father hired a, well hired is a strong word, got me a tutor, a very lovely lady who subsequently became a teacher at that school, by the way. She called me up at the beginning of February. I caught up the first two years of English and started third year English in April.

BH: This would be quite a stretch, and I wouldn't see how you could do it, but would you remember her name?

NW: Yes, exactly. Matter of fact, I visited her in Berlin in 1965. Kaete, Dr. Kaete. I guess you would write it K-A-E-T-E. L-A-S-E-R-S-T-E-I-N.

Laserstein, as they would say in German.

BH: And so she survived the war and the Nazis?

NW: Not only that, but she survived it in Berlin, hidden in an attic of some friends of theirs. She reached a point where she was more afraid of the bombs than she was of the Nazis because Berlin was just devastated, you know. She survived the war, and at the end of the war she moved to Sweden where her sister had been living for some time. After being there for a few months, she decided that it was wrong, that she needed to be back in Germany teaching German youth about what had been going on. She went back and went to public schools and taught until her retirement. When I saw her, of course, she was retired. I received a notice from her sister, this must have been in the late '60s early '70s, that she had died. I had started corresponding with her. And you could correspond with her in German or in English, I suppose anything you wanted.

BH: So she was your tutor?

NW: Yes.

BH: And you were either twelve or thirteen at that time. Did you go through the bar mitzvah?

NW: I sure did.

BH: While you were in Berlin?

NW: In Berlin, right. And I was very fortunate that on my mother's side of the family, I had a second cousin who was a rabbinical student. My father engaged his services to tutor me, and it was also an advantage that I was being tutored at home. If you want to hear a strange coincidence, I received my bar mitzvah ordination, or whatever you want to call it, in a large synagogue in Berlin. One of the associate rabbis of that synagogue was a fella by the name of Nussbaum. He was to be the celebrant of my bar mitzvah and he was. I didn't care for him at all because he was disappointed. You see, a source of income for younger rabbis is to tutor the future bar mitzvah boys. Since I was not his student, he looked at me with somewhat unfavorably and decided to give me a test to see if I was prepared. He asked me all kinds of questions that nobody in their right mind would have memorized, you know. And sure enough, he flunked me the first time. So, I went back a week later and gave him the right information. So he was never a favorite of mine. Although you might be interested to know he was the one who did conversions many years later in the big temple in Los Angeles. He converted some of those movie stars to Judaism.

BH: Oh he did? Do you remember his name?

NW: Nussbaum. I came to Fort Smith, as we get to later. But the reason I wanted to tell you is that we were talking about bar mitzvah. So one day, I kept taking some classes when I first got to Fort Smith

at the night school because I was working in the day, so I was in what was Fort Smith High School, and is now Northside. And, lo and behold, a rabbi from Muskogee was going to give a lecture, and I thought, "That's interesting, I wonder who it is," and would you believe it was my friend, Rabbi Nussbaum [laughing] who had just escaped from Germany also, and the first job he got, because his English had to be improved considerably, he spoke some English but he got this job in Muskogee, which had a congregation even much smaller than Fort Smith, which gives you an idea they probably didn't have over thirty members. But he parlayed himself into a, he was more a politician than a rabbi, but he was slick. And the only reason I digressed because I didn't want to [inaudible]

BH: Do you happen to remember the exact year that you met Rabbi Nussbaum in Fort Smith?

NW: It would have been in the early '40s. I would say probably in 1941 or 1942.

BH: And so back to Berlin and the synagogue. Were you comfortable? Were the Nazis putting pressure on the synagogue at that a time?

NW: There weren't doing that at the time. You could attend a synagogue. Strangely enough, the kind of thing that is happening now was not done until the government ordered it done. In other words, until *Kristallnacht*, I attended synagogue in Berlin without any problems whatsoever.

BH: Things begin to change and there was hope then that this was something that would pass and things would get back to normal.

NW: Well, it's, they are more apt to bomb one now than they were then. You know, because we have got all the various factions in Germany and France. France has got a gigantic Muslim population, and they are causing Jewish congregations trouble year around. They have to have police protection to conduct the service, which that is not true in Germany, yet.

BH: Yeah. Is this particular synagogue where you did your bar mitzvah still standing in Berlin?

NW: I really don't know, but I doubt it. I can't even remember the name of it, which is strange. I know where it was. I really only went there for my bar mitzvah because there was a synagogue much closer to our house that I used to attend. I wasn't what I call a regular attender. It's not like I went every Friday night or Saturday morning.

BH: You were taking more from your mother's viewpoint?

NW: Definitely not as much as my father. My father had such a different background than I did.

BH: You mentioned his orthodoxy in Galicia and yet he comes to Berlin and he is in the meat-

processing business. And he is dealing with something that could never be kosher, right?

NW: Oh, no. Nothing was kosher.

BH: So how did he reconcile that in your memory?

NW: I never heard it discussed until you mentioned it.

BH: I see, it was a just business and—

NW: You do what you have to do. It is not like he handled the meat or handled the pigs, you know what I mean. He was an office person. He was a manager.

BH: So nothing to reconcile there anyway?

NW: Well, if he wanted to be that, he should have never married mother. Because mother wouldn't know what kosher meant. We ate anything that wouldn't eat us first. [laughing] And I am still that way, by the way.

BH: I am interested in your family and social and everyday life in these years in Berlin. Did the family assemble for dinner each night?

NW: Oh yeah. I was even able to maintain that with my children up to a point. Which now I don't know a family of any kind that sits down to dinner at the same time. Half are at McDonald's, the other half are at Wendy's, and the mother is home, and the father is at a meeting, and it's a whole new world, and not a better one. All you have to do is look at the youth crimes, which are due, I think, due to a lack of family cohesiveness.

BH: Well after dinner, would you, as a teenager, go out in Berlin?

NW: I had a girlfriend, and we would go bicycling on the weekend or walk in the woods.

BH: Relatively out of harm's way.

NW: We had no problems.

BH: Did you hear stories of people who were harmed by the Nazis?

NW: We had very good friends who lived one floor below us who lived in the apartment house, you remember me telling you they became Luftwaffe headquarters? He was Dr. Sachs, a dentist and a good Lutheran, and his wife and two children. Well, when the Nuremberg Laws came into being, I am sure you're familiar this. . .

BH: 1935, that was.*

NW: Well, whenever. He discovered that he actually had a Jewish father and a Lutheran mother and he was baptized as a baby and grew up in a Lutheran church and married this fine Lutheran lady. He had two lovely daughters. We were real good friends with them since they lived just below us. But when we first met them, we didn't realize that there

was any connection to Judaism because they were good Lutherans. They were attending church and everything. Well, when all of a sudden, they painted on of those big red "J"s on his nameplate in front of the apartment house. He committed suicide. Because he was a person who had no affinity for Judaism, no understanding, and he was being kicked out of [pause]. He was a good German Lutheran and he was literally being kicked out of an environment, and it's not that he hated it, his life was being overturned, so to speak. He had no understanding, he had some Jewish friends such as us, but you know, he couldn't see himself as a Jew persecuted. In fact, there were a good number of suicides under similar circumstances. There were even people in the Nazi Party who found out all of a sudden that they had Jewish . . .

BH: Who were both Lutheran or some Christian denomination and had a Jewish background?

NW: Not background, just—

BH: Bloodline.

NW: Bloodline. It went to the one-sixteenth. So you could have a great-grandfather that was Jewish, and you were still unclean, you were still not a pure Aryan.

BH: And so in one respect, they were more at risk than the people who were acknowledged.

NW: Yeah. If that was our lot, that was our lot. It wasn't anything that surprised us that we were Jewish. Judaism, you can't compare Judaism anyway. This is for a separate interview. But we can have a discussion sometimes about "What is a Jew?" Because, you know, some people call it a religion, but I don't know that there is a Baptist nation. But there is a Jewish nation.

BH: I would like to have that interview, that would be—

NW: You know, there is no such thing as a history of the Baptist people, but there is a history of the Jewish people dating back nearly 5,000 years. So, that's a whole different thing, so what I am trying to say is that you can be Jewish, feel Jewish, and not necessarily be religious, because it is a people as well as a religion.

BH: Given the actions of the German government at this time, and we see movies and read books and there is always this element of fear of the midnight Gestapo raid, but that wasn't your life there. You lived, more or less, normally.

NW: Well, of course that eventually happened to us, too.

BH: You were a teenager, you had a girlfriend. Do you remember her name?

* The anti-Semitic laws passed in 1935 by the German government and announced by Chancellor Adolf Hitler at the annual Nuremberg Rally to a crowd of more than 100,000 cheering Nazis and sympathizers.

NW: Yeah. Her name was Vera, V-E-R-A. L-E-O-N. Last I heard, she and her parents had fled to Sao Paulo, Brazil, but I have never tried to find her or never been able to. She was a classmate.

BH: A girl-friend.

NW: Yes.

BH: And you had some young male friends, I guess, too?

NW: Well, sure. They were largely through school, except, of course, my cousin that we talked about who lived with us on weekends and the young man who was the son of the superintendant of the house where we lived who I was very friendly with. I will say this much. We didn't have quite as much time as kids seem to have today because by the time we got through with school, we had homework.

BH: Did you have a favorite book, novel, or?

NW: My favorite book was a history book. I can see it in my mind's eye. It was an illustrated history. The author was Hendrik Van Loon. Are you familiar with that name?

BH: No.

NW: He was a Dutch historian. I can't remember how the last name was spelled.

BH: I can look that up.*

NW: And he wrote an illustrated history book. I assume it was probably translated into German, I don't know. I loved to read that and it was very thick.

BH: Did you say Europe? Was it a European history book?

NW: World History

BH: World History. Okay.

NW: I still remember on the front page, there was a cartoon, and it showed this massive structure, you know it was supposed to be a kilometer wide, a kilometer long, and a kilometer high. And you see a bird. The caption said the bird, "Visits this once a year and sharpens its beak on this rock" [laughing] "and when he completely destroys the rock by sharpening his beak, once second of history will have passed"

BH: Wow.

NW: It's funny how you remember stuff.

BH: That's impressive; I can see why you would remember that. What a great analogy or metaphor.

NW: It might be of interest, particularly to you, since that is kind of your—

BH: Yeah, I will be looking for that. So you remember that book, and do you remember how you acquired that book? Was it a gift?

NW: I don't really remember. Probably, one of my parents gave it to me. I was an avid reader. I mean I read anything and everything. In fact, we had a large library in the home.

BH: Did you have a favorite reading place?

NW: I had my own room. I had a place to sit and read. Of course, I could sit anywhere and read. Mother had a

huge number of books and some of them I wasn't supposed to read. Of course, when they were out gone, that's the ones I immediately got ahold of and read them. They were just—Mother loved to read murder mysteries. That was entertainment. Well, I wasn't supposed to read that sort of stuff. Well, as the door closed behind Mother, the book was in my hands. [laughing] I never learned to appreciate that kind of literature, but she loved it.

BH: I sort of asked you, she sounds like a remarkable person, and I asked you about her friends. Did she have any particular hobbies or special interests that you remember?

NW: She loved art, not that she was artistic, but she loved art.

BH: Did she have the easel? Did she ever try her hand?

NW: No, not that I know of. She was a [pause] I really don't know how to describe her. She was unique in many, many ways. But she was not in any way, that I know of, outstanding culturally or anything of that nature. She was just an unusual persona. And so totally different from my father that you would not ever believe they ever met each other, much less got married.

BH: Do you remember, you mentioned you and Vera taking bike trips. Do you remember your bicycle?

NW: No, I sure don't. But what I do remember is—you probably know in 1936, Berlin had the Olympics. They built and we lived in that neighborhood, that general neighborhood. I don't mean next door, but readily attainable by bicycle. You know, it is not like it was a day trip or anything like that. In fact, later on I moved even closer. But where we lived, she and I would get on our bikes and we would go bicycling on the grounds, because it was all so beautifully paved on the outside of the stadium. So that was a great place to go.

BH: Did you actually see some of the events of the '36 Olympics?

NW: Yes I did. The reason why, because I had a cousin whose wife just died last year at ninety-one in Haifa, Israel. Actually, she was my cousin and he was the husband, and he was the correspondent for a New York newspaper and got all kinds of press passes. But since he was a political writer, rather than a sports writer, he passed the tickets on to the cousins. So I got to see a lot of stuff, for free.

BH: That must have been quite exciting. Adolf Hitler attended some of those games.

NW: Yes, in fact the one I did not attend at the time, but always read about, even in Berlin, you know we were still getting foreign stations we could listen to as long as we would be in the back room somewhere, about the time that Jesse Owens did so well. He was the only one that Hitler wouldn't shake hands with, which put the last laugh on Hitler, not Jesse Owens.

BH: Exactly.

NW: We always pulled for every foreign country that we could pull for. We just loved to see the Germans

*Hendrik Willem Van Loon, *Van Loon's Lives* (NY: Simon & Schuster), 1942.

get beat because they were supposed to be a super-race, remember that was the big thing. They were going to be the fastest, the best, the tallest, the highest, you know whatever. They got beat pretty regularly. Not that they weren't good athletes, many were.

BH: But they weren't invincible.

NW: Certainly not, certainly not. But I will tell you this. There was a famous Jewish person on a team, on a U.S. team who was not permitted to attend in Germany. They kicked him off the team before the U.S. team went to Germany. It was not that Germany would not accept him because they would have had to accept him.

BH: I have read that story, yes. And there was another Jewish sprinter on the relay team who did make the team but then they didn't [inaudible].*

NW: So, you know. It's a great country and all, but if I may again go a little bit, one thought leads to another, so I don't think I have told you this story, and if I have just interrupt me please. When we got to New York literally penniless, like I told you I think, my father had been given money from our relatives. But I got the *New York Times* every day and been looking at the help wanted pages. I found this ad where this company on lower Broadway looked for an office boy. And the salary was going to be sixteen dollars a week. Of course, that sounds crazy, but sixteen dollars a week would actually buy stuff. Keep in mind, when I finally came to Fort Smith my first job paid me eight dollars a week and that was a year later. So I immediately got myself a nickel so I could catch the subway and go way down near the battery. There was this huge office building and said Socony Vacuum. In the meantime, some friends had gotten me a personal recommendation from one of the Rockefellers, which said only that so-and-so was a nice young man and he would appreciate it [for Nic to be considered]. It was David Rockefeller in fact. So I presented that to the secretary, and I mean that rushed me into the office just lickity-split to see, you know, the personnel manager. And so he started to interview me, and he says, "Well now, you speak English with an English accent." I said, "Well, yes of course, because I just got here." He says, "Where did you come from?" I said we were originally in Germany. He says, "Why did you leave?" Well we were refugees. I noticed he was turning sort of red in the face, and I couldn't figure it out, and he says "I am sorry to have to tell you young man, but our firm does not hire Jews." That happened within three weeks of having arrived in the United States, which I thought was a weird welcome. However, again if I may jump ahead many years, Socony Vacuum became Mobil Oil. So I was watching TV one day and saw this wonderful

ad about Mobil Oil company about all the wonderful things that they did, just such great people you wouldn't believe it. So I got on the internet and found out who the president or chairman was, and I wrote him a personal letter telling him the story. I said you might want to add that to the description about what a wonderful company you run. I said I will tell you that I know that we are now a family and all our friends did not hurt you even one iota, and I can assure you that not one of us have ever bought a single product made by Mobil or Socony Vacuum, which includes Hefty bags. And I sent it off to their headquarters in lower Broadway, beautiful building with the flying horse, you know. So it wasn't two weeks later that I had an answer from the guy signed by him personally. The next thing you are going to ask me is exactly when it was. I can't tell you. You going to ask me his name and I can't think of it right now. But I still have the letter, needless to say, although I don't even know where it is right now. But anyway, in it he said that first of all that was no longer the policy of the company and many, many years have passed. The time I wrote him was probably in the '80s or early '90s, so that was at least 40 years later.

BH: But you made your—tried to clean the slate there. But he responded. Did he give you anything personal?

NW: Well, he said he also wanted me to know that he could well understand how it was because you can tell by my name I came over in an Italian immigrant family and in my early days I had a terrible time finding work in the community. It has only been in later years that I was finally accepted and able to reach the goals I had set for myself. I want you to know this is no longer the policy and so long as I am alive, there will never be any discrimination against anyone for anything in my company. Then, of course, Mobil and Exxon joined and he became vice chairman, and I don't know what came later but, I was pleased to get an answer. But I am the kind that [inaudible] like yesterday I called the *Southwest Times Record*. Because this week, this Sunday, they put out a beautiful thing called "Life in Sebastian County."

BH: I saw that.

NW: Right. And it has a listing of churches. It has every conceivable Christian denomination in it. It is a wonder they didn't take up the whole book with it. They included a Buddhist temple, but they omitted a synagogue.

BH: There is one in town.

NW: So I called them, and I said, "You know, we may be small, but we are here, and I think we are as important to this community as the Buddhist temple is."

BH: Certainly longer existing here.

NW: I said, "Yes, we have only been in town for 125

*Editor's note: Marty Glickman and Sam Stoller were the only two Jews on the 1936 U.S. Olympic team in Berlin. They were both sprinters and slated to be on the U.S. 400-meter relay team but were replaced by Jesse Owens and Ralph Metcalfe in a controversial switch by the coaches shortly before the race. The 400-meter team won the gold medal in a world record time of 39.8 seconds that stood for twenty years. This gold medal was Owens' fourth in the Berlin Olympics.

years.” [laughing] “So I can see why you would not have heard of us.” [laughing] But anyway, he was very, very . . . Apparently, he had many calls about many things that were left out that I hadn’t caught. But he said, “I assure you, the next edition, we’ll correct these things. I am taking notes all over the place.”

BH: Yes, we were at the Olympics in 1936, and I was going to ask you about a couple of things here. I think I pronounced it halfway correctly. The Wilhelm Strasse, the main boulevard, and the Reichstag building you saw those things?

NW: Well, yes, I mean, it’s not like we were restricted to go anywhere in the city. In fact my father’s business was way away from where we lived, because it was, in fact, what later became East Berlin.

BH: And he drove his own privately owned vehicle?

NW: Mercedes Benz, in fact. Mercedes Benz had like a refabrication plant in Berlin where you took your car after so many years, and they would go over it and it was a four-door convertible.

BH: Is this the reason why he once chauffeured Albert Einstein as you mentioned?

NW: Right, because he [Dad] had a very suitable car.

BH: And were there some details of that that you can remember?

NW: Well, yes, the one thing that I remember, which I can still see—when you sit in the front seat, between the driver and the passenger, on the floor there was this thing coming out, out of the floorboard with a crank handle. And I kept asking, “Daddy, what in the world is that?” Well, he says, “That is a central lubrication system. You turn that handle so often and it lubricates all the four wheels and whatever needs to be lubricated.” [laughing] That is about the only thing that I remember.

BH: So it was a fairly new car in the 1930s?

NW: I think it was a 1929 model. You know, in Europe, you don’t brag about the fact that you can buy a new car every year. You brag about the fact that you can keep a car forever and ever and ever. That is why my father had it reconditioned at the plant in Berlin where they completely repainted it, put a new top on it. You know, the convertible top. Cloth top. The car, you know was still a ’29 model, but it looked like a million dollars. And it drove even better.

BH: And I was going to ask you this earlier about the Olympics, did you ever see Der Fuhrer?

NW: Yes, well that is a separate story, but I didn’t see him at the Olympics, but I saw him all the time because we lived on the avenue that connected the central government district to the Olympics. Which is a street called Kaiserdamm. And all the events, national or international, all took place starting in 1936 at the Olympic stadium. My job was till the end of ’38, and the motorcades always came along by our house, and my favorite story about that is that the lead car, well they had military and police



NICOL WITH FATHER, ISRAEL WEINBERGER, on running board of 1929 Mercedes in Marseilles. The car was a four-door convertible. Also in the picture are Nic’s boyhood friend, Hans Donig (now of Beverly Hills, California), and his tutor.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CORA WINTORY KLAHN

first to make sure everything was safe. In fact, we had to have our shades and curtains closed. You couldn’t look out the window. And they had these storm troopers with interlocking arms looking each direction so you couldn’t get very close actually, but keep in mind the avenue where we lived, the center of it was wide, maybe not quite as wide as Garrison Avenue, but it was wide. And then there was a grassy divide on each side and access roads on both sides. So you can see the width of it was a whole lot wider than Garrison Avenue because it actually had three streets on it, although the ones running next to the houses were one-way. In the middle it was both ways. So anyway, the parade would go down the street, and then Hitler would always stand up with his hand on the windshield and throw his salute. I saw every dignitary. In the later years, he was always followed by Mussolini because they were good friends. And then there was a Hungarian dictator, Admiral [Miklos] Horthy. You might look him up sometime. Sounds funny, a Hungarian being an admiral, I don’t know how he was an admiral. There followed other people of lesser distinction, because they were not necessarily dictators. You would have ambassadors of foreign countries. I always loved the Americans. They

always came with gray top hats. People loved them then, you know.

BH: Charles Lindbergh was there at one time.

NW: He [Lindbergh] said that he admired Hitler tremendously. He thought he was the greatest thing that had happened since apple cider. [laughing] I have mixed feelings about Lindbergh

BH: Oh sure.

NW: I admire his feat, but that is kind of like, and again I am deviating into politics, but you can be an admirer of the Republican nominee for president [John McCain], but that doesn't mean I think he would make a good president. I don't think the one thing has anything to do with the other. I think he is a great human being and has suffered greatly, and I admire him for that, but anyway, that is beside the point.

BH: So there was this, would you call it periodic excitement in Berlin? Or was it constant excitement?

NW: Well, not constant. [inaudible] So the problem was I am a teenager, 14 years old, I want to see what's going on. So I go down stairs and I get my bike and I get in that grassy thing, so I am probably within, what, thirty feet of Hitler as he passes by, and don't you know, it's the damndest thing, but every time, just as he came up, the bicycle would slip out of my hand and just as he came by and everybody is throwing the salutes I was on the ground picking up my bike. [laughing]

BH: Do you think he ever noticed?

NW: Oh, no.

BH: That is a good ploy.

NW: I never had to throw a salute, and I made every parade that went through there. I was just a nosey kid; I wanted to see what was happening.

BH: But you were always picking up the bike. [laughing]

NW: And it was always back up by the time Mussolini came along. [laughing]

BH: So you had close-ups, and I guess those images are burned in your memory, aren't they?

NW: Yes.

BH: Have you ever considered drawing or painting those memories?

NW: No, I have no talent whatsoever. In fact, I can't even read my own handwriting.

BH: Did you own a camera at the time?

NW: Yes. It was promptly taken away from me by the United States at the beginning of World War II because I was a dangerous foreigner.

BH: You were a person who had not completely gotten the trust of the U.S. government yet?

NW: Well, I was still a German citizen according to them, and I even had a pistol at the time because I was employed in Fort Smith by Ross Motor Company, which was a Dodge and Plymouth dealer on the corner of Rogers and Towson. And they taught me how to shoot a pistol. I

bought one, a .22 long rifle pistol, and I joined their team. We had an annual shoot-out against the police department [laughing] and they would match us up our best man against their best man. We usually kept the trophy. We could out-shoot the police pretty well. They took that away and my camera away, and I could get it back in 1946. Of course by that time I was a citizen and had served in the army. The camera, I just threw away because it was the kind that slid in and out and it had these folded, you remember the kind?

BH: Those were great images that came out of those but a lot of trouble and heavy.

NW: It was a German camera.

BH: Leica

NW: No, Leica were not that type. It was one of the famous brands. I think it was Voigt or something, V-O-I-G-T or something like that. Anyway, I just threw it in the trash. And the pistol, I thought I had oiled everything the way it should be, but it was rusted so I just got rid of it too.

BH: Well, to wrap up today, is there another Berlin story that you had in mind that we have not touched on yet?

NW: Well, just getting away from there.

BH: Well, that is what I wanted to start the next one, and probably the fourth session will be, well I am acutely interested in when you got to Fort Smith and so on and all of that.

NW: I might add one thing before we get off of Berlin. It is sort of interesting, you know all of the youth were, the German youth, the Nazi youth, I should say. They were either Hitler Youth. Young men in scout-looking uniforms but with the Nazi armband and they carried a dagger at their waist. And the girls belong to an association called BDM, which meant Bund Deutscher Mädel, which means an association of German girls, and they wore little black skirts, white blouses, and red neckerchiefs and also had Nazi paraphernalia all over them. Well, here we were, Jewish boys and girls, what were we going to do? We can't do anything. So we decided we would all wear navy shorts and white shirts. In fact, in Germany, wearing shorts is something you do practically year around, and it is not something you say, "Well, I am ten now, I can't wear shorts anymore." They wear shorts when they are eighteen. Also something that they wore in those days which you don't hear about at all anymore and I used to wear them in the winter time, were knickerbockers, you know what I am talking about. They went out, as you know, years and years ago but that was still the fashion in those days, and I wore them as a kid. The problem always was that if the socks started to slide then your pants wouldn't billow out the way they were supposed to. Plus the fact that I didn't much like them bicycling because I was afraid I would catch the chain on something. But anyway, we started to wear these navy pants, navy shorts and white shirts, and I joined a Zionist youth organization.



THE GRAVESITE OF NICOL'S GRANDFATHER, Hugo Deutschland, in Weissensee Jewish Cemetery in Berlin. Visitors in 2008 included Nicol's sisters, Cora and Petra, and his brother, Michael.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CORA WINTORY KLAHN

BH: You did? I was going to ask you if you had heard that word and here you are a Zionist.

NW: It was a branch of a largest Jewish youth movement that had various divisions within it and one of the divisions I joined had its own tennis courts and I took tennis lessons there. But the group I was most engaged with was the group that met once a month. We had a youth leader who was probably some guy, eighteen or nineteen, and we would meet and he would tell us about Palestine and the hopes and so forth. Again, it was a—see this is what is so strange—it should sound strange to a good Christian, it was a Jewish movement that had nothing to do with religion. It was a national type movement. We didn't do anything religious, we did things together. We played soccer, stuff like that. It was a great youth organization.

BH: And Zion, to you, as a young Zionist was Palestine? Not like Zion in America or Zion in some other place, it was always understood to mean Palestine.

NW: Yes. Zion is Palestine.

BH: Exactly. But some people decided to

emigrate to America and Australia or other places and so the migrations occurred for convenience or whatever was possible not always what was according to—

NW: Now keep in mind, it was very difficult to get into Israel—into Palestine. There were all kinds of restrictions, and there were people who never made it and returned to Cyprus. You might have read that book [*Exodus*, by Leon Uris].

BH: And yet your uncle made it there.

NW: I don't know how. I don't know the details. But in 1936 there wasn't the big push that came later so a few handfuls were always able to get in. But my aunt and uncle, the ones that I lived with in France, they left in 1934 and went there without any trouble. Anyway, I just want you to know that there were activities with Jewish youth.

BH: That's a great story. Well, we are to the end of interview number two on this Tuesday, and we probably will start [interview number 3] with when the pressure came against you by the Nazi government and your decision as a family to emigrate.

Solid Steel Scissors Company

by Phil Pankiewicz

The Henkel Company of Fremont, Ohio, was started by three partners, George Zimmerman, his brother, Harry, and Paul Schaaf. George Zimmerman was an intimate friend of the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Fremont. Zimmerman hired the pastor's son, Hurd J. Miller, as a salesman during his college summer vacations. It was a job at which Miller proved quite adept, and upon his graduation, he continued in that role.

By 1914, the Henkel Company had grown so quickly that an additional New York office was deemed necessary. Hurd J. Miller was put in charge of the office and continued in that role until Zimmerman disposed of his interests in the company. Part of his departure agreement stipulated that Zimmerman could not establish a similar business east of the Mississippi River.



**HURD J.
MILLER**

Never one to remain idle, Zimmerman began seeking out places to establish a new business using the agreed upon parameters, that is west of the Mississippi for a location. He finally chose Fort Smith, Arkansas. One major reason was an apparently great sales pitch by the local Business Men's Club. The abundance of natural gas and a ready supply of workers in the Fort Smith area were major factors in his decision. Zimmermann took a permanent room at the Goldman Hotel to launch his factory. After careful planning and negotiations, the Solid Steel Scissors Company was established on September 23, 1916.

Zimmermann found a property at the intersection of Kelley Highway and North Fifteenth Street and began production with about fifteen workmen. Early on, the officers included Hurd J. Miller, his father, Dr. Carl G. Miller of Wooster, Ohio, vice-president, and R. F. Routson, treasurer.

For some reasons, most probably health issues, Zimmerman returned to Ohio after selling the entire operation to his star salesman, Hurd J. Miller, who took up residency in an apartment house at 1615 North B Street, most likely so he could devote all his time to the business. Hurd Miller also maintained a summer home near Mountainburg on Highway 71.¹ Indeed, with financial help from the First Federal Savings and Loan, of which Hurd Miller became an officer, the company grew rapidly, gained government contracts, and eventually employed from 150 to 200 workers.²

At age forty-nine, Hurd Miller died in Fort Smith on May 8, 1940. Miller was hailed as a prominent Fort Smith

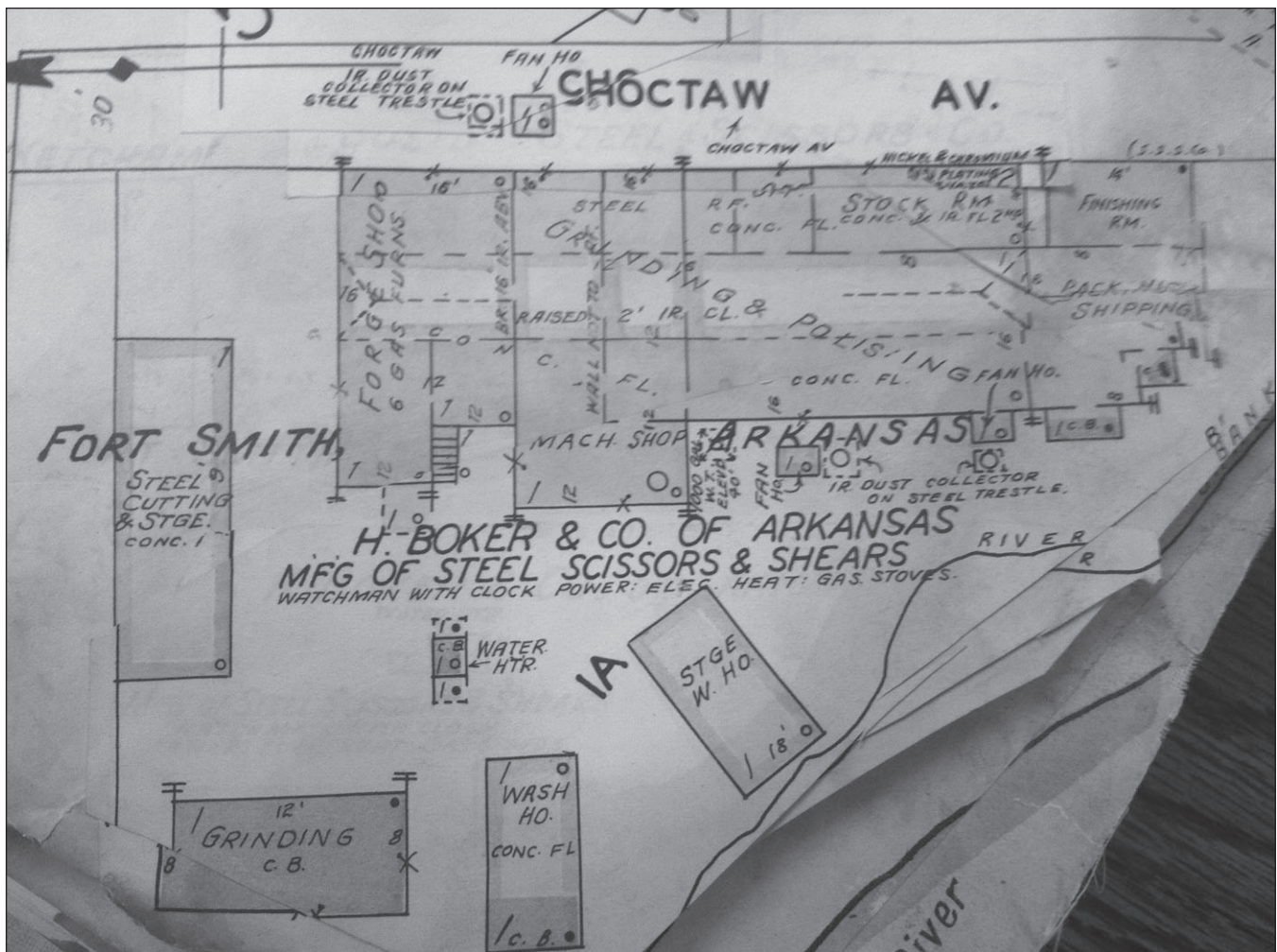


SCISSORS MADE AT THE *Solid Steel Scissors Company in Fort Smith*

businessman in the service held at the First Presbyterian Church. With Hurd's death, his father, Dr. Carl G. Miller, took over direction of the company, but he spent much time in Wooster, Ohio, and so turned over the scissor plant responsibilities to Carl D. Miller, who became the vice president and director of operations. Carl D. Miller lived at 415 Lecta Avenue in Fort Smith.

In 1948, H. Boker & Co. of Newark, New Jersey, founded in 1837, bought out the plant, probably to nullify competition since it sought the same government contracts and had a customer base similar to that of Solid Steel Scissors. Boker also needed the immediate production that the Fort Smith plant could provide, as the company lost its major factory at Solingen, Germany, because of World War II. Boker & Co. moved the plant down by the Poteau River at the south end of South Third Street near Coke Hill.³ There, it focused on the manufacture of cutlery and surgical-type scissors for the military, an operation including the forging of steel, which was managed by Orville Bittle after his return from World War II service. Bittle did well, and H. Boker considered him for a position as the company's cutlery manufacturing representative. Bittle instead became an insurance salesman and from there launched a long-standing career as a State Farm Insurance agent.⁴

Under General Manager Werner H. Daniels, H. Boker & Co. continued to make scissors in Fort Smith until the plant was sold in 1959 to Clarksville businessman Jack Cline and renamed United States Forgecraft. Boker's decision to sell the Fort Smith plant happened to come after years of legal contention over a workmen's compensation suit filed by twenty-five-year employee Walter L. Easton, a rougher at the cutlery plant by job



A MAP OF THE H. BOKER & CO. SCISSORS PLANT ON CHOCTAW AVENUE

description. Easton injured his elbow in a grinding wheel accident in 1953. While his claim of being fully disabled because of the accident was denied in the circuit court of Judge Paul Wolfe, the Federal Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed that decision. Both sides continued the litigation through 1956, and Easton, who also owned a grocery and malt shop on Spradling Avenue, had to continually prove his disability to the courts as H. Boker & Company consistently challenged his right to workmen's compensation.⁵

Today, vintage products from both the Solid Steel Scissors Company and H. Boker & Co. of Fort Smith are available to collectors and bidders on eBay, demonstrating the quality, durability, and attractive



design of the steel scissors and cutlery produced here.

Phil Pankiewicz authored New England Cutlery and New Jersey Cutlery. He is currently writing a book with a working title of American Scissors and Shears. He lives in Vineyard Haven, Massachusetts.

Endnotes

- ¹ Addresses for officers and plant locations are from *Fort Smith City Directories* of 1916, 1945, and 1948. Hurd J. Miller obituary in *South-west American*, May 9, 1940. Hurd Miller was a Presbyterian Church deacon, a thirty-third degree Mason, and in this city had "headed several movements for boys and boys' organizations." Miller was a world traveler and had graduated from Wooster College in Ohio.
- ² *The American Cutler*, November 1921 and January 1922.
- ³ H. Boker & Company manufactured scissors and quality knives. Boker knives with a Tree Brand logo are sold as collector items on eBay as are scissors with made in Fort Smith stamp.
- ⁴ Orville Bittle interview dated May 12, 2006. Interview in possession of the Fort Smith Historical Society.
- ⁵ *Easton v. H. Boker Company*, <http://opinions.aoc.arkansas.gov/WebLink8/DocView.aspx?id=136570&page=1&dbid=0>, accessed July 30, 2012.

The Collections of Fort Smith, Arkansas

and Their Role in Constructing Memory

by Connie Manning

In between the Ozark and Ouachita Mountains and at the confluence of the Poteau and Arkansas Rivers lies the city of Fort Smith. Founded in 1817 as a military fort, its most immediate purpose was to provide protection for the government-supported relocation of Cherokee Indians against the indigenous Osage, who were hostile to the encroachment. More generally speaking, the fort was part of a “vaguely articulated strategy of erecting a chain of fortifications along the length of the western frontier of the United States” to provide security, thus encouraging white settlement. During the 1830s, the fort furthered this goal by acting as the last stopover for “at least thirty thousand” Native Americans who were forced to leave their lands in the southeast and resettle in Indian Territory. In 1839, the “construction of a larger, more substantial rock fortification” commenced, and by 1846, the second fort was completed. After serving as “the major southwestern supply depot for the U.S. Army” during the Mexican-American War and occupied by both Confederate and Union companies during the Civil War, the fort was given over to the federal court in 1871.¹ Although having such a rich and diversified history significant to the overall history of the nation, it is the latter, the twenty-five year period of the federal court, that is Fort Smith’s primary identity for its citizenry and tourists alike.



CONNIE MANNING

The museum exhibits, court case re-enactments, monuments and historic sites of Fort Smith all play a role in constructing the city’s collective memory and in promoting an identity of an “Old West” town.² Unfortunately, a majority of the archival records that would act as “historic sources” of the city’s diverse past seem to be either hidden (i.e. unprocessed) or not promoted. What is available has been recycled so often that the history published and the memory promoted often appear to scholars as more mythical than historical. In the context of archives and



FORT SMITH HISTORIC SITE, which once served as the U.S. Court for the Western District of Arkansas.

memory construction, this essay examines the collections of two major cultural institutions in Fort Smith and their role in the history and memory of the city.

Fort Smith and the Federal Court for the Western District of Arkansas

From 1851 to 1883, the Federal Court for the Western District of Arkansas “had criminal jurisdiction over the whole of Indian country...from its eastern boundary to the Texas and Colorado lines.” The entire jurisdiction, including a slice of western Arkansas, was roughly 74,000 square miles. “A small force of U.S. deputy marshals upheld federal statutes throughout that immense expanse, and witnesses often traveled hundreds of miles to testify before the district court at Fort Smith.” Any crime involving a white person and a Native American, with either party as perpetrator or victim, was brought before the court. Between 1851 and 1871, the court was located in Van Buren, just across the Arkansas River from Fort Smith. According to Roger Tuller, the court was moved to Fort Smith to help relieve the “increasing burdens” the court faced as the construction of new railroads brought “rowdy railroad crews” farther in the territory. (The increase of illegal whiskey trade probably had a greater effect.) Additionally, it would be five miles closer to the territory.³

From 1871 to 1875, the court was presided over first by Judge William Story and then Judge Henry J. Caldwell.⁴ On May 10, 1875, Judge Isaac C. Parker opened court, beginning his twenty-one years in Fort Smith.⁵ More myth than fact surrounds Judge Parker, mostly due to the large number of men executed during his tenure. Also sensational were the two occasions during which six men were executed at once.⁶ In 1883, the jurisdiction was divided between Fort Smith and U.S. district courts in eastern Texas and southern Kansas. Six years later, federal district courts were established in Indian Territory.⁷ Finally, “with the Judicial Reorganization Act of September 1, 1896, the Indian Territory jurisdiction of the Western District Court at Fort Smith came to an end.”⁸

With the publication of *Hell on the Border: He Hanged Eighty-Eight Men* in 1898, the first memories of the court as a bastion of justice were penned into perpetuity. Written by S. W. Harman, a former juror, with the assistance of J. Warren Reed, a defense attorney, and C. P. Sterns, the book added phrases such as “Hell on the Border” and “Prince of Hangmen” to the vocabulary surrounding Fort Smith. Though it draws upon “court records, newspaper accounts, and interviews,” the work was the product of “less-than-careful research” and “inaccuracies are scattered throughout.”⁹ While not a success when it was first published, the book would become extremely important in the mid-twentieth century, when writers such as Homer Croy and Glenn Shirley took up the subject of the court and Judge Isaac C. Parker in works considered “non-scholarly” and “for a general audience.” Also published around that time were popular works of fiction, including Charles Portis’ *True Grit*.¹⁰ Hollywood, quick to capitalize on the growing interest of the court, produced several movies starring some of the era’s leading men, including the 1968 film *Hang ’Em High* starring Clint Eastwood and the 1969 film *True Grit* starring John Wayne. Cultural memory of the city of Fort Smith has been shaped by this particular era for roughly the past fifty years. It is visibly evident in consumer goods, including postcards that depict the “Hell on the Border” jail, dolls fashioned as Judge Parker complete with gavel in hand, and bumper stickers that read, “Visit Fort Smith. See the Gallows Free.”¹¹ It is experienced at grand events, most recently the Bass Reeves Monument dedication, and at annual events, such as the Heritage Festival, which are hosted by the city.¹² And it is capitalized upon by private businesses, like the True Grit Tattoo Parlor and the recently closed Hangin’ Judge Saloon. The memory of the court is more often remembered through events and consumables rather than reviews of historical records and scholarship. Jimerson aptly noted that the “quest for collective memory...constitutes a major change in historical vision,” one expressed less in texts than in the spoken word, images, rituals, and festivals. It arises from the public at large, “which is obsessed by the fear of losing its memory in a kind of collective amnesia—a fear that is expressed in

the taste for the fashions of earlier times, and exploited by nostalgia-merchants; memory has thus become a best-seller in a consumer society.”¹³ The historian must ask why. Why this era amidst so much of significance? Why is this era capitalized so heavily? To find an answer, one must look to the city’s “texts,” its historical records.¹⁴ Yet, in doing so, another question arises. What and where are the document and artifact collections relating to this era? What role have archivists and curators played in the preservation of these records?

Archives and Memory

Occurring within the last thirty years in the realm of academia, both on a national and international level, has been the discussion of memory and the role of cultural institutions in shaping cultural memory.¹⁵ “There has been a cultural and academic shift from reliance on the narrow constructs of the past as associated with history to an embrace of broader constructs of pasts based on ideas about...memory.”¹⁶ This shift is the product of postmodern theory applied to traditional modes of thinking concerning history, truth, and objectivity. Around the turn of the twenty-first century, archivists began examining postmodern ideas and their implications on the profession’s theories and practices. To Joan Schwartz and Terry Cook, this re-evaluation by archivists was overdue.

While scholars in the social sciences and humanities, as well as in other heritage vocations, are struggling with questions of representation, truth, and objectivity, archival professionals and users of archives have been slow to recognize the nature of archives as socially constructed institutions, the relationship of archives to notions of memory and truth, the role of archives in the production of knowledge of the past, and, above all, the power of archives and records to shape our notions of history, identity, and memory.¹⁷

Most now widely recognize that memory is constructed, resulting in multiple pasts, and that archives (as well as museums and libraries) are not objective custodians of the past, but indeed play an important and subjective role in the appraisal, arrangement, description, preservation and promotion of *aides-de-mémoire*.¹⁸

The Role of Archivists and Archives

Along this road to recognition, many important changes have occurred in society that profoundly affected the archives profession, including a move away from the view of archivists as passive custodians of records to that of an active mediator.¹⁹ Both changes in technology and the civil rights movement brought the practice of appraisal front and center. With the invention of typewriters and carbon paper, mimeograph machines, and photocopiers, records began to increase exponentially. In today’s world, selection of records is unavoidable because “ultimately, there is simply too much trivial or redundant information within society

to justify the cost of saving it.”²⁰ Whereas the number of records increased, the quality of information within the records decreased.

Also affecting the way archivists regarded selection were the movements of groups who were underrepresented in society and in the archival record. At the 1970 annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists, Howard Zinn delivered a keynote address that “criticized the notion that archivists were objective and neutral, pointing out the large absences of archival material documenting women, minorities, dissidents, peasants, etc.”²¹ Following the tradition of passive custodians, archivists were reinforcing power structures within society, in effect preserving the records of dead white men in institutions run by white men. Yet, the subsequent attempt to balance the record by including these voices was viewed negatively as well, because the archivist was no longer a passive custodian, but an active selector, thus incorporating bias into the record. Terry Cook explains that “archivists inevitably will inject their personal values into all such activities and thus will need to examine very consciously their choices in the archive-creating and memory-formation processes, and they will need to leave very clear records explaining their choices to posterity.”²² This critique has moved beyond the process of selection. Scholars within (and outside) the profession have called attention to the whole process of archiving, as well as archives as institutions. Again, Schwartz and Cook:

In the design of record-keeping systems, in the appraisal and selection of a tiny fragment of all possible records to enter the archive, in approaches to subsequent and ever-changing description and preservation of the archive, and in its patterns of recommunication of use, archivists continually reshape, reinterpret and reinvent the archive. This represents enormous power over memory and identity, over the fundamental ways in which society seeks evidence of what its core values are and have been, where it has come from, and where it is going.²³

Memory

In his 1990 article “To Remember and Forget: Archives, Memory, and Culture,” geographer Kenneth E. Foote argues how “archives, along with other communicational resources such as oral and ritual tradition, help to transfer information—and thereby sustain memory—from generation to generation.” Many of his examples are within the context of landscape history. For example, Foote points out that in Salem, Massachusetts, the location of “where the town’s ‘witches’ were executed” is unknown due to the “passive effacement of the execution site. . . All records of the site, both oral and written, were lost.” Whereas some records and historic sites are preserved for remembering, the opposite act, that of effacement, is not uncommon. Society can consciously select what to remember and what to forget.

Foote also emphasizes that archives are just one player in the preservation of the past. “Many individuals and organizations act *collectively* to maintain records of the past, even if these records are shaped by the demands of contemporary life. . . The value of this point is that it guards against assuming that collective memory is invested in any single type of human institution, such as the archives.”²⁴

Likewise, Eric Ketelaar identifies the role of multiple players, in this case, the users. “[T]he meaning of a record or of any other cultural artifact must be understood in two different ways—first, the meaning *of* the record and second, the meaning *for* someone or *for* an occasion. . . The record is thus awaiting and standing-in for the meanings people find in or for it.” Ketelaar calls attention to the subjective nature of the records themselves and to the subjective nature of users’ interpretation. He gives an example of five historians finding different historical accounts, even differing “factual details” in one collection of documents. “Because a record means various things to different people, across time and space, the identities that are claimed from and based on a particular archival heritage will be different.” He describes the process of records acquiring meaning as cultivation and argues that cultivation “keeps archives and other cultural goods alive.” Each time a user interacts with a record (what he terms an “activation”), a new meaning is created, differing from the original meaning of the creator and other subsequent users of the record. “Archives are such a memory site, a forum, a public space allowing for competing and contested memories, narratives, records.”²⁵

With the understanding that “in selecting which records to preserve, providing information about their context, and assisting users in interpreting them, archivists play an active role in constructing memory for all members of society,” how are the collections in Fort Smith product of archival intervention?²⁶ Who are the main players that construct the city’s collective memory?

The Collections of Fort Smith

There are many cultural institutions in the city of Fort Smith that preserve various pieces of the city’s history. Some highlight the city’s military history—Fort Chaffee Barracks Museum, Vietnam Veterans Museum, the Darby House; some show the city’s ties to transportation—Fort Smith Air Museum, Fort Smith Trolley Museum; and others, a more fleeting but popular history—Chaffee Barbershop Museum.²⁷ The city boasts a second historic house, the Clayton House, and the official Visitor Center is Miss Laura’s Social Club, a former bordello built in 1900.²⁸ Numerous re-enactment volunteers give the impression of deep dedication and determination. In terms of scale, outreach and promotion, there are two institutions that attract a great number of visitors and have a larger participatory role in the city’s cultural memory—the

Fort Smith Museum of History and the Fort Smith National Historic Site.

Historical Societies

Before examining the collections of these two institutions, a mention should be made of the local historical societies. The South Sebastian County Historical Society, as its name suggests, focuses mainly on the history of south Sebastian County, particularly the town of Greenwood.²⁹ The northern part of the county is where Fort Smith, Barling and Fort Chaffee are located. The Fort Smith Historical Society, established in 1977, is active in collecting historical documents and photographs of this area. The Society publishes biannually *The Journal of the Fort Smith Historical Society Inc.*, which won the Arkansas Historical Association's Walter L. Brown Award for Best County or Local Journal in 2009 and in 2011. Its collections are filed in an office within the Fort Smith Museum of History, but they are not arranged according to archival practices, nor are there finding aids. Nevertheless, researchers are able to use the collections by appointment. The Fort Smith Historical Society appears to have a broad focus in regards to collecting historical records, a large portion of which are oral histories. Its website lists two major oral history projects: *The History of African-American Churches in Fort Smith* and the *World War II Veterans History Project*. The homepage lacks reference to the federal court era besides an occasional image that cycles among others in a left side bar. Whether the society feels this era is sufficiently covered by other cultural institutions is unclear. What is discernible is its Values Statement, which lists "Historical Inclusiveness, attempting to present the history of our city and region in a way that is representative of all groups, cultures and lifestyles within our community and, to the extent possible, also represents conflicting perspectives on the impact and significance of those historical events."³⁰

The Fort Smith Museum of History

Often referred to as the "Attic of Fort Smith," the Fort Smith Museum of History is the second-oldest collecting cultural institution in the city.³¹ The main purpose for its founding in 1910 was to save the "old commissary building" of the second fort from demolition by the city. An enthusiastic group of "ladies," most of whom were presidents of various women's organizations in the city, came together for this purpose, originally calling themselves "The Federated Women's Clubs."³² On October 18, 1910, a certificate of incorporation was signed by the city court clerk incorporating the group as "The Old Commissary Museum Association," and on November 1, the association was given a lease to the "old commissary building" for "a period of ten years with a yearly rental of \$1.00."³³

In the beginning years, there was much enthusiasm for the preservation of the building. One thousand dollars



AN ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE OLD FORT MUSEUM, then located at the old commissary building.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE FORT SMITH MUSEUM OF HISTORY

was appropriated for major repairs. "With the help of railroads, businesses and private individuals, the grounds were cleaned up, water connected and exterior repairs carried out." Not long after, interest would wane with the outbreak of World War I, and again during the Depression. "It was not until 1940 when a 50-year lease was signed with the city that relics began to be donated in appreciable quantities." After 1942, the museum expanded its days open to the public from twice a month to twice a week. Also that year, a small admission charge was instituted, "giving the organization its first regular though limited source of income." During the '50s and '60s, the museum was put in a quandary as efforts to have remnants of the first and second forts, including the commissary building, and the federal court buildings designated as a national historic site swelled. Offered a building at 222 Garrison Avenue, the museum association decided to purchase a building at 320 Rogers, its current location. In preparation for the move, which would not occur until 1979, the collection of more than 10,000 items was in the process of being cataloged.³⁴

Currently, the museum lacks a curator, and thus, the process of accessioning records has been put on hold. While the museum's archival collections are available to researchers by appointment, there are no finding aids in either print or electronic form that could widely publicize the records. There is a major fundraising effort under way in hopes of remedying this problem, in addition to addressing needed repairs and updating exhibits.³⁵ While the exhibits on the first floor, which focus on the cumulative history of Fort Smith, have remained unchanged since their construction in the mid-1980s (with the exception of a temporary exhibit gallery space), the second floor exhibits have rotated, but not frequently.³⁶ Currently, a large section of the second floor space is filled with an exhibit titled, "In the Shadow of the Gallows."³⁷ This exhibit is the reinstallation of one that initially opened in 1998, which was "named best exhibit by the Arkansas Museums Association." The following

is the description of the exhibit listed on the museum's webpage:

Originally presented in 1998, the exhibit addresses the changing perspectives of the federal executions at Fort Smith from 1873-1896 through photographic images, newspaper accounts of the executions, artifacts and souvenirs. At the time of the Federal Court, "hanging day" was an important event and drew large crowds. The dubious notoriety associated with Judge Isaac C. Parker, the lawmen, and outlaws was downplayed during the first half of the twentieth century. During the 1950s, this part of Fort Smith history emerged as a tourist attraction with the establishment of the Fort Smith National Historic Site. Today, the gallows remain an extremely popular attraction.³⁸

Evident from the act of reinstalling the exhibit and from its description is that the museum openly acknowledges its role in constructing a collective memory that emphasizes the federal court. Indeed, the presence of the original pieces of the Judge Parker courtroom is a key reason many visit the museum. Once visitors have finished examining the physics of hanging a person and have absorbed the macabre fascination of spectators, journalists, and publishers from the past, they can purchase as a memento of their visit a T-shirt bearing a noose and the slogan, "Hang Around Awhile in Fort Smith," from the gift shop.

The Fort Smith National Historic Site

The Fort Smith National Historic Site, occupying a large acreage along the Arkansas River in downtown Fort Smith, preserves the remnants of the first and second fort, and the federal court and its two jails. Already in 1929, there was a proposal for the city to purchase the area, then a slum known as Coke Hill, and make it a park.³⁹ More than twenty-five years later, interest in a park regained momentum, and accompanied a growing interest in the federal court. In 1955, Mayor Hestand recommended a city commission to look into the restoration of Judge Parker's courtroom.⁴⁰ In the June 28, 1958, edition of the *Southwest-Times Record*, the city's plan for Coke Hill to be turned into a riverside park again was reported, as well as the visit of two representatives from the National Park Service to the site "several months ago." Following the forced removal of tenants and the razing of buildings on Coke Hill in 1958, efforts within the city were made "to encourage the federal government to restore the original fort and develop the area into a national monument."⁴¹ These efforts were realized when on December 19, 1960, the site was declared a National Historic Landmark District. The next year, on September 13, 1961, it was officially designated a National Historic Site.⁴² The pomp and circumstance surrounding the establishment of the site included a visit from President John F. Kennedy in 1961 and first lady Lady Bird Johnson in 1964.

In considering that "above all, what we remember is

closely linked to what we forget, whether consciously or not," it is interesting to review which original structures from the site are gone—two officers' quarters, the quartermaster's building, the stables, the walls and bastions, and other small military support buildings.⁴³ Also missing from the landscape is the original gallows. In 1897, almost one year after the last execution, the gallows was demolished and burned by the city. A replica was built in the 1950s and again in 1981-82.⁴⁴ As a site of memory, the gallows can be viewed as an example of Ketelaar's multiple meaning concept. Today, it is labeled "an instrument of justice" and is often described as where the "law was handed down." For others, it can be seen as an excess of capital punishment and the failings of representation for Native American defendants.⁴⁵ For the city of Fort Smith in 1897, the gallows was at risk of becoming a tourist site stemming from George Maledon's participation in promoting Harman's *Hell On the Border*.⁴⁶

In regards to the archival records, the majority of the records are facsimiles of originals that are located at the National Archives Southwest Region in Fort Worth, Texas. Here, too, it is important to remember that "the principles and strategies that archivists have adopted over time, and the activities they undertake—especially choosing or appraising what becomes archives and what is destroyed—fundamentally influence the composition and character of archival holdings and, thus, societal memory."⁴⁷ Most of the records preserved relate to the federal court, including court cases and documents detailing the employment of U.S. marshals. In contrast, there is a dearth of records relating to the Trail of Tears. Blouin notes that "the underrepresented, the disfranchised, the conquered, the suppressed did not create documents, or if they did, sadly, those documents are not represented in the archives."⁴⁸ Fortunately, this sparsity of records did not produce an absence in interpretation. The site displays six wayside panels that are part of an overlook near the edge of the Arkansas River, in addition to a section of exhibit space in the visitor center. Even still, the majority of interpretation and programming focuses on the two forts and the federal court.

Conclusion

The city of Fort Smith has profuse history spanning almost 200 years, including three military forts (two of which were antebellum) and ties to the Butterfield Overland Mail Trail, the Trail of Tears, the Mexican-American War, the Gold Rush, the Civil War, the Western Arkansas Federal District Court, World War II, the furniture and wood products industries, and more recently the federal resettlement of 50,000 Vietnamese refugees following the fall of Saigon. Yet, despite such a history, Fort Smith is known primarily for its role as the seat for the Western Arkansas Federal District Court and the twenty-five years it held jurisdiction over Indian Territory. For roughly the past fifty years, this focus has been pursued and promoted by the city and local

cultural institutions, from the creation of the Fort Smith National Historic Site in the 1960s to the recent securing of the U.S. Marshals Museum in 2007.⁴⁹ The historical records pertaining to the federal court era and other significant events are scattered throughout the city and are in various states of organization. In order for more awareness and promotion of these important periods in Fort Smith's history, the records of these periods need to be collected, organized, and presented to both the public and researchers. There is great need for the focus to be shifted from myth to fact. In doing so, the city can promote and be proud of its rich and diverse history, not just a period of twenty-five years.

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¹ Billy D. Higgins, *Fort Smith: Vanguard of Western Frontier History* (Lawrenceburg, Indiana: Creative Co., R.L. Ruehrwein, 2007), 15, 29, 35, 41.

² "Mock Trial On Docket At Historic Site." *Times Record Online Edition*, February 17, 2012. Accessed March 16, 2012. <http://swtimes.com/sections/features/mock-trial-docket-historic-site.html>.

³ Roger H. Tuller, *"Let No Guilty Man Escape": A Judicial Biography of "Hanging Judge" Isaac C. Parker*. Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma, 2001), 4, 42-3.

⁴ Higgins, 56.

⁵ Tuller, 51.

⁶ Seven men were executed during 1871-4; six under Story and one under Caldwell. Eight-six men were executed under Parker. Harman mistakenly gave him credit for two more. "The Gallows: Frequently Asked Questions," *Fort Smith National Historic Site*, <http://www.nps.gov/fosm/historyculture/gallowsfaq.htm>.

⁷ Tuller, 4.

⁸ Higgins, 65.

⁹ "Prince of Hangmen" refers to the executioner, George Maledon; Juliet L. Galonska, introduction to *Hell on the Border: He Hanged Eighty-Eight Men*, by S. W. Harman. 1898. Reprint, (Fort Washington, Penn.: Eastern National, 2007).

¹⁰ Homer Croy, *He Hanged Them High: An Authentic Account of the Fanatical Judge Who Hanged Eighty-Eight Men* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc., 1952); Glenn Shirley, *Law West of Fort Smith: A History of Frontier Justice in the Indian Territory, 1834-1896* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1957); Bruce Hamilton, *Hanging Judge* (New York: Harper, 1948); Charles Portis, *True Grit* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968); and Elmer Kelton, *Hanging Judge* (Thorndike, Maine: G.K. Hall, 1969); "Further Reading on Judge Parker," *Fort Smith National Historic Site*, <http://www.nps.gov/fosm/historyculture/further-reading-on-judge-parker.htm>.

¹¹ The postcards and dolls are available at several cultural venues in the city. The bumper stickers were part of a promotion in the 1960s. Billy D. Higgins (Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Arkansas – Fort Smith), in discussion with author, July 27, 2012.

¹² The Bass Reeves Monument is a larger-than-life-size equestrian statue dedicated in Fort Smith in May 2012. Reeves, an escaped slave, served as a U.S. deputy marshal for thirty-two years, mostly in Judge Parker's Indian Territory jurisdiction. Author Art Burton memorialized Reeves with his book, *Black Gun, Silver Star: The Life and Legend of Frontier Marshal Bass Reeves* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006). Subsequent publications by other authors, including children's books, have capitalized on Reeves' memory. The Heritage Festival is an annual event that involves many of the city's cultural institutions. Festival goers can watch living history demonstrations, various cultural dances, and interact with historical re-enactors, including "Judge Isaac Parker."

¹³ Randall Jimerson, "Constructing Memory," *Archives Power: Memory, Accountability, and Social Justice* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2009), 202. The postcards and dolls are available at several cultural venues in the city.

¹⁴ The term "record" applies to more than paper documents. Richard Pearce-Moses' *Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* gives the following as one of several definitions: "Data or information that has been fixed on some medium; that has content, context, and structure; and that is used as an extension of human memory or to demonstrate accountability." http://www.archivists.org/glossary/term_details.asp?DefinitionKey=54.

¹⁵ With the publication of Maurice Halbwach's work *Les Cadres Sociaux de la Mémoire* (The Social Frameworks of Memory) in 1925, the discussion

- of memory was placed in the academic ether. However, it was not until the 1980s that the term "cultural memory" was coined and a subsequent flood of scholarship was composed on the subject. *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Sciences*, s. v. "Cultural Memory" by Robert DeHart, accessed April 2012, doi: 10.1081/E-ELIS2-120044333; Schwartz and Cook, *Archives Records, Power*, 5.
- ¹⁶ Francis X. Blouin, Jr., "Archivists, Mediation, and Constructs of Social Memory," *Archival Issues* 24, 2 (1999): 105.
- ¹⁷ Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory," *Archival Science* 2, 1-2 (2002): 8. Elisabeth Kaplan expressed this sentiment in relation to identity but two years earlier—"If we as archivists have been slow to question our profession's long held view of archives and archival records as sites of historical truth, we have been equally slow to question assumptions about group and individual identity as representations of historical truth or reality."—in "We Are What We Collect; We Collect What We Are: Archives and the Construction of Ethnic Identity," *American Archivist*, 62, 2 (2000): 144-5.
- ¹⁸ Jimerson, 192.
- ¹⁹ Citing the 1937 *Manual of Archival Administration*, Reto Tschan explains Jenkinson's viewpoint succinctly—"In his definition of archives, Jenkinson stressed their custodial history, their organic structure, and their accumulation through natural processes: 'A document which may be said to belong to the class of Archives is one which was drawn up or used in the course of an administrative or executive transaction (whether public or private) of which itself formed a part; and subsequently preserved in their own custody for their own information by the person or persons responsible for that transaction and their legitimate successors.' Jenkinson argued that the manner in which archives were created, that is, their natural accumulation during the course of regular activities, as opposed to their having been "singled out for preservation," and their creation and preservation by their creators for their own particular use without consideration as to their future use, endowed archives with the qualities of impartiality and authenticity. These qualities, in turn, gave to archives their particular value as evidence of the past." [Tschan's italics]. Reto Tschan, A Comparison of Jenkinson and Schellenberg on Appraisal," *The American Archivist* 65 (Fall/Winter 2002): 178.
- ²⁰ Frank Boles, "Why Archivists Select," *Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005): 8.
- ²¹ Michelle Light and Tom Hyry, "Colophons and Annotations: New Directions for the Finding Aid," *The American Archivist* 65 (Fall/Winter 2002): 218.
- ²² Terry Cook, "Remembering the Future: Appraisal of Records and the Role of Archivists in Constructing Social Memory," in *Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Social Memory: Essays from the Sawyer Seminar*, edited by Francis X. Blouin Jr. and William G. Rosenberg (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009): 173.
- ²³ Schwartz and Cook, 1.
- ²⁴ Kenneth E. Foote, "To Remember and Forget: Archives, Memory, and Culture," *The American Archivist* 53 (Summer 1990): 378, 380, 385-6, 390. Foote's italics.
- ²⁵ Eric Ketelaar, "Cultivating Archives: Meaning and Identities," *Archival Science* 12 (2012): 23, 28-29. Ketelaar's italics.
- ²⁶ Jimerson, 193.
- ²⁷ The Darby House, a historic house, is the childhood home of Gen. William O. Darby, the leader of Darby's Ranger in WWII. The Chaffee Barbershop Museum is the location where Elvis Presley received his first military haircut. "Historical," *Chaffee Crossing*, <http://chaffeecrossing.com>.
- ²⁸ *Clayton House: Victorian Mansion and Museum*, <http://www.claytonhouse.org/>; "Miss Laura's Social Club," *Fort Smith, Arkansas*, <http://fortsmith.org/visitors/welcome-center.aspx>.
- ²⁹ South Sebastian County Historical Society's Facebook page, accessed July 20, 2012, <https://www.facebook.com/OldJailMuseum>.
- ³⁰ "Mission, Values, and Vision." *The Fort Smith Historical Society*, accessed May 2012, <http://www.fortsmithhistory.org/index.html>; *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*, s.v. "Fort Smith Historical Society," by Carole Barger, last updated August 8, 2011, <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=6292>.
- ³¹ Brochure titled "Fort Smith Museum of History," available at Fort Smith Museum of History. The oldest collecting cultural institution is the Fort Smith Public Library, which formally opened July 27, 1892; <http://www.fortsmithlibrary.org/fsplhist.html>.
- ³² The preliminaries of the association's first "Meeting Minutes" book list the following organizations: Daughters of the Confederacy, Wednesday Club, Sebastian Historical Association, American Women's League, Fortnightly Club, Fort Smith Beautiful, W.C.T.U, Musical Coterie, Civic League, Sparks Memorial, Clean City League. Meeting Minutes, unprocessed collection, Fort Smith Museum of History.
- ³³ "Fourth Meeting," Meeting Minutes, unprocessed collection, Fort Smith Museum of History.
- ³⁴ "City's Old Fort Museum Is Source of Civic Pride," *Southwest-Times Record*, September 25, 1966.
- ³⁵ "Museum Kicks Off Fundraising Campaign," *Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce*, accessed July 2012, <http://fortsmithchamber.org/node/556>.
- ³⁶ Themes included are the settlement of the area, history of the two forts, role in the Civil War, role in World War II, famous local stores, etc.
- ³⁷ The "In the Shadow of the Gallows" exhibit was documented and arranged by then Fort Smith Historical Site historian Juliet Galonska. The current installation opened August 15, 2009. *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*, s.v. "Fort Smith Museum of History."
- ³⁸ "Attractions," *Fort Smith Museum of History*, <http://www.fortsmithmuseum.com/attractions>.
- ³⁹ *Southwest American*, September 6, 1929. See the December 5, 1929, edition for information regarding the proposal's rejection.
- ⁴⁰ *Southwest American*, January 7, 1955. This commission would later become Historical Restorations, Inc.
- ⁴¹ *Southwest-Times Record*, January 11, 1959.
- ⁴² "National Register of Historic Places database," *National Park Service*, <http://www.nps.gov/nr/research/>.
- ⁴³ Jimerson, 193.
- ⁴⁴ "The Gallows: Frequently Asked Questions," *Fort Smith National Historic Site*, <http://www.nps.gov/fosm/historyculture/gallowsfaqs.htm>.
- ⁴⁵ Of the eighty-six men executed, approximately one-third were Native American.
- ⁴⁶ Maledon "began traveling the area with a tent display showing gallows relics, including nooses and photographs of the men who died on the gallows." "The Gallows: Frequently Asked Questions," *Fort Smith National Historic Site*, <http://www.nps.gov/fosm/historyculture/gallowsfaqs.htm>.
- ⁴⁷ Schwartz and Cook, 3.
- ⁴⁸ Blouin, 104.
- ⁴⁹ *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*, s.v. "Fort Smith (Sebastian County)," by Benjamin Boulden, last updated April 9, 2012, <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=988>; Higgins, *Fort Smith*.



Noncarbonated Tru-Ade

Orange or Grape

By Anita Snoddy Paddock

My daddy, Jim Snoddy, was a man who dreamed big. With a last name like his, he compensated by being courteous, friendly, and generous with everyone. He enjoyed meeting new people and was a superb salesman. But the one thing he couldn't sell was a soda in a bottle called Tru-Ade.

His dream was to become wealthy by bottling and selling this new noncarbonated beverage of both orange and grape flavor. He thought he'd put Grapette and Orange Crush out of business. Although the plan didn't pan out, he tried, and oh, how his wife and three daughters also tried.

A good athlete, Daddy played baseball for a while for a St. Louis Cardinals farm club, graduated from Arkansas Tech, taught school, was a state senator, and owned three automotive businesses in Crawford and Franklin counties. When World War II was threatening our country, he enlisted in the Marines, even though he was then too old to be drafted. My mother later told me that he enlisted because he felt ashamed when they went shopping in Fort Smith, and all the soldiers from Camp Chaffee would be walking up and down the sidewalks, talking in Brooklyn or New Jersey accents.

Daddy was sent to Camp Pendleton for his basic training, and our mother and we three daughters moved to California where all of Mama's family lived. We stayed in California until the war ended. Daddy never left the states, much less saw any action.

Daddy returned to the automotive businesses he left, my sisters and I came home to our same house with our same beds, and Mama came home a strong and confident woman. Most women gained a lot of confidence once they realized their life could go on pretty much the same, if not easier, without a man around. And there were no more ration stamps to save.

Those days after the war were jubilant. Our country was strong. We beat back the Germans and the Japanese and kept the

Photo courtesy of Anita Snoddy Paddock



THE TRU-ADE BOTTLING COMPANY BUILDING ON NORTH B STREET IN DOWNTOWN FORT SMITH.
IMAGE COURTESY OF ANITA SNODDY PADDOCK

Russians at bay. Men felt confident and yearned for something else, a something that they fought for. They enrolled in college on the GI bill and proceeded to build lives they could be proud of.

My daddy, I guess, was no different from other men in the late 1940s. When he and his best friend, Felix Weatherly, who had returned home from the Navy, got together, they decided they would go into a new business venture.

Daddy had read a business report that said automotive stores would not flourish now that the war was over. The Kiplinger Report suggested a new business: Tru-Ade Bottling Company, a franchise business that was destined for prosperity. So Daddy sold his automotive businesses, borrowed money from the First National Bank, and set about to become the proud owner of a Tru-Ade Bottling Company in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Felix would open a Tru-Ade plant in Little Rock.

My sister Mary, who was fifteen then, remembers the two big trucks Daddy bought. "He parked them in our

backyard in Mulberry. They were painted yellow and took up the whole place. It was then that we knew he was really going into the bottling business."

My sister Rita, who died of ovarian cancer while this article was being written, said before her death, "Well, it got us out of Mulberry."

Where it got us was to Van Buren. Why we didn't move to Fort Smith, I don't know. Daddy found us a house out in the country between Alma and Van Buren, and he rented a building in Fort Smith, 709 North B Street. The Quonset style building still stands, and every time I drive by there, I can still smell the hot sugary orange drink being stirred in a huge aluminum vat. The grape had a softer, gentler aroma. It was my favorite, but the orange drink was a better seller.

We enrolled in Van Buren schools. I don't remember being unhappy, but I was only seven. Mary was fifteen. Rita was seventeen. The only difficult thing about moving was facing the inevitable teasing we suffered because of our last name. Mary and Rita were really pretty, and that

helped. They became the popular girls with a funny last name.

Every Saturday morning, the whole family drove to Fort Smith. That was the day Daddy cooked the product. I can see him standing on a ladder, wearing slacks and a white shirt, stirring the mixture, constantly checking the temperature. While it was being cooked, Mary and I loaded empty bottles onto a conveyor belt, and the bottles travelled through a sterilization process.

The sterilized bottles proceeded down to another machine with spigots that filled up the bottles.

Rita's job was to make sure the bottles didn't topple over while they were being filled.

That was a hard job because the bottles were filled with hot soda.


But Mama's was the hardest. She caught the bottles after they were capped and placed them in wooden crates. The bottles were hot to the touch, and it required a keen sense of timing and rhythm to complete the job. Mama's poor face would be red, and she'd be sweating. We all were. Daddy had the easiest job, or so we begrudgingly thought because he acted like the foreman and cautioned us to pay attention. In today's world, he would have been accused of breaking child labor laws.

There were two male paid employees, and they drove the trucks and delivered the drinks to grocery stores, filling stations, restaurants, and soda fountains in towns in the western part of Arkansas. At first, the drivers left off a couple of cases at each stop to be given away for free as advertisement for the drinks.


In addition to working at the bottling plant, Mama also served as a homeroom mother at my grade school, Sophia Meyer. I think she did that in an effort to help me fit in at the school. She was always a hit with the kids because she brought plenty of Tru-Ade, in both flavors, to school every time she came. "All you could drink" was her motto.

It was more popular with kids than adults. Billy Higgins, a local historian and professor, remembers Tru-Ade: "No lunch to a twelve-year-old was as liked as a hot dog and Tru-Ade orange at the Kresses counter. Nothing could ever be as good as that, and looking back, I guess it wasn't." I only wish there had been more customers like him.

After two years of losing money, Daddy admitted defeat. He sold the franchise to another dreamer. We no longer had to spend our Saturdays at the bottling plant, and as a reward for all our hard work, we took a vacation to visit our family and the friends we'd made in California. On the way, we stopped just outside Oklahoma City for gas. Daddy asked if we wanted something to drink. In unison, we called out, "A Coke! We want a Coke!" Never again would we have to drink a Tru-Ade.



Every Saturday morning, the whole family drove to Fort Smith. That was the day Daddy cooked the product. I can see him standing on a ladder, wearing slacks and a white shirt, stirring the mixture, constantly checking the temperature.



Daddy and Mama kept one memento of our Tru-Ade bottling days: a large orange and blue ice chest that outlasted the lives of both Mama and Daddy. Mama always referred to it as the \$45,000 ice chest, and if Daddy was around, he always ducked his head and remembered something he had to do really quick.

Daddy eventually got back into the mercantile business, selling appliances and furniture and guns and fishing tackle and air conditioners and television sets, prospering enough to send three daughters to the University of Arkansas. Felix Weatherly did better with his plant in Little Rock once he added Canada Dry products.

Daddy had one more dream that Felix Weatherly also figured prominently in. Daddy ran for governor against Orval Faubus, and Felix served as Daddy's campaign manager. Felix always said, "If Jim's name was Smith or Jones or Williams, no one could stop him."

Once again, Daddy called on his family. Rita and Mary were both young mothers by then, and I was in high school. We campaigned all over the state, going to fish fries and picnics and political rallies. We handed out cards and smiled at everyone, even those who made fun of our last name. Mama went campaigning with another woman who took her to garden clubs and luncheons and tea parties all across eastern Arkansas.

That dream didn't turn out too well either, but that's another story. *

Anita Paddock is a writer and reviewer who lives in Fort Smith and is a founding member of Borderliners, a writing group.

Interviews:

Mary Snoddy Pratt, Alma, Arkansas, by author April 8, 2012 and June 13, 2012

Rita Snoddy Davis, Fayetteville, Arkansas, by author April 12, 2012

Billy Higgins, Fort Smith, Arkansas, by author April 2, 2012

* **Editor's Note:** Jim Snoddy polled 14 percent of the vote in the 1956 Arkansas Democratic primary, finishing behind incumbent Orval E. Faubus (58 percent) and James "Justice Jim" Johnson (27 percent), but ahead of two other candidates in a crowded field.

On the Edge of Creation

The Making of a Fort and a City: How It All Began

By Jerry Akins

A PETITION TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR
FROM THE INHABITANTS
OF ARKANSAS DISTRICT
[NA:WD, SWDF, P 89:DS]
[Received April 14, 1812]

To the Honorable the Secretary of War
The Petition of the Undersigned Inhabitants of the District of Arkansas in the
Territory of Louisiana

Respectfully Sheweth that from the former and late conduct of A Party of
Cherokees Indians living on the River St Francois within the Jurisdiction of this
District; your Petitioners are placed in a very dangerous situation; that two of said
Cherokees have lately murdered A man by the name [blank] Rector near their
settlement on said River, they met him on the road murdered him, Cut open his
body, tore out his bowels and afterwards cut and mangled his body in the most
savage manner. The murderers have been demanded of the Chiefs, but the Clan
or Tribe to which they belong refuse to give them up and say they will protect them
with their lives.

That a large body of Cherokees are ascending the Arkansas River To settle
at a place called the pine bayou about One hundred miles above our upper
inhabitants, and experience has proven to us that when they are so far removed
from the eye of the General Govern-ment, that they will naturally when opportunity
offers fall into their former Practices of Murder, Robbery and Theft.

That from conduct of the said Cherokees and other Tribes adjacent to the
Settlement of your Petitioners we have serious alarm from the hostile attitude and
from our dispersed Settlements, the phisicle [physical] force of the Inhabitants
cannot be called to the defense of each other—wherefore we pray that two or more
Companies may be ordered to the Post of Arkansas for the protection of our Infant
and dispersed Settlements—

[The document was signed by fifty-five male "Inhabitants"]

[Endorsed] Petition. The Inhabitants at Arkansas, Stating the hostile conduct
of Indians &c.

Rec^d April 14, 1812

The military presence that the inhabitants
prayed for would be more than five years
in the future, for the James Madison
administration and the U.S. military were engaged in
affairs of more immediate importance to them. And
the man for whom the fort would be named was, in

April 1812, cursing the cold rain, the mosquitoes,
the military, the government and the Spanish at San
Agustin (Saint Augustine), in La Republica Español
de Florida Oriental, Spanish East Florida.

Colonel Thomas Adams Smith, a couple of years
later to be Brigadier General Smith, was engaged in

James Madison's plot to steal East Florida from the Spanish. This adventure would become known as the Patriot War, something few people today have ever heard of. James G. Cusick titled this action, "*The Other War of 1812*," in his excellent book on the subject. The following information concerning Florida and Thomas Adams Smith came from Cusick's book and from the *Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. 21, p. 667, 1944.

In April 1812, when the petition of the inhabitants of the District of Arkansas was received in Washington, the administration was being embarrassed by the revelation of this unauthorized military action against a foreign government. At the same time, the United States was preparing for war with England.

To further complicate things, 1812 was an election year. So you can imagine that the inhabitants and their problems, which were largely created by the government by moving Cherokees to the area in 1808, were far down the list of priorities of the administration in Washington.

In 1812, Florida was a Spanish colony and was divided into East and West Florida. West Florida was the panhandle of present-day Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi, with its capital in Pensacola. East Florida was the peninsula, with its capital at St. Augustine. West Florida was beginning to come under United States control as a result of a revolt at Baton Rouge and intervention of the U.S. military.

George Mathews, former governor of Georgia and Revolutionary War soldier, convinced the James Madison administration to acquire East Florida through a revolt of "Patriots," American citizens who had settled and acquired land in East Florida. The Patriots were to claim oppression by the Spanish government and start a revolt. The United States would then come to their aid, oust the Spanish, and thereby acquire East Florida. Under Mathews' direction, the government authorized the United States forces at Point Peter, the Army post on the Georgia border of Florida, to assist the Patriots. A militia of citizens of Georgia, over whom the U.S. military had no control, joined in the fray, and the whole thing turned into a more than yearlong debacle.

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Adams Smith was the commanding officer at Point Peter who led his ill-equipped and poorly clothed men into Florida. Smith was not authorized to take any offensive action, only to protect the Patriots and to occupy any forts and cities taken by the Patriots. He had no control over the militia of Georgia citizens. Those things, combined with the cold rain, mosquitoes, and other nuisances of nature, lack of funds and

supplies, and lack of a clear mission objective made for a very unhappy Lieutenant Colonel Smith. However, he did receive one uplifting note. On his arrival at Fort Mose (pronounced mó-seh), he learned that he was now Colonel Smith. But that did little to relieve his frustration, for at Fort Mose, he found more vexations.

Fort Mose sat directly north and almost within artillery range of the fort of St. Augustine, capital of East Florida, home of the governor and the main military strength of the Spanish. The U.S. Army sat there with no authority to attack the Spanish fort, while at the same time being harassed by the Spanish.

After nearly two months in East Florida, with no support from the federal government and using his personal line of credit to supply his troops, Smith was moved to write a letter to the adjutant general asking, "Is it intended I shall remain here and permit myself to be insulted with impunity? If so, I must insist on being relieved of the command." And to another colonel he wrote, "I could tell you enough on this subject to make you damn the profession of arms as things are conducted in this misguided country."

Meanwhile, in Washington City, the people there were concerned with things far removed from the inhabitants of the District of Arkansas in the Territory of Louisiana. First of all, in this election year, the administration had just been embarrassed by the revelation of the illicit actions in Florida. Those events had been reported by newspapers from Georgia to New York.

Add to that the fact that a British spy turned informer had been paid \$50,000 by the Madison administration for information on activity between the governor of Canada and Madison's opponents, the Federalists.

The people in Washington had more than enough to keep them busy while they put out political fires and dealt with the impending war with Britain. War against Britain was declared by Congress on June 19, 1812.

Finally, in April 1813, Colonel Smith was replaced by Major Lawrence Manning, and went to participate in the real War of 1812, where he served with Major General William Henry Harrison in the northern campaigns in Canada and the Great Lakes. On January 4, 1814, Colonel Smith became Brigadier General Smith. In 1815, Smith was appointed commander of the Ninth Military District at Fort Belle Fontaine, near St. Louis.

The inhabitants of Arkansas would still have to wait another three years for "two or more Companies" of soldiers to be sent to Arkansas.

“They’re Coming! Settlers and City Makers”

By Jerry Akins

Emigration.—Three keel boats arrived here yesterday morning with families from Kentucky and Tennessee. We understand they intend settling on this river, in the neighborhood of Fort Smith. We are much pleased to see the current of emigration turned towards this quarter. Heretofore the emigration has been almost exclusively directed to Missouri—Arkansas was scarcely known or heard of east of the Mississippi or Ohio. The scale is now turning—strangers are arriving here almost daily, with the intentions of exploring or settling in this country. Families and others, we are told, are flocking in great numbers up White River. We learn, also, that great numbers are preparing to emigrate to this Territory from the states of Kentucky and Tennessee, and the eastern and middle states. We have no doubt that as soon as the Land Offices are opened, the emigration to this Territory will increase rapidly. We doubt whether any section of the western country offers greater opportunities to the respectable and industrious farmer and mechanic than the fertile soil of the Arkansas Territory.¹

“[T]he fertile soil of the Arkansas Territory,” no longer a district of Missouri Territory, now was elevated to the first grade of Territorial Government. “An act providing for the government of the Territory of Missouri,” June 4, 1812, separated the lands of Missouri Territory from the state of Louisiana. On March 2, 1819, “An act providing for a separate Territorial Government in the southern part of the Territory of Missouri,” gave the governor of that southern part the power to convene a General Assembly. On July 4, 1819, Missouri became a separate territory, and in that year applied for statehood. General Thomas Adams Smith retired from the Army on November 10, 1818, with the permanent rank of colonel, and in 1819 accepted the position of receiver of public monies in Missouri. That same year, President James Monroe appointed General James E. Miller as governor of Arkansas Territory. It was the beginning of the beginning.

People had been traveling through and settling along the Arkansas River ever since the French trappers and Spanish explorers had ventured into the interior of the continent. But few of the settlers from east of the Mississippi left a historic record except in military records directing their removal from Indian lands. If Thomas Nuttall’s description of those migrants is accurate, perhaps there is a reason they chose not to leave any traces of their residence. Naturalist Thomas Nuttall, in his journal of his travels up the Arkansas in 1819, portrayed them in this way:

These people, as well as the generality of those who, till lately, inhabited these banks of the Arkansa (sic), bear the worst moral character imaginable, being many of them renegadoes (sic) from justice, and such as have forfeited the esteem of civilized society.

He may have described some of the inhabitants accurately, but it is likely that his view was influenced by the disparity between those people and his associates from his educated English background. However, later nineteenth century history affirms that there were plenty of “renegadoes” in the area, possibly descendants of those described by Nuttall.

But regardless of the moral character of the renegadoes and other residents, they were here in this place that Nuttall described on April 22, 1819, as: “[R]ich alluvions were now clothed in youthful verdure, and backed in the distance by bluish and empurpled hills. The beauty of the scenery was also enlivened by the melody of innumerable birds, and the gentle humming of the wild bees, feeding on the early blooming willows”

Nuttall’s 1819 description contrasts greatly with Captain Stuart’s letter to the War Department fourteen years later when he was arguing for the removal of his soldiers from Fort Smith:

This place in some respects would probably be a good location for a Military post, but there are objections to it that cannot be overcome. One is that it is too near the Territory of Arkansas, and another is that it will always be extremely sickly in Summer. The

post itself is about Fifty feet above the level of the river at low water and it is nearly three-fourths surrounded by bottom or Swampy Land, which extends to a great width and in many places contains pools of stagnant Waters, which are very unhealthy and that portion of the land considered highlands is almost as unhealthy as the low lands. From the circumstance of it being flat Post oak land, and a great portion of it is in small basins, or Pools in which the rain water stands continually from the commencement of the rainy season in the fall until it is evaporated by the Sun in the months of July, August, and September. This description of the land commences at the Fort and extends back at least a mile.

Descriptions of and opinions about this frontier abounded in the early 1800s, most of them wrong. When the territories of Missouri and Arkansas were created in 1819, the boundaries were not established. In an article discussing the formation of states within the Louisiana Purchase, *The Arkansas Gazette* on January 22, 1820, stated, in reference to the area west of the Mississippi, that: “[T]he woodland districts and the cultivatable soil are found in the neighborhood of the great rivers, and between them are vast plains without wood or water. The borders of the rivers will therefore be the populous districts, and the plains between must remain for centuries, perhaps for ever (sic), without inhabitants.” Little did they know!

But there were those who knew or believed their future, or escape from their past, was on the new frontier. The settlers must have been daring and resourceful ultimate optimists or ultimately desperate. In the words of Major Stephen H. Long, “It appears to be the desire and the intention of the Settlers to acquire an honest livelihood from the cultivation of the soil.—A large proportion of them have expended all their property in moving to this wilderness country...”² In addition to their having “expended all their property,” nature was not kind, although the land was bountiful. Captain John Bell reported in September 1820:

The diseases of the country are argue (sic) & feavers (sic) & bellious (sic) complaints, which seldom prove fatal. I have not heard of any physician in this part of the country, there is none belonging to the garrison, The soldiers are in fine health. Last night a Soldier's wife of the garrison, was delivered of a fine boy weighing 12 pounds & this morning she is about her usual avocations.

Fruits & vegetables of every description grow here with cultivation in the greatest abundance, and of the finest flavor, and perfection.³

Botanist and geologist Edwin James, who had

also trained with physicians, had a different opinion of the conditions in the area of the fort. His view was:

In a region of extensive river alluvion, supporting, like that of the Arkansa, boundless forest, impervious to the winds, and rays of the sun, it is not surprising that a state or the atmosphere should exist unfavourable to health; intermitting, remitting and continued bullous fevers prevail during the summer and autumn, and in many instances terminate fatally. Among recent settlers, the want of the most common comforts, the advice and attendance of skillful physicians, and above all, the want of cleanliness, and the destructive habits of intemperance are causes operating powerfully to produce and aggravate these diseases. The settlers about Fort Smith were sickly, and we saw numbers with the particular sallowness of complexion which accompanies those chronic derangements of the functions of the liver, so often the consequence of bilious fever.⁴

Regardless of the atmosphere “unfavourable to health” or the expenditure of property, the settlers continued to come. And judging from Post Surgeon George B. McKnight's weather observation for March 1821, they came to weather variations that were not too different from today. Surgeon McKnight noted that the weather had been very variable and that the peach trees had blossomed, but the frosts of the nights of the 21st and 29th had probably destroyed the fruit. The purple martins had made their appearance, but the cold had caused their disappearance. His last sentence read: “So sudden have been the changes during the month that the language of another may be with propriety adopted, ‘We lie down in June and rise in January.’” Dr. McKnight's weather observations were limited to his own perception for he had no instruments. A note in the weather diary reads: “I recd a thermometer on the last of Feby from Dr. Coleman.”⁵ Only the instrumentation has changed.

The settlers were few by 1820. Crawford County, the smallest of the nine counties, had a population of 547, twenty-five of whom were slaves.⁶ The Crawford County Tax Book for the year 1821 lists ninety-four taxpayers in 1820, the year Crawford County was created from the western end of Pulaski County.⁷ But few as they were, Governor Miller wrote to the Secretary of War in December 1820 that, “The County of Crawford has been settleing (sic) for the last season and continues to, faster than any other part of the Territory. It is healthy, first rate land, well watered (for this country), good springs of fresh and salt water, with many other advantages.”⁸ In an

1823 petition to the U. S. Congress, the Arkansas Territorial Assembly stated, "The settlements of the Territory of Arkansas were made under circumstances different from those of any other Section of the union. They have labored under hardships almost unequalled—been impeded by obstacles & difficulties alone sufficient to have prevented the Settlement of almost any other country." But in time the governor was proven right. The settlers persevered, and by 1827, a census showed that the population of Upper Township (where Fort Smith is located), to be 674, exceeding the 1820 population of the entire county by 127.⁹ Those numbers just verify or reflect what Thomas Nuttall said in 1819 when he spoke of the "accession of population," "which, like a resistless tide, still continues to set towards the west."¹⁰

In April 1822, the first steamboat to arrive at Fort Smith, the *Robert Thompson*, came towing a keelboat. Both were loaded with supplies and, more importantly for the soldiers, it brought Paymaster Major Phillips.¹¹ Pay of soldiers on frontier forts was irregular and Major William Bradford in his reports for January/February 1819 had complained that, "... no man will re-enlist in the service when discharged without pay. No sutler will supply the garrison with such necessities as are wanted without a better prospect of being paid for them."

A fort on the frontier was a focus of civilization and the sutler's store was a center of the economy. Although there were other businesses in the area, the sutler was the first registered business since he operated under a contract with the government.

The sutler at the time the *Robert Thompson* arrived was the company of Nicks and Rogers.¹² The Rogers of that firm, Captain John Rogers, would go on to acquire the historical title of "Founder of Fort Smith." But at that time, Rogers acted as military storekeeper, supplying goods to the fort and to the soldiers. The firm also traded with Indians and settlers for hundreds of miles around, as did other traders.¹³

Unfortunately, one of the commodities these merchants supplied seemed to almost precede settlement of frontiers, or at least travel in tandem with settlement. That commodity showed its presence in Colonel Mathew Arbuckle's letter to the acting adjutant general on August 2, 1823, when he wrote:

The Post does Not prove as healthy as Might be expected, from its high and pleasant Situation. The Sickness, I have no doubt has been increased in Consequence of it being impossible to prevent the Men from obtaining liquor from Citizens who have Settled Near to us. If the Commanding officer Was authorized to remove Such as are engaged in this Traffic, I have

No doubt a few Examples Would remedy the evil.

That evil had surfaced about a year earlier when Private Daniel McCraney killed Private Benjamin Clark while they were on a work detail hewing logs. McCraney had been drinking that morning before going on the work detail, and continued to drink through the morning. He kept trying to instigate an argument with Clark over money. After the men had started to work, McCraney took a stand on a log that Clark was hewing and hit him across the neck with a broad axe.¹⁴

The McCraney incident wasn't the beginning or the end of alcohol-related problems around the new community. While there is no positive proof of it, there is certainly circumstantial evidence that the number of soldiers reported sick or disciplined coincides with the number of people appearing daily in the sutler's account book making purchases of whiskey. A twelve-cent shot of whiskey is not enough to sustain an alcoholic, but a consistent record of daily purchases might indicate an affinity for the stuff. And there were wives of soldiers, as well as the soldiers, making those daily purchases. There may also have been some merry or perhaps discordant music around the fort, for drummer Zacheus Waldo and fifer Joseph Cross were among the regular customers logging those daily whiskey entries on the sutler's account book.¹⁵

It seems apparent that there were suppliers of alcohol other than the post sutler among the unnamed settlers and traders for ardent spirits to play such a ruinous effect on the post operations. But in April 1834, the post operations had an injurious effect on the business of those purveyors of spirits. For two years, Colonel Arbuckle argued for removal of the 7th Infantry Regiment to a place farther west in the Indian Country where it could be more efficient in controlling Indian hostilities and white squatters. In March 1824, Arbuckle received orders from General Winfield Scott to remove the garrison to the mouth of the Verdigris.¹⁶ With the garrison went a considerable part of the customer base of the Belle Point merchants.

But the settlers stayed, among them Sarah Ann Tichenal, recognized as the first white child born in Fort Smith, on December 23, 1823. While it's possible that the baby mentioned by Captain John Bell in September 1820 might have been the first white child born at the fort, Sarah and her family were among the first permanent residents of the county. Sarah Ann's parents, John and Rebecca, lived just outside the fort, where John practiced his blacksmith trade. And Sarah, eighteen years later, married Jeremiah Hackett. All of Sarah and

Jeremiah's children were born in Hackett, Sebastian County, Arkansas.¹⁷

Although there were, from the appearances of tax and sutler's records and the obvious existence of businesses, a large number of settlers in Crawford County, few besides Sarah and her family left names and addresses. Samuel M. Rutherford had an entry in the sutler's book and stayed on to leave his descendants and his mark on the area as Indian agent, sheriff, legislator and businessman. The Pevehouses and the Beans were among the taxpayers of Crawford County and are still here as many others may be. But where all these people on the tax rolls were, in a county much larger than all of Crawford and Sebastian counties are today, can't be known.

What is known is that the fort sutler and storekeeper, John Rogers, stayed when the garrison moved to Fort Gibson and that he and the other settlers immediately began a campaign to bring the soldiers back to Fort Smith.

ENDNOTES

¹ *The Gazette*, Arkansas Post, March 25, 1820, headline.

² Major Stephen H. Long to General Thomas A. Smith. Jan. 30, 1818, *Arkansas Territorial Papers*. Vol. XIX, 1819-1823, 8.

³ *Journal of Capt. John Bell*, 284.

⁴ *Account of an Expedition From Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, Vol. III, 190-191.

⁵ *A History of the National Weather Service at Fort Smith, Arkansas* by Walter L. Newman. "The first time any United States governmental agency acted officially in regard to weather observations was May 2, 1814. An order by Dr. James Tilton, Surgeon General of the U. S. Army, directed hospital Surgeons of the Army to keep a weather diary. This project did not get started until 1819, under the direction of Surgeon General Joseph Lovell."

⁶ 1820 Census, AGGREGATE amount of each description of persons within the TERRITORY OF ARKANSAS

⁷ Reconvened session of the General Assembly, October 9, 1820, motion submitted by Thomas H. Tindall

⁸ *Arkansas Territorial Papers*, Vol. XIX 1819-1823 p245

⁹ *Arkansas Territorial Papers*, Vol. XX 1825-1829, p582

¹⁰ *A Journal of Travels into the Arkansas Territory During the Year of 1819*, Thomas Nuttall, 128.

¹¹ *The Gazette*, Little Rock, April 9, 1822, p3, col. 1

¹² Elsa, Vaught, "Captain Rogers: Founder of Fort Smith, Arkansas," *Historical Quarterly* 17 (Autumn 1958): 247.

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ *Arkansas Gazette*, Little Rock, May 26, 1823, 2

¹⁵ The Sutler's Account Book for 1820-1822 and Fort Smith Arkansas Post Returns 1820-1846

¹⁶ Letter from General Winfield Scott, Head Quarters Western Depot, New Orleans, March 6 1824.

¹⁷ Titchenal Family Genealogy Website, www.titchenal.com. Note the spelling of the family name. "Tichenal" is the spelling in the Sutler's Account Book. There are other misspellings of the name in other places.

Letters From Readers

Inquiries will be published in the *Journal* as space allows and should include the following:

- ❖ Your full name and address
- ❖ Full name of ancestor about whom you desire information
- ❖ Definite time period (birth, marriage or death date, or date appearing in a certain record at a definite time period.)
- ❖ Specific place of residence at a certain time period.
- ❖ State the relationships (names of parents, names of children, names of brothers and sisters, or in-laws.)

Material should be submitted using word-processing programs supported by Windows. Do not abbreviate any words; put all surnames in capital letters; capitalize only the first letter of given names and places; write dates as follows (Day, Month, Year, example: 25 January 1978.)

Suggestions for Submission of Articles

We welcome the submission of articles, previously unpublished, covering significant historical events and persons in the Fort Smith and surrounding area. Manuscripts, including quotations and footnotes, must be double-spaced, using *The Chicago Manual of Style* (University of Chicago Press). Footnotes should be numbered consecutively in the text, assembled at the end of the article, along with a list of any additional sources. The author's name, address, phone number and email address should appear only on the title page. Manuscripts may be submitted on CD disks, using word-processing programs supported by Windows. Photographs should be submitted in digital format.

All correspondence and manuscripts should be submitted to:

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The Journal of the Fort Smith Historical Society

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THE MCALESTER/BUGG HOME, CIRCA 1890. *The land is now home to the Janet Huckabee Arkansas River Valley Nature Center at Chaffee Crossing.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF OPAL MANESS HARRIS

Memories: Annis Bugg Maness and Leota Bugg Womack

Growing Up in Historical McAlester/Bugg Home

By Wincie Hendricks

In October 1941, the *McAlester News Capital* reported the razing of the ancient dwelling of Judge McAlester near Fort Smith to make way for a military post. The house had been erected more than 100 years before when William J. McAlester received the land through government grants signed by three presidents of the United States. The first grant was signed by Martin Van Buren in 1837, the second by John Tyler in 1840 and the third by James Buchanan in 1860.

As the workmen tearing the structure down removed the weatherboarding from the house, the original logs with which it had been constructed by

Judge McAlester were revealed. The house was built of logs the judge cut from a forest of oak trees on his land. The two sturdy rock chimneys, one at either end of the house, remained intact throughout the century.

Annis Bugg Maness and Leota Bugg Womack were the daughters of Lon Jackson Bugg and Ida Hayes Bugg. Their grandparents were Sheriff T. W. Bugg and Martha Temperance McAlester. Annis and Leota were the fourth generation born and raised in the same home built by their great-grandparents, Judge William McAlester and Elizabeth Holcomb McAlester. Today, the Nature Center at Chaffee Crossing is located on this land.

The Memories were given to me by Opal Maness Harris, daughter of Annis and niece of Leota. Opal reported that her mother, Annis, wrote these memories in a journal not long before she died December 20, 1988. Opal's Aunt Leota wrote her memories in a letter to her sister, Reba Bugg Mackey.

Annis Bugg Maness

I was born January 16, 1915, 3 miles southwest of Barling, Arkansas, in the little community of Maness. I was the 7th of 10 children of Lon Jackson and Ida Elizabeth Bugg. The others were Reba, oldest, Juliette Mae, Madge Elizabeth, Leota, Hayes, Me (Annis), Ruth, John Paul and Inez. The 2nd child a boy died at 9 months of age. Ruth died at 14.

The house we were born in was of log construction with 2 such rooms and side rooms built on. Side rooms were bedrooms. Our house was split level with 3 levels. The upper room was 3 steps above the middle room, which was 5 steps above the kitchen. There was a room over the kitchen which was a bedroom. We had to have 6 beds. Two in a bed. We used so many quilts to keep warm we could hardly turn over. We had no blankets. Just sheets and quilts. We would heat an iron and take it to bed to keep our feet warm. I slept with Madge. She was plump and warm. I'd snuggle up to her. She usually went to bed first.

I wonder what kids would do now, if they were suddenly dropped in living conditions like that. They'd freeze I guess. Our house wasn't warm either. Both log rooms had fire places, but we had no floor coverings and the floors were cold. It took mountains of wood to keep us warm. And we didn't (couldn't) warm but the rooms where the fireplaces were.

My grandfather Bugg had hand planed the boards our living room was sealed with. The upper room was sealed with rough boards and white washed. The living room was painted. The kitchen was neither. We scrubbed the floor with a broom. Rinsed them, swept them as dry as we could, then let them dry and no one dared walk on them until they were dry.

We were poor but happy. We were never hungry, but sometimes only had one pair of shoes. We cleaned and polished them for Sunday.

We lived ¼ mile from school, so we went home for dinner. Sometimes my sister and a classmate swapped lunches, Ruth would take her (classmates) lunch and she (classmate) would go home with me for dinner. She liked Mama's cornbread and home-made butter. Sometimes I'd bring her some when I went back to school after dinner.

Wash day the older girls had to miss school. If we finished by noon we went in the p.m. Wash Pot, wash boards and lots of hard work. With such a family we had big washings, once a week. We didn't change



ANNIS BUGG MANESS at ages fifteen (left)
and sixty-five (right).

PHOTOS COURTESY OF OPAL MANESS HARRIS

clothes until they really needed it. We didn't have that many clothes.

The older kids had to help with the younger ones, of course. We had cows, chickens, and hogs. Killed our hogs and cured the meat, then smoked it. Boy, it was good! I don't know how Mama fed so many, but we came one at a time so I guess she just gradually added another potato or biscuit or egg. She was expert at it.

We always had a garden and canned a lot. We also had an orchard and vineyard. We all had to work in them. I hated to spray grapes, pick cotton and hoe cotton. But then, I was little.

As far back as I can remember, we went to church and Sunday School. Also to singings. Dad was song leader and taught us to sing. Reba took music and learned to play on an old foot pump organ. At one time, Daddy owned 720 acres of land. He inherited the home place and bought up some surrounding farms during World War 1, when land was cheap. He was a trusting person, so he signed a bond for a friend who defaulted and Daddy lost nearly everything he had. A co-signer turned all his holdings into his wife's name and so got out of paying his part. My Dad and A. C. Davis paid off that debt as honorable men should.

Dad was left with 320 acres of mortgaged property. When things got bad and he needed to sell some more property (I was married with 2 kids then) Mitch and Johnny told him if he would let them have the farm they would make it pay off the mortgage, which he did. Turned it all over to them, lock, stock and barrel. We combined our cattle and went to work. The Army Camp came to Camp Chaffee and we all had to move. Dad had promised Mitch and Johnny 40 acres when the mortgage was paid off. So that 40 acres paid off the mortgage and we had 300.00 each left.

Johnnie and Peggy moved to below Greenwood and we moved to Greenwood. They later bought the place at Jenny Lind.

Dad had 3 big barns which were torn down and the lumber used to build where ever we all went. O, how we worked!! Very few people work as we did. But we were young and strong and it was the right thing to do.

Our old cows brought us out of debt, along with a lot of farm produce for home use. Those were the good old days!

We had to make our own entertainment. There wasn't even a radio back then. We played ball, hide and seek, "Last in the hole is a mad dog", shinny, and made do with what we had.

Tacky parties were fun. People had more parties in those days and everyone was invited. We had no dances. There were a few dances held but not many. Johnnie and Peggy had one once. Dot Autry's family gave dances but they didn't live close to us. We had to walk most places we went, until I was about 14. Then people started getting cars. I was about 12 when we got our first one, and I got nauseated every time I rode in the back seat, which was always. There were so many of us.

One way to play shinny: Choose up sides, have a home base line (2), then a line between the home bases. Everyone has a real strong club, or stick. A tin can was set on the middle line. Two people (one from each side) tried to be the first to hit the can, trying to knock it across the opposite line. All the players then got in the fray and there are sticks everywhere and many cracked shins. That's where it got its name. The side who knocked the can across the opposing side won. Boy, that was a rough game. Boys and girls both played. The rough girls did. Of course the ladies didn't. I did. I wasn't much of a lady.

In the winter we skated on the creek and sometimes we had neighbors who gathered at a pond and built a big fire, had a bunch of fun skating. It really got cold back then. We never had refreshments even at parties back then. Everyone was too poor to serve. At birthday parties there was a cake. Neighbors loved neighbors back then (in our community), and helped each other.

We had no sleds. We used round bottom shovels. Straddled the handle and we had good individual sleds. Sometimes we had accidents, but we didn't go to doctors then. If something bad happened (like a broken arm) the Dr. came to our house. You had to be really sick to have the Dr. God bless our family doctors.

Hayes was 2 years older than me and there were very few things he could do that I couldn't. I was a tough little booger. Hayes and I got into more

trouble than all the rest combined. We were always into something. We fought a lot until we got about grown. Madge delighted to "tell" on us, if she wasn't into it (whatever it was). Peggy told us how to get punished less. She said, "cry real loud and they'll quit whipping sooner."

When Mama went off and left Reba in charge, Hayes and I didn't like to obey her----sometimes we didn't. She had the authority to switch our little legs, if she could catch us. Once Flossie Mae Hayes (my 1st cousin) and I got into Reba's lipstick. Now, back in those days you didn't buy a lipstick very often. Reba was going to whip us. She caught Flossie, but I got away. I ran a mile from home before she gave up and went back. I wouldn't go in and eat supper with the family as I knew she'd catch me. So I ate later and went upstairs to bed. After a few minutes I heard her coming and there was no way to escape. She got me!

Ruth was 2 years younger than me and wasn't as rough as I. She was the sweet one. Her and Peggy. Peggy was kinda sassy, but real good. Madge was the clumsy one. Leota was about normal I guess. John Paul was the baby until he was 4, then Inez came along. She was my baby. I wagged her around until I spoiled her, then I had to tend to her.

Ruth died when she was 14 and without an autopsy we didn't know what killed her. She had a headache on Tuesday and Thursday she was dead. After Inez died the same way and the autopsy showed an aneurism, we believed maybe Ruth had one too. We'll never know.

When I was little we played a lot. We didn't have to do chores, there were older ones to do them. I started milking when I was 8 years old. Inez had pneumonia and Mama had to stay in with her. So I had to help with the milking. That's when I got my 1st cow. When we started milking we got a cow. I've had one ever since. We separated our milk and sold the cream. We drank skim milk (lots of it) and all were healthy and no one was fat except Mama. She weighed nearly 200 lbs. once. She quit eating supper and lost down to about 150. Dad was a small man, about 5'8" and about 145 lbs. He was a mild man, but we knew to obey him.

We raised cotton, corn, cane, field peas, all kinds of garden stuff, watermelons & cantaloupes. Of course, we had horses & mules. Raised corn to feed the mules and kept mules to raise crops. We had our corn meal ground at Barling. I can barely remember when we raised wheat and had our flour made at the mill.

We had to sell a bale of cotton before we got winter clothes. Mama ordered them from Sears. It was exciting when we got a package through the mail!

Hog killing day was a busy day. The day before the men made a log heap for the fire. Put rocks in it to heat, filled up a barrel with water (about ½ full) which was put in a hole so they could slant it. On killing day the fire was lit and when the rocks were hot they were put into the barrel until the water was very hot. The hog was shot in the head, the juglar vein cut so it would bleed good. When it was dead, they hung it on a single tree and lifted it with a block and tackle and ½ put into the barrel. When it was scalded enough to slip the hair, it was taken out of the water and swung onto a platform fixed for it, where it was scraped and cleaned. When one end was finished they swapped ends and did the other end. After the hair was off, it was swung hind legs up and cut down the middle. The intestines were caught in a tub. The heart, liver, caul, kidneys & sweet bread was put into cold water. The lungs were thrown away. The German people in Dutchtown (near Maness) used the lungs, we didn't. We took the fat off the intestines to render with the other fats. We used hog fat for everything. O yes, and butter.

With a meat saw (or chopping ax) the hog was divided down the middle on each side of the backbone. The ribs were hacked into two or three inch pieces. We boiled them. The backbone the same. The hams and shoulders were taken off, salted down and left to cure as was the side meat (bacon). The jaws (hog jowls) were salted down too. All the trimmings went into sausage or lard. We cut it in strips and for lard cut the fat into about 1 inch pieces. For sausage we left it in strips. After seasoning the sausage with salt, pepper and sage we ground it and put it in long slim bags and hung it up to smoke it. Later we fried it down and covered it with lard. The head, feet and just scraps that went nowhere else, we boiled until tender, took out the bones, seasoned it just like sausage and made souse meat. (hog head cheese)

This had to be done on very cold days or else the meat would spoil. The neighbors always helped each other. Neighbors were neighbors in those days. We nearly always raised 4 big hogs. Lots of meat! We had a big family. The neighbors all did the same only some with less kids killed less hogs. Most of them had less kids. John Holland had more than we. They had 12 with 2 dead. We had 10 with one dead until I was 16 when Ruth died. She was 14 when she died.

Everyone went everywhere in a wagon or a buggy. Families I mean. Lots of people rode horses. We had an old gentle horse named Charley. We could get all over him. We could put our feet on his hocks, grab his tail and climb up on him like that. Or catch him grazing and get astraddle his neck and he'd raise up with us. Once, when I was about 10 or 11 years old,

I got on the chicken house and jumped off on his back and scared him so, he jumped out from under me and nearly broke my shoulder. I was blue from shoulder to elbow. Mama called the Dr. She thought my arm was broken. If I'd let him know I was there he wouldn't have jumped out from under me. Once I went to the pasture after him and he didn't want me to take him to the house, so I picked up a little stick and hit him beside the tail. He just raised one hind leg and hit me enough to knock me down. So, I left him alone. Didn't figure he wanted me to ride him that day. There were times when 6 of us would be on him at once. Oh, he was a good old horse! His mate was a black mare we called Maud. He was red—Charley was. Maud was a little skittish and only the oldest kids rode her.

We had another team of horses we didn't ride—they were work horses. Charley and Maud were too but they were broke to ride. When Clip and Blue got old, we got a team of mules. We didn't ride them either.

We had a creek running through our farm where we waded, fished, skated (in winter) and learned to swim. We spent a lot of time at the creek. I loved to wade in the water. Girls wore dresses in those days and Ruth and I would tuck our dress tails into our panties and then we didn't get them wet, unless we fell, which we did. Once Ruth and I were skating and I fell through the ice. As I was going home half frozen, I met Dad going towards the creek. He wasn't very observant, so didn't notice I was wet. I was relieved! Boy, I was cold! The farther the creek went, the bigger it got. We would walk a mile and a half to go swimming. It was real fun. When we picked berries we always went by the swimming hole to "wash all the chiggers off" (in overalls yet).

We got up early and went to milk before daylight in the winter time, carried lanterns for light. We usually milked from 4 to 8 cows. We had stalls instead of stanchions. We had a cream separator. A bowl you poured the strained milk into. It had a float under it that let you know how fast to let the milk in. The place the milk went whirled so fast the cream being lighter rose to the top and ran out a spout. Skim milk out the other. I guess by now you've guessed there were two. (spouts) Skim milk went to kids and hogs. Cream went to town to the market. When I was a wee lassie we (mama) churned and sold butter. Took it to town in a buggy. Also the surplus eggs.

We always had lots of chickens. We had 3 incubators. One held 120 eggs, one 200, one 300. They were kept warm by kerosene flame. Twice a day they turned the eggs. They put a mark down one side of the egg. Each turning put the mark down or up. If I remember right the temperature was kept at

103 degrees. The eggs were cooled when they were turned. It was exciting when the chicks hatched. They were taken out of the incubator and put in the brooder. They had to be kept warm. We started eating the little roosters when they were very small. There were so many of them. Our first 4-H project was raising chickens. Later we got a calf.

Dad bought little pigs. We fed them kitchen slop and skim milk. We kids had to cut weeds for them. I didn't like that but it did me a little good. When they were ready to fatten, we fed them corn too. We wanted them fat as that's where we got our grease for cooking. We never bought lard until we were out of it. Then we bought pure hog lard.

When the meat was cured, we heated a wash pot of water and after putting a wire through the hams, shoulder, side meat, and hog jaws, we dipped it in boiling water to wash off all the salt. We then sprinkled it with borax, to keep off the flies. Some people sprinkled pepper on it. Then we hung it up and smoked it until it was brown. We used green hickory wood to smoke with. The best breakfast I ever had was, smoked ham, or shoulder, eggs, brown (or speckled) gravy and homemade biscuits. Can you imagine how many biscuits mama made for 9 kids and 2 adults? A whole lot!

The men folks cut mountains of wood for winter. A cross cut saw, chopping ax and wagons to haul in. Nothing like a chain saw. We finally (after moving down to Greenwood) got a circle saw that ran off a gasoline engine that cut real fast but you had to handle logs to get them on the table for cutting. Me and the kids could keep the cut pieces moved from close to the saw. Else the wood would pile up under the saw. It didn't take so much wood then as we had stoves and not fireplaces. Later, of course, we got chain saws. Such an improvement! And a tractor. Wonderful!

We had a huge woodpile out in front of our house. (outside the yard) Evenings someone always put enough wood on the porch to do one day. Daddy always put a large back log on first. Then a smaller front log. We used andirons of course. We called them dog irons. I don't know why. Because everyone else did I guess. Then you put the fire between the front and back logs. At night you covered coals and fire up with ashes so they'd keep until morning. That was "banking the fire." In the morning, just rake off the ashes and you had live coals. Didn't take long to have a fire, with some dry kindling and a piece of paper to fan with. Winters were much colder then than now. Or so it seemed. We all wore long underwear then. Men & children. I don't remember what the women wore. I wasn't a woman.

Everyone helped gather corn. The wagon straddled one row, which was called the "down row." The



LEOTA BUGG WOMACK, age unknown (left)
and at age ninety-nine (right).

PHOTOS COURTESY OF OPAL MANESS HARRIS

smallest ones got the down row. Two rows on each side of the wagon with as many pickers as was there. When the wagon was full (with sideboards) it was taken to the barn and put in the crib. Cribs were made with a large window on the hall side. We had 2 large log cribs with a hall between. The ears were thrown through the window (or opening) by hand of course. We always had lots of corn.

Cotton was a different story. Spring we hoed. Had to keep it clean until it was big. Then came picking time. We drug sacks down the row middle. The sacks had shoulder straps. We didn't like to pick cotton but it was about the only cash crop. We took wagons with sideboards to the cotton field. Scales too. When our sacks got heavy they were taken to the wagon, weighed and emptied. Records were kept on each picker. When the wagon was full, packed—it was taken to the cotton gin, where the fiber was separated from the seed. We sold the fiber and fed the seed to the cattle. They are very good cattle feed.

Aunt Leota's Memories as Written to Reba Mackey

Dear Sis and bed partner,

Remember how we would get up before breakfast, milk the cow, separate the milk, and how you always got a cup and drank milk while it was warm?

Remember how we would laugh, talk, sometimes they were secret things that we would not tell anybody?

How you would put those little cold feet next to mine to get them warm. How you loved to see it lightning. We couldn't agree about: I wanted the curtains pulled and you didn't. One night I went to bed early and dreamed the house was on fire. Mom and you heard me say "house on fire." It wasn't but

could have been. The wind had blown the curtain across the lamp and caught it on fire.

How we would work in the field, come milk the cows, then the whole gang would go swimming in "long hole." How one time you was going to show how to dive. (I wish I had a picture of that). How we had a good laugh over that dive. We all decided we didn't want lessons from you on diving. And the time I was swimming on my back and when I stood up there was a snake in my face. Everybody thought it was funny but me. You talk about someone swimming fast, I did.

One night Mellville stayed all night. Of course she slept with us. And she wet the bed. Next morning, she said, "Leota you got me all wet." I said, "I did not." When she got up to dress her pants were purple (I think) and she said she was purple all over. Then she said, "I know it was me."

Remember when Daddy surprised you with a pair of high top shoes that had, I believe, white buttons? How proud you were of them. I believe to button the shoes you had to have a hook of some kind. I remember you and I were in the kitchen when Daddy gave them to you. Your face was so bright and such a surprise look.

Remember when Flossie (Hayes, cousin) was always telling ghost stories, how you wrapped yourself in a white sheet one evening just before dark. You had us to get Flossie to come around where you were, it was in the corner toward the barn. When you ran out of the corner she was so scared. Daddy really scolded you.

You used to climb the telephone poles, almost to the top. Do your girls know what a tom boy you were?

Remember you and Lauraine made the leaf dress for me to stop crying when the limb broke and my finger was cut? I still have the scar on my thumb.

Remember your birthday party? Mom told me to go and help you with the nuts and when it was time, for you to come to the house. I couldn't get you to quit. Mom told you to clean yourself up, Mr. and Mrs. Blythe were coming. You said, "and why would I care for them to see me like this?" You thought it was funny when all surprised Lois Pinkerton, but it wasn't for you.

Remember the big cherry tree at the barn? They were wild, but O, how good they were. They were so large for wild ones. We spent much time up there. Also the corn cob fights we used to have?

How every fall Daddy would get us all out to burn the meadows? When they were bailing hay, sometimes Daddy would let us ride on the top of the hay as it came to the barn and sometimes he would let us ride the coupling pole.

On Thanksgiving, when all the cousins would come and some times, Daddy would let us go quail hunting

with them. There would be a tub full. Now we hardly see one.

Remember when Mom cut yours and Peggy's hair. Mellville said, "Aunt Id, you cut it off and I'll trim it." Daddy came just as Mellville was trimming and Daddy thought she had cut your hair. Mom told Daddy she cut your hair that Mellville was just trimming it.

We would have to hide ourselves to watch the turkeys nest. They would not go to the nest if they knew we were watching.

Remember the cow named, I believe her name was Violet? No one could milk her but you.

Also our grape vineyard? How the grapes disappeared? We all knew where they went. We felt like Mr. Blythe got them and made wine out of them.

Then in school, how Miss Lina Luck held Ira Holland on the floor until she sent someone after a switch? Ira wasn't so brave after that.

The time John Paul got his clothes wrong side out and everyone was laughing? Hurshal said, "J. P. you may be excused." J. P. said "I don't have to go outdoors." Hurshal said, "J. P. go change your clothes." (Opal's note: Wonder where everyone was when he left for school?)

Last but not least: The Baptist church had a revival at Barling, they would get Daddy to lead the singing. You and he would sometimes sing duets. When Brother Shim held a revival for, I don't know how long, we would go. I believe Dad invited him for dinner one day. You were converted during that time. You and I would stretch across the bed and you read scriptures to me and I would ask questions about some of them. You could tell me sometimes and sometimes you couldn't.

So many more memories, I don't have room for them. I am so thankful for our happy childhood, aren't you? Remember the mad dog scare? At night, in the summer, we always slept on the porch and brought mosquito nets to go over the bed. The gate that was on the west side was open and I thought you wasn't afraid of anything. That time I knew you wasn't my big brave sis anymore. You wouldn't go close the gate and I wouldn't either. I said, "come on, we both will go close it" and we did. When the gates were closed, no dog could get in.

The time that goat was tied to the fence across the creek. Madge and I went to turn it loose. I don't remember who told us to go untie it. It was Aunt Tenny's goat. We did, and how fast we ran and climbed the gate down by the shop. We had to run fast for the goat would butt us.

How we had to strip the cane and Daddy would let us go with him to take the cane to Aunt Tenny. No one could make molasses like her.

How we would get up on the wheel of, was it the blower, I don't remember what it was called, we would

curl up on it and go around & around we would go.

How we would play “anti over” and “bum bum where you from,” drop the handkerchief and hide and seek. Oh yes, don’t forget the rough game of shinnie. What a rough game! Our shins would be blue after that game. How we played “town ball.”

How we would catch crawdads and cook their tails?

How in winter time, we most of the time had a quilt in the frame. When it was being taken out of the frame, we always had to go get a cat (opal’s note: I am not sure about this word) and see who was going to get married first. How we made bats for the quilts. I have carded lots of cotton to make them. I still have a set of the cards. I think I can still card them.

How Daddy would sometimes pay for a singing school, all by himself and sometimes pay for the song books. Thank you for teaching me to play the piano, only ours was the organ.

I hope everwho reads this to you will know some of the words aren’t spelled right and I don’t write like I used to. This Parkinson disease won’t let me. Anyway, if you see a misspelled word, act like it is correct.

Time has come and gone—but you know what memories are one thing no one can take them away from us. I guess you remember lots I have forgotten.

How we put the water in the tub to warm for our baths. How we would put vinegar in our last rinse to remove what was left of the soap in our hair when we shampooed.

How when I was going with Joe Clark, and we had a date at home, we were talking and John Paul came in the room without a stitch of clothes on. He sat down on the organ bench, and I said, “John Paul go back to bed.” He said, “No, I have as much right in here as you do.” I called Mom, she got him to bed. We found out he was walking in his sleep and didn’t know what he was doing. Guess I better close this and get busy. Love you always, Leota

In 1997, In October, Aunt Leota Wrote This to Aunt Reba

Dear Reba,

92 years ago, today, you were the first born from a union of Mary Ida Elizabeth Hayes and Lon Jackson Bugg. Married Jan. 25, 1905. Five years and 3 months later, I came along. Memories of the past are very precious to us.

How we had such a carefree childhood. How we roamed the woods, the hills, the little creek that ran through, the bridge we used to walk on the top of the bridge. How we tiptoed bare footed through the prickly pears barefooted across the creek. Sometimes we would get some of the apples from them and cook and eat them.

How we would wade up and down the creek, catch

crawdads, pinch their tails off, cook them and after they were cooked, pull the shell from around them and eat them. (good)

Remember the grape vine, we would swing across the creek on? The three big barns, we would spend hours and hours in? The, I believe, three bins that Daddy built to keep the grain in. How we were not allowed to play in it, but we did.

The big cherry tree we played in and when the big cherries got ripe, how we loved those big wild cherries. I think they were the largest of any to be wild.

You Reba, the oldest, and I the fifth one. I don’t know how we seemed to be the closest of the rest of them, was it because we slept together more than the rest?

Remember how different Mom and Dad were? Mom so full of life, if she could see the bright side of anything that happened, she did, so bubbly and full of life. Daddy so solemn and serious so much of the time.

Remember when Daddy was recovering from the wagon running over his leg? He had gotten to where he could scoot across the floor. He let some gas expel and Mom laughed. Daddy looked up at her and said, “Id I heard them all my life.” They say opposites attract, I guess they do, or Dad and Mom would have never married. However, they tell me, Daddy was full of mischievous ways when he was in his teens.

The school reunion at Maness, Saturday, October 11, 1997, also brought back so many memories of happy school days. How Madge would not stay at school. She would slip off and go home. So they sent me to school when I was 5 years old, so Madge would stay in school. How all 9 of us were in school for one turn, as you, Reba, studied ninth grade when Hurshal was teaching. Who could have any happier childhood than we?

How Reba said she blamed Mom for her marrying Hurshal. Someone asked how she was to blame. She said, “Mom always taught her to love her teachers.”

Mom’s psychology was, “I try not to worry over things I have no control over.”

Remember how Daddy would always take us to Sunday School and church as we kids came along? Mom didn’t go at that time. In later years how we would get up on Sunday. We older ones would help dress the younger ones. We would have the most of our noon meal almost ready when we came in from church. All eleven of us was always there when we had church, was it twice a month?

Gone, but not forgotten, “How sweet it was.”

Love you, Leota

P.S. I am so blessed, as we all are, to be raised in a home that taught us about God and His plan of salvation.

1912 Newspapers

THE SOUTHWEST TIMES RECORD

**July-December 1912
by Wincie Hendricks**

Abstracted from microfilm
in the Fort Smith Public Library.

Editor's note: Most spelling, punctuation and grammar
appear as printed in *The Southwest Times Record*.

July 5, 1912

FORT SMITH BOY IN GRAND OPERA

Detroit papers have recently made favorable comment and produced pictures of Lawrence Wallace, son of Mr. and Mrs. Mike Wallace, of this city who is beginning a career in grand opera. Mr. Wallace has spent the past several months in New York City studying and has joined the Sheehan Opera Company (which showed here last season), with whom he will tour next season.

Mr. Wallaces' fine physique and magnificent voice will make him a noticeable figure in stage life and critics predict a brilliant future for him in an operatic career.

August 1, 1912

BOOZE BLOCKADE RECENT CAPTURES

Federal officers have been quite busy recently seizing and destroying liquor in trailers found in Oklahoma in such cases the liquor is destroyed on the spot and the cost to the government of court proceedings thereby is saved. Deputy United States Marshall J. O. Johnson broke 48 pints, 48 half-pints and 24 quarts of the fire water on Monday night.

The Fighting Brand

The next evening he was still more successful

when he captured a regular suit case distillery. A long bottle holding about 2 quarts was found to contain the "essence" which, with 170 parts of water to 7 parts of alcohol, will make over 100 gallons of the famous buzz-saw brand of foolish water. It is called this because it will make a hen-pecked husband fight a buzz-saw, and three drinks of the same concoction is said to have made an Oklahoma rabbit turn on the houn'dawg that was pursuing it and fight him to a stand-still.

August 14, 1912

"UNCLE CHARLEY" BURNS, AN OLD CITIZEN, IS DEAD

Charles Burns, one of Fort Smith's oldest citizens, died this morning at the family home, at 722 Thirteenth street. Deceased was 82 years of age, having been born in County Fermanash, Ireland, in 1833. In 1845, soon after the death of his father, Patrick Burns, he came to America in company with his mother and brother. They landed in Canada, where they remained until 1843, when Charles came to America.

Here he became a saddier's apprentice, but after a few months of this, he entered the United States Army, in which he served for 23 years. During most of this time he was engaged in war with the Indians and traveled all over the western country. He came to Fort Smith in 1865 and when the U.S. Court was established here was appointed jailer, serving in this capacity for 14 years, or until Cleveland's first administration.

In his capacity as jailer he superintended the first hangings that took place here under the court's orders, and he superintended the execution of a large number of the Indian Territory outlaws. He engaged in the saloon business for several years and at one time owned quite an amount of real estate, but met with business reverses.

His last employment was in the service of the government, which he served more than half a century, being in charge of the elevator at the Federal building. He had been bedridden nearly two years, following a fall which fractured his hip.

He was married at Fort Gibson to Miss Catherine Lawrence and became the father of 13 children, 7 of whom are now living. Charles is living at Ada, Oklahoma; Henry at Stigler, and the remainder, Leo, Will, Thomas, Misses Mollie and Kate residents of this city. His wife also survives him.

The funeral will be held Thursday morning at 9 o'clock from the Church of the Immaculate Conception. Interment in Catholic cemetery.

August 23, 1912

SUE W. U. FOR FAILING TO DELIVER MONEY

George Cutsavis and Marguerite Cutsavis, his wife, have instituted proceedings against the Western Union Telegraph Co., for \$2,000 damages in each of two cases, growing out of Cutsavis' recent trip to his old home in Greece.

From the complaints it appears that Cutsavis had booked to sail from Athens and had paid \$10 on his passage and requested his wife to wire him \$150. She alleges she did so on June 11, 1912, paying a \$6.90 toll, the money to be sent to Mineri, Tripolis, Greece.

The money was not delivered and as a result Cutsavis was delayed 20 days in sailing for home, and incurred a great deal of expense, incident to several trips to Mineri, failing to sail on the boat on which his passage was paid, etc.

It is alleged his wife is owner of two lunch stands in this city and Cutsavis manages them upon a salary of \$10 per day. The 20 days loss of salary, and his hotel and traveling expenses are named as actual damages and the remainder is asked as compensation for mental anguish, etc.

His wife sets up the \$150 paid the telegraph company, which has not been refunded, interest, \$35 cable tolls explaining the sending of the original telegram as actual damages and the remainder is for loss of her business through absence of the manager, deprivation of her husband's companionship, etc.

October 28, 1912

'POSSUM MARKET IS WELL STOCKED

The cool weather has brought about a new market to Fort Smith—the possum market—and reports from local meat houses say that between 50 and 75 of the animals are being disposed of to the lovers of

“possum and sweet’aters.”

This morning C. B. Roose, of Charleston, brought in 36 'possums, disposing of them at different meat markets. A crate with 24 of the animals in it attracted a great crowd of people.

“We have no trouble disposing of them,” said one of the market men this morning, “a fresh supply is brought in town every week and some times as many as 75 'possums are brought in at one time. Yes, we get a very good price for them, ranging from 35 to 75 cents, according to weight.”

December 16, 1912

H. E. KELLEY BUYS MORE AVENUE FRONTAGE BETWEEN 2ND AND 3RD PAYING \$70,000 FOR 70 FEET

Another big avenue deal, in which Harry E. Kelley played the part of the man having the utmost confidence in Fort Smith, took place today when he purchased 70 feet between Second and Third streets at \$1,000 per front foot.

The property is that owned by Mrs. Fannie Cohn and her sons and is among the choicest wholesale property in Fort Smith. It is occupied by a four story and basement brick block extending 140 feet to an alley which contains a switch track. The building is occupied by Apple Hat Co., G. N. Gilley and Lees Seed store. The Speer Hdw. Co., formerly occupied the premises.

At the time the new union station was occupied many property owners in the vicinity of the Frisco depot were of the opinion that the change would deprive the property in that portion of the city of its value. This sale proves that the fears were unfounded.

The deal is one of the largest of the year and makes upwards of quarter of a million dollars that Mr. Kelley has invested in Fort Smith property in the last sixty days.

In fact, he has already invested the greater part of the proceeds of his sale of eastern Arkansas timber land, one of the notable deals of the year in the state, in property in this city. He made the purchases as an investment and it is convincing evidence that Mr. Kelley considers Fort Smith realty the best investment to be found in the state. His purchases at this time show that he, (and he's admitted to be the shrewdest real estate operator in the state) takes no stock in the report that real estate in this city will be a great deal lower twelve months from now.

The deal was engineered by T. I. Greenstreet.

Who Knew?

The Fort Smith Historical Society welcomes inquiries pertaining to Fort Smith, Sebastian County, Arkansas. The Society's inquiry coordinator as well as volunteers who are knowledgeable in different segments of Fort Smith's history might know how to answer a reader's inquiry or may know the answer or can suggest where to look for that answer.

The query below generated quite a bit of discussion among the volunteers. Marvin McCullough proved to be an interesting former resident of Fort Smith. Perhaps you knew Floyd Marvin McCullough and have your own memories of him. The e-mails containing data and stories pertaining to Marvin McCullough are presented to you in the same sequence as submitted by the person who inquired and the volunteers who responded.

— Mary Jeanne Black

Person with the inquiry:

My mother's brother was Floyd Marvin McCullough. I believe he lived in Fort Smith for many years, and worked as a radio DJ. A man named Don Logan gave me a little information about Marvin, but not much. Does your organization have any old pictures, news articles, etc. that would pertain to my uncle?

Margaret Green

Mother's Name – Nannie Lou McCullough
Ashville, Alabama

Response from Society:

There is an article called "The life and times of Dandy Don Logan" whose grandmother's family settled in Poteau, Oklahoma. It mentions your uncle in the article three times:

Back in Poteau, Oklahoma for his senior year and graduation, Logan was very active in music. He had a band called the 'KLCO All-Stars.' They played every bar and honky-tonk in the area. He was also a featured performer on the KWHN Saturday Night show in Fort Smith, Arkansas, along with Jim Mundy, Ann White, Bob Jones, Tommy Holbrook, Jimmie Helms, the Roller Brothers, Chuck Mayfield, Lucky Plank, Pete Graves, Marvin McCullough (*italics added*), Linda Flannigan, Larry Morton, Fred Rose, Bobby Helms, "Little" George Domerese and Ben Jack . . . Fort Smith was not a real crossroads for the entertainment world. Only one DJ is really remembered, by most people in the area, as a truly original personality and that would be the late Marvin McCullough . . . However, Logan would play unknown rock and roll artists



THE MARVIN MCCULLOUGH BAND

along with the established stars of the day and the unknowns, sometimes received more requests than the stars and some even went on to have monster hits. Logan had an ear for the hits and probably would have eclipsed "Marvelous" Marvin as a local icon, if Don had stayed in the market.

There is also a mention of your Uncle Marvin McCullough in Tulsa Radio Memories.

"This website is a Tribute to Central High Alumni and Miss Isabelle Ronan their English Teacher." Paul Harvey was a major product of Miss Isabelle Ronan's class. Noel Confer, a friend of your Uncle Marvin McCullough, was also a product of Miss Isabelle Ronan's tutelage. He took radio acting roles on local stations, attended the University of Tulsa's broadcast school, and served Uncle Sam in the Army.

Noel Confer, (aka Noel Kelly), went on to say deeper in the site posting that he never worked for "KRMG Radio, but when he worked for the original KVOO-TV they were downstairs neighbors in the old Akdar Shrine building." (This may be another place that you can ask if any of these sites have old photos of your Uncle Marvin.) Noel Confer who was on TV with Marvin McCullough wrote on the Tulsa Radio Memories Guest book that he did comedy on Marvin's Channel 2, television show, "The T-Town Jubilee", and that Noel played the character, "Grandpappy Hawkins." Noel Confer also said, "I'm sure you all hold that memory close to your heart. We had a great local Gospel quartet."

1930 Census, taken April 14, 1930, District 4, Opelika, Lee, Alabama:

McCullough, Marvin—Head of Household, Male, White,

27, Married age 21, Alabama, Father-Alabama, Mother-Alabama, Manager, Postal Telegraph

McCullough, Marie—Wife, Female, White, 26, Married age 20-Born-New York, Father-New York, Mother-New York.

McCullough, Hellen (spelling on the census)—Daughter, Female, White, Single, 3 – Born-Alabama, Father-Alabama, Mother-New York.

McCullough, Marvin Jr.—Son, Male, White, Single, 10/12 months (10 months old)- Born- Alabama, Father- Alabama, Mother- New York.

1951 City Directory of Fort Smith: Marvin F McCullough residence was 304 North 7th Street. 1953 City Directory of Fort Smith: Marvin McCullough announcer Radio Station KWHN residence Fort Smith Hotel

1955 City Directory of Fort Smith: Marvin McCullough announcer for KFSA Radio, residence 809 South 12th.

Anniston Star (Anniston, Alabama) – April 27, 1973 ad for Sunny King “Join in on the fun Marvelous Marvin McCullough Show. Friday night 6:00 pm ‘til 9:00 pm, Saturday 1:00 pm ‘til 4:00 pm.”

Northwest Arkansas Times (Fayetteville, Arkansas), Thursday March 7, 1963

HUNTSVILLE (Special) Marvin McCullough and his band will put on a variety show in Huntsville March 15th. The show will be at 7:30 pm., in the Huntsville school High School Gym. The Huntsville Lions Club is sponsoring the show to raise funds to help finance the County Youth Baseball program. Tickets for the variety show are being sold by all Lions Club members.

Person with the inquiry:

Wow! I wasn’t expecting all this. Thank you so much. One thing I should mention, however, is that the 1930 census report isn’t my uncle. Uncle Marvin wasn’t born until Sept. 13, 1930. I’m surprised that you didn’t find more about him and Ann Magouirk. As I remember, there was a shooting, and some jail time involved, before the case was dropped. I only knew about Uncle Marvin after her return to Alabama for a few years while I was in college. He lived with my grandparents in Anniston, Alabama, and I was in college at Jacksonville State University in Jacksonville, Alabama—about 20 miles away. After he returned to Arkansas and married wife number three, Joy, I only heard from him once or twice. He tried to talk to me after he had his stroke, but about all he could do was make grunting noises. Again, thank you for finding all these items for me. Should you find anything else in the future, please keep me in mind.

— Margaret Green

From Society to Volunteers:

Does anyone have more information on Floyd Marvin



MARVIN MCCULLOUGH AND THE KRMG SIGN.

McCullough aka Marvin McCullough for Margaret Green

Responses:

Volunteer One: Marvin McCullough was on radio station KWHN radio station, largest and most powerful in Fort Smith located at 421-23 Garrison. He [McCullough] was a morning jock and musician. This was in the '60s. Carl Riggins who works for 1st Baptist Church was a jock there as well and probably has some info. I don't know if any pictures survive as the old building is long gone. It was at 5th and Garrison. It was a real fancy station in its day. Production rooms and stages etc., a lot of live broadcasts came from there.

Volunteer Two: Here's another picture of Marvelous Marv. There is a man in town whose name won't come to me right this minute who lived next door to Marvin in an odd apartment complex when they both arrived in town back in the early 50s. He has some Marv stories.

Volunteer Three: What I have to contribute is anecdotal, and not too "historical". It might be of some interest to the descendants. More or less from my ninth grade through FSHS graduation, I was a keen Marvin fan. That would have been from around 1951 through 1954. He had a morning show on KWHN 1320 at around 7 A.M., and his sponsor was the local OK Feed. His lingo was "cool", er, at least fascinating for us.

“Squall and bawl and run up the wall” and all kinds of references to gravy, which seemed to be his reference for superlatives. As good as red-eye gravy, or as bad as possum gravy or ‘bout as wonderful as brown gravy on biscuits He could really yak. Because of the sponsor, it kinda had a slant for the farmers, they gave the price of bushel corn in Kansas City and pork bellies in Chicago, that sort of thing, just immediately before the program, or just after. Now it was mentioned he was a disc jockey, I never knew this, he always sang and played his big Gibson, (I think), sometimes his own songs. It was what we all called hillbilly, at that time. Now I played the guitar and sang, and I have forever retained, and still sing, “Marvin’s Theme Song” which he started his program with. He wrote it:

Gooood mornin’ everybody,
Mr. Farmer hello,
How’s yer livestock comin’,
Have yer chicks begun to grow,
Ifen yer cows don’t give much milk,
Theres sumpin that they need,
It surely makes a difference,
If you feed ‘em OK Feed,
Use OOOOKAYY FEEEDD TOOODAAAY!

Marvin had a Cadillac convertible, I would call it purple, maybe lilac. At some point in this span of my interest, he lived in an apartment just across North ‘B’ street from the First Presbyterian Church. This apt building still exists, I believe.

Marvin was a constant curiosity to me and my friend David Phillips as we would see him with a lot of different girls/women, riding around. To illustrate his popularity, or notoriety, at a recent 1955 FSHS reunion, my old hillbilly band, The Deacons, sang Marvin’s Theme Song and everybody loved it. A lot of people, at that time, liked to listen to Marvin, but did not necessarily admit it . . . We put it on YouTube.

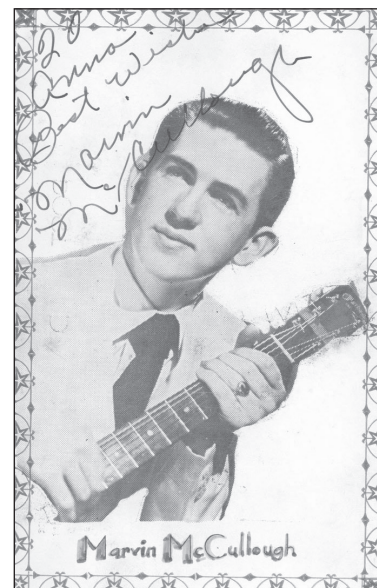
Volunteer Two: The man whose name just keeps nudding at my brain, who lived next door to Marvin had another interesting neighbor in those days. Angelo J. Batounis lived on the other side of him. In those days Angelo ran the Squeeze In for the Catsavis brothers. That odd little building across the parking lot from Edwards Funeral Home must have been jumping in those days. Oh wait...Stan Holloman, is that right? Well, the Holloman part is right. He’s the man that told me Marv stories from back in the day. Someone in the last week, I thought it was on the If You Ever Lived In Fort Smith, Facebook group, there was a discussion going on about Marvin’s 1st & 2nd wives and children. When I run across it again I’ll send a message.

Volunteer Four: When we were in high school Marvin was dating a classmate named Shirley Mc-something, and they eventually married. He picked her up after school in some kind of big car, and we

were all impressed. That was about 1952.

Person with the inquiry:

It is interesting to hear about Uncle Marvin. I’ve been searching for pictures of him for several years. Mother had some when he was a young boy, and a few publicity photos too. She also had a newspaper feature article about him that had several pictures, but the quality of those was poor. He always told people he was from Birmingham, Alabama, and would fudge about his age. I remember that he was quite self-absorbed, and overly concerned about his appearance. I doubt that he was ever anywhere near Birmingham until he was old enough to leave home on his own.



**MARVIN MCCULLOUGH
POSTCARD.**

I knew about my uncle as far back as I can remember, but by the time I was born he had already left Alabama. He came to visit, usually for a few days in the summer and stayed with my grandparents. If he could work it in while he was visiting my grandparents, he would stop by to visit with my mother. The visits were always short, less than an hour. My father died when I was 14 and I don’t remember Marvin coming to our house much after that. Mother probably saw him some during that time. I really don’t remember for sure. When he returned to Alabama to live for a few years, he worked for the American Red Cross. Then he made commercials for a car dealership. I think he even got back on the radio for a while.

Society:

This query required a larger than usual “dig” for an answer. We thought perhaps you would enjoy watching this story unfold. It is especially fun when several researchers join in a search. We all had a common goal, to introduce Margaret Green to the Uncle Marvin that Fort Smith knew.

Mary Jeanne Black is the inquiry coordinator for the Fort Smith Historical Society and fields most of the questions sent in by readers or other people searching for Fort Smith historical information. Her column “Who Knew?” inaugurates the exchange that will become a regular feature of The Journal.

Book Reviews

Ben Boulden, *Hidden History of Fort Smith, Arkansas*. Charleston, South Carolina: The History Press, 2012. Pp. 128. 35 images. \$19.95.

I was thrilled to be asked to review my friend Ben Boulden's book, *Hidden History of Fort Smith, Arkansas*. This is an elaboration of his articles in the *Times Record* titled, "Inquire Within," which I might add is very missed. Opportunity has necessitated his move along with his very talented wife, Jennifer (The Jenny), to Little Rock.

The book is for those who love and who have grown up in Fort Smith. One without connections to the city would have little interest. To those with connections, it is indispensable. The table of contents alone conjures up memories of a city from my youth. Swimming pools, Christmas celebrations, ball games, and movie theaters from the past are in the first chapter. Memories come flooding back. I barely remember Whittaker's pool but have heard it discussed. Some of the others I never heard of but do remember walking the tracks to Creekmore on hot summer days with my bathing suit rolled up in a towel and a quarter in my pocket to pay admission. The popular and larger Creekmore pool probably spelled the end to the Whittaker operation.

The part about how Christmas has changed over the years and the reminisces of Sofia Kannady from 1903 brought back memories of a five-year-old boy riding in the cab of the Dr. Pepper truck that had Santa Claus on top in 1951. That, of course, was me, and I was very special that night. Many of the movie theaters mentioned by Ben Boulden in his book were long gone before my time, but I saw *Peter Pan* at the Joie on Ninth Street before it burned. I spent many Saturday mornings at the Temple and Malco theaters when a can of food was the admission to Ken Maynard westerns, the Three Stooges films, and endless cartoons. And it was air conditioned!

The grandeur of the theaters and the long-gone hotels also brought back memories. The Goldman and the Ward, I remember. My first Sebastian County Bar meeting was in the Goldman in 1972 when I was still a student.

Boulden's chapter on prostitution, drinking, gambling, and the gypsies brought on personal memories. One of my jobs in school was delivery boy for Vaughn Drug. Some of their customers were the girls who plied their profession at the Como and Ozark hotels on Fifth Street. Sometimes the street as I turned onto it looked like a

light display as Fort Smith's finest would be escorting some soiled doves into squad cars. I would go on to more deliveries and come back later when the girls had all bonded out and were back at work.

Boulden goes on to tell of places gone or fading; the history of transportation—trolleys and the like; air travel and aviation pioneers from here. The most interesting chapter to me was one that brought back no memories, the story of Fagan Bourland. He was maybe our most colorful mayor whose wife several times attempted and finally succeeded in killing Fagan's mistress, Maud Allen. That is only one story about Fagan, and you need to read the book to know the rest.

This is a book of memories that spark your own of our eccentric, odd, and downright crazy city that cannot decide if it really wants to be a city. *The Hidden History* is well written and indispensable to those who care about and want to understand Fort Smith, Arkansas. Thanks to Ben Boulden for this important contribution to our history.

*Reviewed by Jim Spears, Sebastian County
Circuit Judge and founding member
of the Bass Reeves Legacy Initiative*

Phil Karber, *Fear and Faith in Paradise: Exploring Conflict & Religion in the Middle East*. Lanham and other cities: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012. 339 pages with index. \$39.95.

Phil Karber, a Fort Smith native, is an authentic world traveler, having set foot on all seven continents in addition to many islands including Bali. A former certified public accountant at Hanna Oil and Gas Company, Karber retired early and since has seemingly spent his waking hours either afoot, in boats, on trains and buses, aboard planes and gliders in foreign domains, or planning his next adventure. Phil does not travel as do most Americans, that is along well-beaten paths to well-known venues abroad, the tourist route, that is. He prefers otherwise, that is traveling by local conveyance, eating local cuisine, and staying in villages, in family-owned inns, and in homes even. For every traveling inconvenience he has experienced, however, he seems to have gained another insight into the native culture. Phil, along with his wife, Joellen Lambiotte, of Fort Smith herself a world authority on planned parenthood, not

only travel to grass-root places, but they have resided in Hanoi, Nairobi, Bangkok, and Marrakech, Morocco.

Phil Karber interspersed his travels with visits to his hometown, where he would recount to friends and acquaintances, often over a meal at George's Restaurant, what he had witnessed, photographed, and discovered about foreign places. Phil became a marvelous window into places way off the beaten track. Naturally, he was encouraged by his friends here and elsewhere to write about his travels, and Karber subsequently published two books, *Yak Pizza To Go* and *Indochina Chronicles*, both books offering much in the way of historical background and intelligent observation to readers regarding East Africa, Southwest Asia, and Southeast Asia.

The latter book brought Phil the 2006 Lowell Thomas Travel Book of the Year award, distinguishing him as a credible author to big commercial publishing houses such as Rowman & Littlefield, who picked up his latest manuscript on North Africa and the Middle East which is based on his eight separate trips and twelve months in the region. This war zone has its share of suspicious bureaucrats and state police, but Phil travels easily because he has so many friends in NGO's who facilitate his passage and because his long experience in border crossings and the visa syndrome allow him to find ways to enter countries that, conventional wisdom has it, do not particularly welcome Americans. To the contrary, Phil finds friendship, kindness, unrequited stories, and a zest for living and for conversation ordinarily not attributed by us Americans to peoples of the Middle East.

This particular book has much to offer to readers worldwide, but especially those in this country. Just a look at the table of contents may inspire you to continue. Karber upsets some stereotypes and in so doing brings Muslim people and values into a much better focus for us. That has to be healthy, and if you want to learn enough background to understand why things happen as they do in North Africa and the Middle East, Karber's book is clearly a must for your reading.

*Reviewed by Billy D. Higgins,
Associate Professor of History and Geography,
University of Arkansas-Fort Smith*

Jennifer Paddock, *The Weight of Memory*. San Francisco, California: MacAdams/Cage Publishing, 2012. 254 pages. \$24.

From the first paragraph of the first page, Jennifer Paddock sets a tone of history in her novel, *The Weight of Memory*. With a few words about the stones of mountains wearing down to grains of sand, Paddock

serves notice that this third chronicle of three girls from Fort Smith will be as much about what is past as what is future.

Leigh, Sarah, and Chandler are connected by high school friendships and events but otherwise live very different lives and go in very different directions, to Washington, D.C., and New York or Alabama and Florida, or, in Leigh's case, staying for what she thinks is too many years, stagnant, in Fort Smith. Despite the disparities, they remained connected, moving in and out of each other's lives as they move through their twenties and into their thirties.

It is not just the teen death in a car crash of a boy each of them loved that weighs on them. Each carries personal burdens, each with their own weight of memory. Sarah and Chandler are dealing with troubled marriages, and Leigh is searching for who she is and where she comes from.

The Weight of Memory is a continuation of stories that began with Paddock's first two novels, *A Secret Word* and *Point Clear*, and while it may be helpful to have read the first two, it is not a must. Reading the other books, however, allows the reader to realize that the tone of this novel, the "voice" of the characters, has changed ever so gradually. They have, after all, grown up and grown older, and their thoughts and perspectives have matured. Whether that was done on purpose or whether it is a product of Paddock's own maturation is interesting to consider.

She manages quite well the inherent problems that come from one book being based upon another, and while the reader may wonder about something that happened before, she tells enough to carry the story along, and the need to know is fleeting, often disappearing from the reader's thoughts by the end of the next sentence. We learn, with a few well-placed words, for instance, how Chandler first became intrigued, and then enamored, with Walker Galloway, a swimmer who suffers from amnesia. It is a quirky relationship—"interesting," is a way Chandler describes him—but he is just the sort of person Chandler needs after learning that her husband, who becomes ex-husband, has put himself, singular, above them as a couple, plural.

We learn quickly enough of the relationship between Leigh and her mother, who lives a life of which Leigh does not exactly approve. ("My mom is the kind of mom who smokes Marlboro Reds and drinks too much and sleeps with strange men and is still sort of sexy.") It is Leigh's desire to find her father, whom she has never known, that gives the book its best connection to history.

An accidental discovery of an old photograph gives Leigh her first clue, and after a lifetime of wondering, she wastes no time in pursuit of her past. She storms in

to see her mother at work, as a cashier at the Cherokee Casino, to confront her—"Is he my father?" she demands to know—and from there, she is hot on the trail of her history. The search takes her to Tahlequah, Oklahoma, the capital of the Cherokee Nation, where she not only finds a connection to her heritage, but also the life she had apparently been looking for all along.

Paddock blends well the stories of the three women, yet gives each personalities and circumstances sufficient to keep clear who is whom as the points of view shift from chapter to chapter. It is clear she has been to the places in the stories, whether in New York or Point Clear or Destin, and the streets and stores can be found and recognized, a sure pleasure for knowing readers.

For those in and around Fort Smith, it is fun to read of Free Ferry Road and Central Mall and the Cherokee Casino in Roland and the landmarks toward Tahlequah. It is easy to slip back into our own histories as we read these place names, back to our own youths and trips to Tenkiller Lake and Chicken Creek, just another reason to enjoy this satisfying and enjoyable novel.

*Reviewed by Doug Kelley,
author of The Captain's Wife*

**Todd Timmons, Makers of Western Science.
Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2012. 224
pages. \$45.**

This new book by Dr. Todd Timmons, University of Arkansas-Fort Smith professor of history, constructs a systematic timeline tracing the development of science and scientific thought from Copernicus to the DNA revolution of the twentieth century. Along the way, the reader finds ample evidence showcasing the move toward experimentation and the establishment of the scientific method as the pre-eminent mechanism for advancing human knowledge. We also discover such monumental insights as Kepler's need for a more accurate means of measuring wine consumption, which leads to calculus—a fact that would be most helpful to many college students looking for motivation to learn this mathematical language.

Timmons traces the centuries-long progress toward reliance on inductive reasoning (scientific reasoning) as a means of expanding the range of human knowledge. The Aristotelian dominance of deductive logic throughout the middle ages slowly gives way to a trust in empirical processes. Some natural philosophers such as Descartes advance science despite their continued mistrust of sensory input. Observation with the senses needed to fight through the usual entrenchment of thought and supremacy for the authority of the ancients. Timmons cites Kepler's words concerning the stubborn

and lazy ways of the learned academicians of his time: "They (academics) are established in order to regulate the studies of their pupils and are concerned not to have the program of teaching change very often. . . the things that have to be chosen are not those which are most true but those which are most easy." It is an interesting observation by one of the great mathematicians, which is often echoed by critics of the academy in our current era.

Experimentation and inductive reasoning propel Timmons's review of the development of science over the past six centuries. Why chose to begin with Copernicus and not the ancient natural philosophers such as Aristotle, Archimedes, or Galen? Well, these eminent philosophers of Greece and Rome either relied strictly on deductive reasoning or were just plain wrong. Galen certified that the liver produced blood, which was used by the body as fuel. The concept of the blood as a delivery vehicle within the body would not emerge until William Harvey's experiments nearly 1,500 years later. The ancients were respected and thought to be without error. However, when these new "natural philosophers" began making direct observations through experiments such as Harvey's dissections, a different kind of knowledge arose.

Induction is never certain except when it proves the negative, but unlike deduction, it provides the corpus of human knowledge gained in the last 500 years and has developed a methodology that guarantees a high likelihood of certainty. When the same data is found again and again, science believes. Theories are not speculation but overarching concepts that unify a variety of observed phenomena. Timmons does a marvelous job constructing a narrative that traces this development and the establishment of the scientific method that mapped the human genome and placed robots on Mars. Some stories are better than others. After all, Copernicus was a church official living what could be described only as the dull and boring existence of a church official. Within that life, however, he found the presence to speculate about the true nature of the heavens. Galileo Galilei, on the other hand, led a fascinating life. Timmons seems to find a real sense of energy and storytelling while relating the events and discoveries of the telescope peering Pisan.

The book is accessible to the layperson and only occasionally delves into the depths of mathematics and only when necessary to propel and support the narrative. Timmons also makes the strong case that it is the language of mathematics that must always accompany the theories of science. Noble Prizes are awarded to the scientists who develop to the formulas that "prove" the empirically observed.

*Reviewed by Henry Q. Rinne, Ph.D., Dean,
College of Humanities and Social Sciences,
University of Arkansas-Fort Smith*

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- 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
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Visit Our Website

www.fortsmithhistory.org

Find the links listed below to aid your research!

❖ **Arkansas Stories**—A site dedicated to the stories, studies and songs from Arkansas' past, Arkansas' future.

❖ **Arkansas Freedmen of the Frontier**—The African-American experience in northwest Arkansas is chronicled here. It has a lot of great links and information.

❖ **Arkansas Historical Association**—The mission of the Arkansas Historical Association is to promote the preservation, writing, publishing, teaching, and understanding of Arkansas history through the publication of the *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* as well as other activities.

❖ **Arkansas History Commission and State Archives**—The Arkansas History Commission is one of the oldest existing state agencies in The Natural State and Arkansas' official state archives are maintained by the commission.

❖ **Black Men Who Rode For Parker**—A site dedicated to the African-American deputy marshals who enforced the law in the federal court district of western Arkansas and Oklahoma. Judge Isaac Parker presided over the district in the late nineteenth century.

❖ **Center for Local History and Memory**—The Center for Local History and Memory at the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith grew out of student-faculty efforts in 1997 to collect oral history interviews to document the first seventy years of the college.

❖ **Arkansas Civil War Sites**—The Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission website with information on Arkansas' participation in the 150th anniversary of our country's struggle with itself.

❖ **The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture**—The Encyclopedia of Arkansas Project is proud to present these initial entries.

❖ **Fort Smith Trolley Museum**—For more than 20 years, Fort Smith's trolley museum has worked to educate people about transportation history, restore and maintain antique trolley cars, and even give riders a trip back in time in those streetcars.

❖ **Fort Smith Museum of History**—The Fort Smith Museum of History acquires, preserves, exhibits and interprets objects of historical significance relevant to the founding and growth of Fort Smith and the region.

❖ **Fort Smith Air Museum**—Located at the Fort Smith Airport; the museum is a treasure trove of facts

and artifacts that tell the story of Fort Smith's aviation history. Our readers might also enjoy this site on The History of Flight, submitted by one of our readers (Tony, a history researcher and student of Ms. Brooke Pierce in Delaware)—the site provides a fantastic time line that breaks down the early history of flight in America.

❖ **Historic Fort Smith**—A page containing some general information about Fort Smith history, heritage tourism in the city and links to other sites.

❖ **Oak Cemetery**—A recognized National Historic Landmark with more than 152 years of history is home to the burial sites of outlaws hanged by order of Judge Isaac C. Parker, marshals, deputy marshals, an Arkansas governor, fifteen mayors of Fort Smith, and the founder of Fort Smith, John Rogers.

❖ **The Old State House Museum of Arkansas History**—Set in the oldest surviving state capitol west of the Mississippi; it houses a multimedia museum of Arkansas history with a special emphasis on women's history, political history and special programming for children.

❖ **Richard C. Butler Center for Arkansas Studies**—The Center for Arkansas Studies proudly presents what we hope will one day become the premier online resource for historical information related to Arkansas.

❖ **South Sebastian County Historical Society**—The South Sebastian County Historical Society, located in Greenwood, Arkansas, is an excellent resource on the history and landmarks of the area.

❖ **Wikipedia Entry for Fort Smith**—The online, user-created encyclopedia has a descriptive entry about the largest city in western Arkansas.

More Genealogical Links

❖ **Fort Smith Library Genealogy Department**—One of the greatest resources of local genealogical information to be found in the city. The Fort Smith Public Library is also a frequent gathering place of local historians and history buffs.

❖ **Crawford County, AR cemeteries**—A rich genealogical resource for Van Buren and Crawford County.

❖ **Leflore County, OK Genealogy**—Find birth and death records in support of your genealogical searches involving LeFlore County, Oklahoma.



UAFS history students on a field trip to the Fort Smith National Historic Site, April 2010. Park Ranger Loren McLane (left front) and Park Interpreter Jeremy Lynch, both UAFS graduates, guided the tour.

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