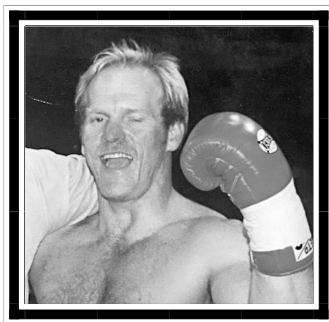


The JOURNAL



German POWs at Camp Chaffee

Task Performed by the Organization



*Bobby Crabtree:
True Grit Fighter*



*The Life and Times
of Carolyn Joyce*



*Parker Marks
a Century of Service*



MISSION: The mission of the Fort Smith Historical Society Inc., founded in 1977, is to publish the *Journal* of the FSHS and through the *Journal* and other activities to locate, identify, and collect historical materials; to publish primary source material and historical articles that pertain to the city of Fort Smith and the vicinity. Preservation of Fort Smith history is our primary mission, and we always welcome the loan of historical material, including photographs, letters, diaries, and memoirs, and will return them promptly.

MEMBERSHIP & ORDERS: *Journal* issues are available. Cost for current and past issues is \$7.50 plus a \$2.50 mailing charge per copy. Send orders to:

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P.O. Box 3676
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or contact us online at webmaster@fortsmithhistory.org

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QUESTIONS pertaining to the Fort Smith Historical Society or the *Journal* may be addressed by email to:

Mary Jeanne Black, inquiry coordinator and researcher, mblack3086@aol.com.

Mary Jeanne edits the *Journal* department titled "Who Knew?" Contact her with your research and/or genealogical questions or topics.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE! www.fortsmithhistory.org
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Content tabs: Organizations, Membership,
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Contacts & Links, Archives and Gallery.

SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS FOR POSSIBLE PUBLICATION IN THE JOURNAL

A submitted article is peer-reviewed by members of the *Journal's* editorial board and approved before publication. The due dates for manuscript submissions are February 15 for the April issue and July 15 for the September issue. The story should be relevant to the city of Fort Smith and/or this area and significant to the history of the border region. Manuscripts must be based on historical documentation with notes, bibliography, or a list of sources. We recommend authors search through the literature on their subject. We encourage photographs, charts, or maps to accompany the article. These visual aids must be released by the owner, who is to be properly accredited, and appropriately captioned.

Specifics

1. Manuscripts of 3,000-7,000 words may be submitted to the Editorial Board of the *Journal* electronically using the email address of stoliv44@gmail.com, Sherry Toliver, President of the Society, or mblack3086@aol.com, Mary Jeanne Black, Inquiry Coordinator.
2. Title page should include article title and author name.
3. Manuscripts should be double-spaced in Times Roman 12-point font with one-inch margins. Pages should be numbered, preferably with author name in the top right corner.
4. Notes and bibliography should be cited according to the *Chicago Manual of Style* (Turabian). Book, journal, and newspaper titles should be italicized.
5. Photographs and maps should be submitted with manuscript in digital format of at least 300 dpi resolution and must be captioned with 1-5 sentences. Photographs and maps must be credited as to source.
6. An author photograph and short bio should be submitted at the end of the manuscript along with mailing address, phone number, and email address.

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

AMELIA WHITAKER MARTIN

Journal Editor & Co-Founder, 1977-2004

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The JOURNAL

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- Main) German POWs await processing for incarceration at Camp Chaffee.
- (Lower left) Bobby Crabtree
- (Lower center) Carolyn Jones as Miss Laura
- (Lower right) The Parker Center in Fort Smith

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News & Opportunities

Fort Smith Historical Society

2023 Monthly Meetings
are held on the
Second Monday of every month at 6 p.m.
University of Arkansas-Fort Smith,
Math-Science Bldg., Room 104

Check FSHS Facebook page and email alerts
for monthly meeting sites.

Arkansas Historical Association

82nd Annual Meeting 2023
Arkadelphia, April 13-15, 2023.

Theme: “Amusing Arkansas: Sports and Leisure in
the Natural State.”

Host DeGray Lake Resort State Park offers a chance
to consider the history of Arkansans at play: in sport,
outdoors, arts, and hunting and fishing.

Register through the Arkansas Historical
Association website:

www.arkansashistoricalassociation.org

Clayton House

514 North Sixth Street
479-783-3000

claytonhouse@claytonhouse.org

Upcoming Events

All events require reservations or pre-ordered
tickets. Got to claytonhouse.org or our Facebook page or
give us a call at 479-783-3000!

Fort Smith Museum of History

320 Rogers Avenue
479-783-7841

For program times, descriptions, reservations, and
current exhibits, please use the museum website: <http://www.fortsmithmuseum.org/newsletters>

Upcoming events at the Museum:

❖ April 20, 2023: The trial of the Dalton posse for
murder “In Parker’s Court” at the Museum.

❖ U.S. Deputy Gratt Dalton, his brother Bob
Dalton, and posse members Jeff Griggs and A. J.
Landis are accused of murdering Montgomery Deeds
near Bartlesville, Oklahoma. This case is one of many
where deputies had no warrant and the murdered man
had said he had been “working up business” for the
Daltons. Must be eighteen to attend. Tickets will be
available through org or by calling 501-783-7841.

❖ Children’s Month: Every Thursday in June,
10:00 to 11:30 a.m., reading programs and other
activities based on the history of rodeo and cowboys
are open to all children and their parents, however, they
are best suited to youngsters under the age of twelve.

❖ July 14 and 15: Annual Christmas-in-July
fundraiser, offered in partnership with the Clayton
House and the Bonneville House. Activities in all three
locations. Tickets may be purchased through any of the
vendors as the date approaches. Early Christmas
shopping, exciting events and delicious food awaits all
at Christmas-in-July.

Yarnell’s Ice Cream, made in Arkansas since 1932,
is featured in the Museum’s old-fashioned soda
fountain. Come in and treat yourself.

Friends of the Fort

More information at Facebook page or by emailing
friendsofthefort@gmail.com

Drennen-Scott Historical Site

Visitor Center
221 North Third Street, Van Buren, Arkansas
479-262-2750
drennen-scott@uafs.edu

Drennen Scott House is closed for restoration and
maintenance work with reopening planned for 2023.

Nearby on the site, at the Willhaf House
restoration work is proceeding. Leonard Willhaf was a
German immigrant, ran a bakery on Main Street in Van

Buren, and was a veteran of the Mexican War of 1846-48. His home, built in 1851, was donated to UAFS and grants were acquired to restore and interpret the home as a museum.

For more information contact Tom Wing, Director of the Drennen-Scott Historical Site by email at drennen-scott@uafs.edu.

Facebook: Drennen-Scott Historic Site

John Talkington Chapter of the Sons of Union Veterans

Anyone with Union Army ancestors from the Civil War period or who have an interest in joining can contact Tom Wing at 479-262-2750 or VanBurenSUV@gmail.com.

The local chapter is named for John Talkington, an ancestor of Angela Walton Raji, who was a slave of Isaac Talkington in Crawford County. John Talkington fled in 1863, headed to Fort Scott, Kansas, and joined the 2nd Kansas Colored Infantry which engaged Confederate forces at the 1864 Battle of Jenkins Ferry in lower Arkansas (referenced and re-enacted scenes shown in the Academy Award Winning movie, Lincoln). Talkington was wounded in the combat. He later died in Fort Smith, and is buried in Fairview Cemetery, Van Buren.

Fort Smith Regional Art Museum

1601 Rogers Avenue – Fort Smith

479.784.2787

info@fsram.org

Fort Smith Regional Art Museum is celebrating its seventy-fifth anniversary.

Lectures, workshops, education programs, and events throughout the year. Contact RAM for a full schedule of activities, exhibits, and children-centered art classes.

❖ January 22-April 23, 2023. Pablo Picasso: 25 Years of Edition Ceramics from the Rosebaum Collections. This exhibition presents a selection of the ceramics created by Pablo Picasso in collaboration with George and Suzanne Ramie and the artisans at their Madoura pottery workshop in Vallauris, Southern France, between the years 1947 and 1971.

❖ Ongoing: John Bell, Jr. Legacy Project. Exhibits of Art and Artifacts of this significant and amazing Fort Smith artist.

Frisco Station, Fort Smith by John Bell, Jr. Prints

available at the Regional Art Museum.

❖ Saturday, April 29, 2023, 6-11 p.m. RAM 75th Anniversary Celebration Gala: “Evening in Paris.” Art has been adding joy to life for seventy-five years through the Fort Smith Regional Art Museum. Enter la Belle Epoque (“the beautiful era”) of Paris and celebrate with us! Contact the RAM for ticket info.

Fort Smith Little Theatre

401 North Sixth Street, Fort Smith

2023 Season

❖ April 13, 14, 15, 16 and 19-22: “Dilemma with Dinner” by Robin Roberts. Directed by Tina Dale.

❖ June 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7-10: “Deathtrap” by Ira Levin. Directed by Micki Voelkel.

❖ July 27, 28, 29, 30 and August 2-6 and 10-12: “Rodgers and Hammerstein’s Cinderella” by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II. Directed by Eric Wells and George Mann.

❖ September 21, 22, 23, 24 and 27-30: “Arsenic and Old Lace” by Joseph Kesselring. Directed by Brandon Bolin.

For seating and start time information, contact information is online at <https://www.fslt.org/category/2023-season/>

Fort Smith Historical Members

Do you know how much you are loved and appreciated? Your support and assistance make possible the preservation of Fort Smith history for future generations. Without your on-going support, the Fort Smith Historical Society and *The Journal* could not exist.

Reprinted from the 10th year of the *Journal*, 1987. We feel same about our dear members in this, our 46th year. Our FSHS membership runs from January 1, 2023, to January 1, 2024.

Please renew. Your support and membership for the *Journal* of the Fort Smith Historical Society is deeply appreciated.

River Valley Film Society Inc.

August 25-26, 2023

Fort Smith International Film Festival

TempleLive, 200 North Eleventh Street, Fort Smith. Submit a film before May 25, 2023, for consideration. Film categories can be seen on the website: <https://fortsmith.org/2023-fort-smith-international-film-festival>



FORT SMITH
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL

Fort Smith International Film Festival Invites World's Creativity Here

By Lynn Wasson & Brandon Chase Goldsmith

Independent films from all over the world began digitally arriving in Fort Smith in spring for the Fort Smith International Film Festival, competing to be chosen for the Aug. 25-26 event.

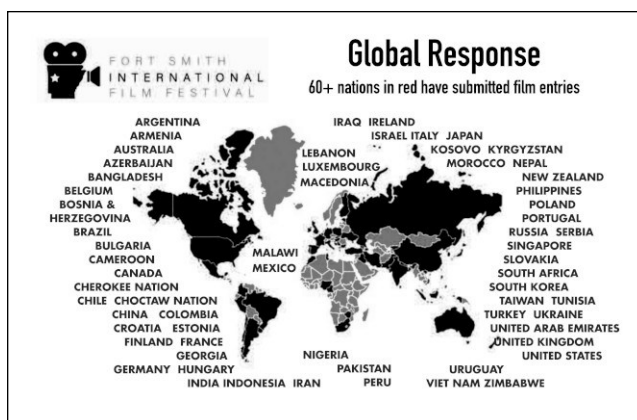
This third annual competition will be held at Temple Live, the city's historic Masonic temple now converted to a versatile entertainment venue offering the festival audience four simultaneous screening spaces in period movie-palace splendor.

"Last year, films were submitted from fifty-six countries, nations and tribes," said Brandon Goldsmith, executive director of the festival. Attracting independent filmmakers from around the globe, 396 film submissions came from forty-three different countries in its inaugural year. "In year two, that number grew to more than fifty countries, nations, and tribes, an overall total of more than sixty countries across two festivals."

"We are making creators from all over the world aware of Fort Smith as a center of international cultural encounters and opportunities," said Goldsmith. According to media trackers, the 2022 Fort Smith International Film Festival reached 265 million and 254 million in 2021, for a total of 500 million globally. Reach is calculated by the number of print and television reports published by major media, tallied by the tracking service Meltwater.

Momentum is increasing in film entries this year, he said. "[re]Focused is the theme of the festival, celebrating a storytelling renaissance by movie makers who suffered production obstacles posed by the global pandemic," Goldsmith said. "Artists who persevered are emerging with new focus."

The 2023 Fort Smith International Film Festival



celebrates the movie making warriors and survivors who pushed through. The global pandemic delayed, derailed, and devastated film productions across the world. As the international creative economy recovers, stalled projects were revived, new ideas emerged from the ruins, and artists have become [re]Focused.

[re]Focused filmmakers are on the leading edge of a storytelling renaissance. Their lenses are capturing experiences from different angles and apertures are being opened bringing blurry situations into the light. With a new focus, people and groups who were on the margins or left out of narratives are entering the picture with a sharpness that reveals the details of their lives at a higher resolution. The third annual Fort Smith International Film Festival invites these [re]Focused movie making warriors from across the globe to tell us your stories.

Choosing the Films

From February through May, volunteer screeners watch the prospective films, with a goal for "three sets of eyes" to rate each film, said program director Clay Pruitt. With a digital login, screeners can watch the films on their own time, or at live watch parties held monthly at 5 Star Productions in Fort Smith. Films vary from a few minutes to feature length. Screeners may earn free tickets, festival merchandise or a trophy for reaching goals of hours watched, Pruitt said.

On June 25, the selected filmmakers will be notified. Then the films will be judged by professionals from around the globe. One set of judges are especially invited.

Three local festival officials traveled to Cisterna, Italy, in summer 2021 to its international film festival. Cisterna, liberated by forces led by Gen. William O. Darby of Fort Smith in World War II, is Fort Smith's "twin city." While being generously hosted in a warm and cordial style, Goldsmith, Pruitt and festival board member Caroline Speir exchanged mutual insights with the Italian festival presenters. Speir is the executive

Fueling the Creative Economy

2022 Fort Smith International Film Festival's impact on the economy.

Festival Budget.....	\$37,000
Destination Patrons Direct	\$40,453*
Destination Patrons Indirect.....	\$26,067*
Local Patron Direct	\$26,750**
Total Economic Impact	\$130,270

*City of Fort Smith Advertising and Promotion Commission

** The University of Oregon's Community Service Center studied 79 film festivals and found that "Destination patrons reported spending an average of \$803 related to their trip, not including airfare. This equates to \$122 per person per day. Local patrons averaged about \$107 per party (2.14 people)."

SOURCE: *Film Festivals in Oregon: Impacts and Marketing Strategies, September 2017, Final Report, Community Service Center, Department of Planning, Public Policy & Management, University of Oregon*

director of the Fort Smith Museum of History.

"The Cisterna Film Festival executive staff pick our overall International Film Winner," Goldsmith said.

The Fort Smith festival will include as many selected films as will fit the two-day event, which also offers live panel discussions and after-film talks with film making teams and actors. Audiences enjoy the films and filmmakers learn and make professional connections, Goldsmith explained. The entire experience showcases Fort Smith's interface with the global film industry.

Economic Impact

Today, film festivals operate more like micro economies. They can make smaller cities boom by bringing in business, giving young people a reason to remain in the region, and developing a city's national and international links.

—Sarah Jilani, [theguardian.com/cities/2019/sep/11/do-film-festivals-help-or-hurt-their-host-cities-venice-sundance](https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2019/sep/11/do-film-festivals-help-or-hurt-their-host-cities-venice-sundance)

This festival interacts with regional film industry players such as the Cherokee Nation Film Office and Arkansas Cinema Society to identify capable regional directors, actors, film technicians and skilled



FORT SMITH FUTURE SCHOOL GRADUATE GABE HOBBS was awarded a \$2,000 scholarship to the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith at the 2022 Fort Smith International Film Festival. His short documentary is *A Chat with Tony C, and interview with friend*.

tradespeople, Goldsmith said.

Film festivals are a gateway for independent filmmakers to receive critical and commercial notice. The Fort Smith International Film Festival awards cash prizes and scholarships to filmmakers of high school and college age.

Encouraging young filmmakers is the primary focus of the festival and its yearlong programming and initiatives. Cash prizes and scholarships provided by sponsors and affiliated academic partners such as UAFS help to sustain student filmmakers' professional and creative development. Fort Smith Future School graduate Gabe Hobbs won a \$2,000 University of Arkansas-Fort Smith tuition scholarship for his short documentary, *A Chat with Tony C*, at the 2022 festival.

Bryan Alexis, University of Arkansas-Fort Smith Art and Design professor, created a series of posters around the Borderlands theme. "The entire process of film making is a series of borders being created and erased. This poster series celebrates that process," explains Alexis. "The poster designs advance through stages of the ideation process for film making, with each poster progressively refining the idea until we arrive at the launch of a finished film called Borderlands."

2022 Award Winners

Best Overall Film & Best Narrative Feature—*Guthlee Ladoo* by Ishrat R. Khan, India.

Best Overall High School Film—*Ruby* by Gwendoline Laurent, France.

Best Local High School Film—*A Chat with Tony C* by Gabe A. Hobbs, U.S.

Best Alumni Film & Best Documentary Feature—*The Journey of Tiak Hikiya Ohoyo* by Mark D. Williams, U.S.

Best Local Film & Best Regional Film—*Double*



UKRANIAN FILMMAKER OLGA ARTUSHEVKA with her award for Best Comedy Short from the Fort Smith International Film Festival.

Trouble by Levi Matthew Smith and Blake Dean Allen, U.S.

Best International Award—*Opal* by Alan Bidard, Martinique.

Best People of Color Film—*Blurring the Color Line* by Crystal Lee Kwok, U.S.

Best Western Film—*Heart of the Gun* by Travis Mills, U.S.

Best Short Film & Best Indigenous Film—*Peace Pipeline* by Gitz Crazyboy and Tito Ybarra, Canada.

Best Documentary Short Film—*Sam Wang: Centripetal Persistence* by John Rash, U.S.

Best Animation Short Film—*Lotus* by Gwyneth Jones, Australia.

Best Music Video—*Outta Here: Escape the Simulation* by Danielle Eillesse Smith, Avitiuh.

Best College Local Film—*Fort Smith: Developing Creative Economies* by Dillon Hudson, U.S.

Best College Short Film—*Vlada Goes to London* by Arti Savchenko, Israel.

Best Thriller Short Film—*Hunger* by Carlos Melendez, Mexico.

Best LGBTQ+ Short Film—*Just Benjamin* by Paige Murphy.

Best Comedy Short Film—*Valera* by Olga Artushevka, Ukraine.

Best Sci-Fi Short Film—*Young Liars* by Adam Christy, U.S.

Best Action Short Film—*Delville Wood* by Izette Blignaut, Connor Weidemann, Mitchell Weidemann, South Africa.

Best Drama Short Film—*Join Me* by Anais Nativel, France.

Best Experimental Short Film—*Triangle* by Peter Engelmann, U.K.

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In Memoriam

Bob Coyal Worley (1924-2023)

The Fort Smith Historical Society honors the vast life and work of one of the state's most productive citizens, Bob Worley, who died on January 6, 2023, at the age of ninety-eight years, four months. He was preceded in death by his wife of seventy-seven years, Mary Lou Raney Worley (1924-2020). Born in Poteau, Bob entered the U.S. Army in 1943 and served in the China-India-Burma Theater during World War II. Post-war, Bob and Mary moved to Fort Smith, where their three children would be born.

Working for the Kansas City Southern Railroad, Bob read law and passed the bar exam. Worley became a solicitor licensed to argue cases before the Interstate Commerce Commission and the Federal Maritime Commission. His highly successful representation of the Fort Smith Furniture Manufacturers Association in hearings before those bodies resulted in equalization of freight rates for trans-Mississippi furniture makers and ensured that this city's paramount industry thrived in a national market. A long-term officer in both the Fort Smith Freight Bureau and the Arkansas Industrial Traffic Association, Worley pushed for creation of the Port of Fort Smith as the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System brought high volume barge traffic into western Arkansas and as far as Tulsa. For such significant and lifelong work in the river and rail transportation area, in Tulsa in 2011, Bob Worley was inducted into the Arkansas River Valley Historical Society Hall of Fame.

An avid supporter of the Fort Smith Historical Society and the Fort Smith Museum of History, Worley founded the Hardwood Tree Museum Association in 2009 and assembled a board of businessmen, teachers, ecologists, architects, accountants, and manufacturers. The HTM acquired two plots of land north of Wells Lake, built the Herman Udouj Trail adjacent to the Janet Huckabee Nature Center, acquired oral history interviews, historical furniture, Jessup Tree Collection specimens from the American Museum of History, art and artifacts made from wood for display in the Fort Smith Museum of History, and is developing a Memorial Hardwood Tree Grove on one tract of Chaffee Crossing land. In addition to these worthy causes to



BOB WORLEY



ATTORNEY BOB WORLEY, left. *The Chairman of Interstate Commerce Commission is third from left. Other individuals are officials of the American Association of Railroads. This photo, courtesy of Bob Worley, was taken in Hotel Galvez in Galveston, Texas, in 1961. Worley's arguments brought about a favorable decision by the ICC regarding equalization of freight rates, which benefited shippers west of the Mississippi River.*



HTM FOUNDER BOB WORLEY, left, and James Reddick, current HTM President look over deeds to lands ceded to the Hardwood Tree Museum by the Fort Chaffee Redevelopment Authority. *The property is being used for a wetland trail, planting a memorial tree grove, and prairie restoration.*

which he contributed so much, Worley was a superb rose grower, rose bouquet presenter, and member of the Rose Society of Fort Smith.

Articles concerning Mr. Bob Worley appeared in these issues of the *Journal* of the Fort Smith Historical Society: Volume 35, No. 2 (September 2011), pp. 36-42; Volume 41, No. 1 (April 2017), pp. 37-41; Vol. 45, No. 1 (April 2021), p. 12. The Museum of Fort Smith's Richard Griffin Theater shows a video interview of Mr. Worley regarding his service during World War II.



GERMAN PRISONERS OF WAR begin processed for incarceration at Camp Chaffee.
(Photo courtesy of the Fort Smith Museum of History)

The Task Performed by the Organization

A contemporary report on German POW Camp at Chaffee, 1942-45

By Jerry Akins with Sue Robison

Part One

Historical researchers grow accustomed to hours spent scrolling online resources, days given to piles of books and newspapers, and emails sent in search of the one person with the one bit of information they need more than food or sleep. Seldom does fate deliver into their hands a treasure such as a first-person, contemporary, military-styled report on the German Prisoner of War Camp at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas during World War II.

Jerry Akins, author of the book *Hanging Times*, experienced such a happenstance in his volunteer station at the Fort Smith National Historic Site when he found a transcript titled “A History of the Prisoner of War Camp.

Camp Chaffee, Arkansas.” The title noted the document was completed September 11, 1945, at the Prisoner of War camp. The unnamed author(s) preface the report by declaring “that which is a current description of operating procedures is written in the present tense,” and speaks of the “nature of the task performed by the organization.”

The report is an intricate collection of information compiled by category rather than date of event and gathered into what the author(s) refers to as chapters. Unfortunately, no information in the fifty-nine pages remaining to the original article identifies the writer or defines their purpose. A line in the preface page promises no opinions of the “writers” were included in the work, suggesting more than one person participated

in the compilation and recording.

Working together, Jerry Akins and Sue Robinson present the information in the report to readers of the Fort Smith Historical Society *Journal* in a condensed form. The copy of the report is illegible in places due to smudging and age. What remains is a unique view into the construction and operation of the World War Two Prisoner of War Camp at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas. A total of twelve chapters are contained in the body of the transcript. The first consists of eight type-written, legal sized sheets randomly marked with hand-scribbled author's notes under the heading, "Physical Facilities."

The report opens with the eighty-five acres of Camp Chaffee land designated for use by a Prisoner of War Camp being described as a secluded location chosen for prisoners as a "secure means of preventing their escape." The Army's area engineer took control of construction, which began in the summer of 1942. The author(s) write as witness to the start of construction between the forks of the Little Vache Creek. The author(s) explain the difficulties caused by natural boundaries when a camp originally built for 1000 expands to hold 4000 inhabitants by August 1943.

Metal housing units known as hutments were the primary shelters for the prisoners, the majority of whom were from Rommel's "Afrika Corps" in northern Africa. The second page of the report tells us a total of 3,400 prisoners and 16 German medical officers were sheltering in hutments by February 16, 1944. By that date, the camp also contained quarters for forty American officers and a separate building for the commanding officer.

When describing security at the camp, the author (s) speak of changes made to the facility arising from the handling of prisoners of war. There were, at the time of the report, eleven guard towers on the perimeter fence located at intervals of 600 to 1,500 feet. The 33-foot-high guard towers were provided with a ladder, a space heater, a telephone, two movable searchlights, and three machine gun mounts. Each tower held four men. In 1945, emergency lighting was installed to supplement the battery search lights. Great detail was given to the installation of the machine gun mounts, which were constructed with the use of elbow mounts devised by Camp Chaffee's Ordnance Department. Sixty light poles and four floor lights illuminated the prisoner of war camp.

The reporter(s) tell of a perimeter fence constructed of double chain anchor wire. There were multiple fence lines located eight feet apart



AFRIKAN KORPSMAN FUNERAL

(Courtesy of the National Archives)

surrounding the three compounds at the camp. During the spring of 1944, additional fencing was added between compounds One and Two to prevent prisoners in those areas from "coming into physical contact with each other." Tensions between prisoners and continued sequestration led to construction of a 10-strand barbed wire fence halfway across the front of Compound Four and down the middle of "this compound."

The main gate was located at the center of the middle compound. A road separated the stockade from the area housing American personnel. In 1943, the gate was modified to allow guards to search vehicles between the inner and outer gates. Pedestrian gates were opened at the main gate and work gates were established at Compounds One and Two. When in full use, a total fourteen gates offered access to the area.

Three connected hutments created a Headquarters Building. A separate Personnel Office opened near Headquarters in 1944. In 1945, the Personnel Office increased in size to six hutments. In the spring of 1943, the control station at the main gate was enlarged to contain a Prisoner Labor Office. A supply office was built next to the supply warehouse.

Each of the three prisoner compounds had a total of thirty-four six-hutment barracks, four four-hutment orderly rooms, one canteen, one day room, one dispensary, four mess halls, four latrines, one workshop building, and a recreation area. In the summer of 1945, the fences were removed to permit each compound to have a recreation area of its own. A prisoner medical officer's compound consisting of five huts, one latrine and a recreation area was constructed in late 1944 and early 1945 in space taken from Compound One, Compound Two, and the Visitor's Center.

The Visitor's Center sat on an area in front of Compound One. It housed the Commander's office, a

prisoner recreation area capable of holding 800 men, and a prisoner guardhouse completed in 1943. A six-hutment segregation compound was added in the spring of 1945.

Enlisted personnel were provided four mess halls, four orderly rooms, four latrines, and quarters for 130 men in each organization area. Two of the original mess halls were later combined into a single mess and the remaining two became barracks and storage rooms. In June 1945, one of the mess halls became a bowling alley for American personnel. Other considerations resulted in the creation of an enlisted men's day room, an area room, and a consolidated supply room.

Buildings for the woodworking and blacksmith shops were constructed north of the stockade in 1943. The Post Engineer secured tools for the shops from items abandoned by the Division Engineer in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The compound also held a paint shop for prisoners making signs, a plumbing shop, cobbler and tailor shops, and a carpenter shop. From 1943 to 1944, a civilian operated a sawmill at the camp with the use of prisoner of war labor.

The author describes how the fire station was replaced with three 500 foot hose carts at the entrance of each compound. He explained the telephone switchboard installed in 1942 and its direct line used in case of fire emergencies.

A building was brought from the main camp to serve as dispatching office for the prisoner of war stockade motorcade. A flagstone wash rack built in 1943 was replaced with a concrete wash rack capable of holding two vehicles.

In April 1943, a hutment from the Visitor's building was placed in front of the enlisted men's day room to serve as a chapel. Using the expression, "at the current time," the author reported the transformation of the chapel into an Information and Education Center.

In October 1943, the Post Engineer designed and oversaw the construction of the prisoner's cemetery. The article reports the location of the cemetery as "in a small grove of trees on the southwest side of Compound One near Tower Eleven." Headstones for the cemetery were furnished on automatic issue by the office of the Quartermaster General.

German prisoners held in the camp constructed sidewalks in the enlisted men's area. It was a project requiring a period of years to complete. Flagstone was quarried southeast of the camp for the walkways, and drainage ditches were constructed with the same stones.

The chapter of the report detailing the physical facility of the Prisoner of War camp concludes with

details of a theater and an enlisted men's beer garden. There is a summary of repairs made to the facilities using a \$20,000 appropriation from the War Department and facilitated with the use of prisoner labor.

The author(s) explain the original struggle faced by organizers to find additional buildings for the prisoner of war camp. He told of Camp Chaffee Police and Prison personnel who sought out buildings left on camp reservation lands after the annexation of local farm homes to fill their needs. The author(s) record, "When the camp first opened, it was a common sight to look up and see a small house being dragged up Compound First Avenue behind a truck."

The second chapter of the material details the organization and administration of the prisoner of war camp. The author(s) record the site's name changes, including its original title as a "PW Stockade" when it opened on January 9, 1943, being changed to the "Camp Chaffee Internment Camp" on July 10, 1943. The same General Order #33 that renamed the camp established a Headquarters Detachment with the 396, 397 and 4024 MPEG as organic units for the installation. The service unit number "1887th" was assigned by Headquarters Eighth Services Command on July 10, 1943, after which the name was changed again to Prisoner of War Camp, Camp Chaffee on July 24, 1943. On February 1, 1945, the camp's designation was changed to 1850 SCU POW Camp, and the author (s) state this designation was still in place at the time of his writing.

On November 5, 1942, the 396th MPEG Company arrived for assignment at the PW camp from Fort Bliss, Texas. They were joined the next day by the 397th MPEG, also from Fort Bliss. The camp at the time of their arrival was described as "a sea of mud" with corn rows still visible. The troops from Fort Bliss underwent intensive training before the arrival of the first prisoners. They also spent time originally designated for organized athletics policing and improving their company area.

A third company, the 402nd MPEG, arrived from Fort Bliss on January 4, 1943. In the Fall of 1943, the 334th MPEG moved from the Rohwer Relocation Center in Arkansas to Camp Chaffee, but the company was reassigned in February of 1944 to Camp Monticello.

In March 1944, all MPEG companies on duty at prisoner of war camps were consolidated into a PW Camp Provisional Battalion. All enlisted personnel incapable of functioning mentally or physically were replaced at that time.

The first Commanding Officer of the Prisoner of War Camp at Camp Chaffee was assigned from Camp Livingston, Louisiana. The original allotment of officers provided for one quartermaster, one chaplain, three medical corps, and one dental corp. The first group of enlisted men consisted of fourteen soldiers who arrived December 2, 1942.

The office of the Stockade Commander was a five hutment building originally designed for use as a Visitor's Center that opened in September 1944. A portion of the hutments was used to house a section of segregated prisoners until they were moved to a separate compound. The Stockade Commander supervised all compounds and activities inside the stockade except the Prisoner of War guard house, the tool house, and the labor house.

The author(s) use the expression "at the present time" to describe the American servicemen duties in each of the camp's three compounds. Author(s) share that a group consisting of a Compound Sergeant Major, a Supply Sergeant, a Mess Sergeant, and additional personnel assigned to each company. Each compound had a German spokesperson and interpreter to represent the prisoners. Between March 30, 1944, and August 1944, the camp was without a spokesperson because the prisoner selected to hold the position refused to represent Germans held in the segregation area.

The Adjutant supervised enlisted personnel and operated with regular Army directives. The telephone switchboard was manned by four enlisted men under the Adjutant. Originally, the switchboard had only five lines but, at the time of the writing, the Commanding Officer, the Supply Office, the Prisoner Labor Office, the Personnel Office, and the Outside Dispensary had direct phone lines.

The PW Labor Office oversaw the administration, dispatching, and receiving of prisoner labor details for various agencies using prisoners as workers. All rosters were kept in this office. The Personnel Office was the custodian of each prisoner's pay data records. Prisoner of War companies were originally called Internment Companies and were activated in accordance with needs driven by prisoner population. These companies compiled and kept various files for the camp, including morning reports, sick reports, assignments to prisoner work details, and other necessary information.

Each PW company had one American enlisted man and one American clerk. The allotment for a Prisoner of War Company generally consisted of a company leader, an interpreter, a clerk, a mess sergeant, cooks, kitchen police, a utility man, and a latrine orderly.

The prisoner company leader was responsible for the maintenance of the company area, maintaining the cleanliness and sanitation of each prisoner, transmitting orders from command, and requiring military discipline and courtesy. The prisoners of war received authority from the Americans and no authority based on a German rank. Leaders for prisoner companies were selected from privates; leaders for companies comprised of non-commissioned officers were selected from non-commissioned officers.

The supply office opened November 1942. It managed clothing and the delivery of rations for the prisoner of war camp. It also operated the supply house, the motor pool, and camp maintenance.

Medical care for the prisoners was under the command of the Post Surgeon. Each Prisoner of War compound contained a dispensary, and the Station Hospital contained a prisoner section. American medical personnel supervised the work of two German medical officers in the PW dispensaries, and four German personnel worked in the hospital ward set aside for prisoners. Out-patients from the prisoner population were shuttled to the clinics at the Station Hospital, and emergency ambulance service was available when needed. Four prisoner dentists worked in the camp's four dental clinics.

In September 1944, Compound One was designated an annex for the Station Hospital with separate housing and mess facilities for prisoner of war patients. On September 29, 1944, 199 prisoner battle casualties were moved from Glennon General Hospital, a German Prisoner of War medical facility in Oklahoma, to the Station Hospital at Camp Chaffee for treatment. They were joined the next day by an additional 296 patients. Prisoners whose treatment did not require the sophisticated facilities of the hospital were housed in the annex.

As the writer prepared his report, there had been eight burials at the prisoner of war cemetery. He gave a detailing of difficulties encountered after heavy rains, which were alleviated by drainage ditches. He also recorded the assignment of a prisoner to serve as gardener with a charge to provide a lawn and garden for the cemetery.

As he ends this section of his report, the author takes pride in noting that the Prisoner of War camp at Camp Chaffee was one of the first to be activated. As a result, experimentation was necessary to create the functioning encampment he details for readers. He told how some of the records from Camp Chaffee are similar to those later adopted by the War Department,

and throughout the Army. The writer also spoke of representatives sent from other camps to study Camp Chaffee, and of records requested from Camp Chaffee for study across the country.

In the third division of the report, the author delves into the camp's operation under the dictates of the Legation of Switzerland, better known today as the Geneva Conference. Seven pages were dedicated to protective powers, aid societies, and prisoner complaints.

Periodic inspections were held at the camp by Legation delegations, and there was oversight in the transmitting of documents from prisoners to Germany. In 1944, a numbered circular system for dissemination of information to prisoners of war was instituted.

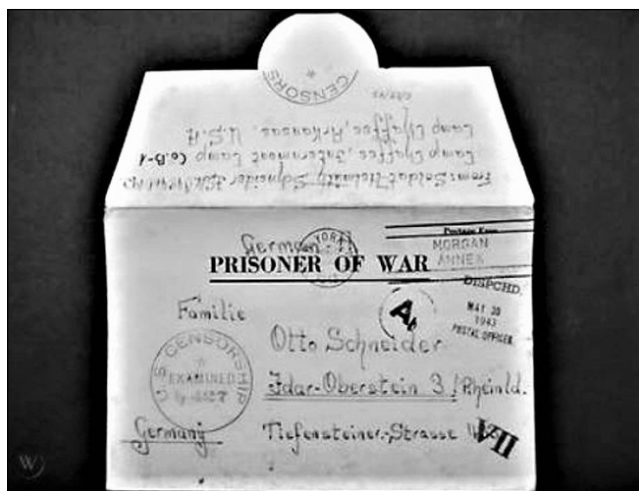
During the time covered by this report, the camp received six visits by representatives from the Legation of Switzerland and the United States Department of State. Emil Greutar of Switzerland and Whitney Young of a special division of the Department of State made the first compliance visit in December 1942. The final camp inspection to ensure convention compliance came April 23 and April 24, 1945.

In May 1945, the International Red Cross became the Protecting Power for German Prisoners of War, replacing the American and German Red Cross agencies. The Red Cross managed packages and messages with their German counterparts, and prisoners at Chaffee without correspondence from Germany within any three-month period received special forms that, once completed, were forwarded to the German Red Cross for processing. Christmas gifts from Germany were delivered to prisoners in 1942, 1943, and 1944.

To support the work of the International Red Cross, prisoners at Chaffee donated \$580 in 1943 to support the agency. The initial donation was followed with a two-thousand, three hundred- and thirty-six-dollar gift in 1945, and a final donation of four-thousand-seven hundred and ninety dollars on August 12, 1945. These were voluntary donations from the German prisoners made with funds they received for work.

Representatives of the Apostolic Delegations of the Catholic Church and representatives from the Lutheran Church visited the camp to make cash donations to prisoners in need. The Catholic delegation also helped prisoners contact family members through the church offices in Rome. The American Red Cross assisted prisoners in their efforts to contact relatives using their locations throughout Europe.

Our author wrote of complaints lodged against



A LETTER MAILED from a German prisoner of war at Camp Chaffee.

(Courtesy of the Fort Smith Museum of History)

camp policies and operations by the prisoners saying there were several complaints the first year the camp opened, but almost none by the time the war ended. He proceeded to detail twenty of the complaints, all of which were handled through the office of the Provost Marshal General.

The list contains the complaint from German medical personnel that they were not immediately recognized as required by the Legation of Switzerland. This 1943 complaint resulted in medical professionals held at the camp being designated as “protected personnel.” A second complaint made the same year focused on the manner in which medical treatment was made available to the Germans in the Station Hospital Prisoner Ward, but this complaint was dismissed by the Swiss reviewers.

A spokesman for the prisoners complained about the reduction of recreation time from two hours every day to only two days of the week. Command explained the reduction was in place due to a shortage of prison guards. In June 1943, a complaint was lodged about the slowness of mail delivery. Camp officials responded that most of the mail arriving from Germany to Chaffee was routed through Africa, the Hawaiian Islands and San Francisco. It was the journey, it seems, that caused the delay.

In the summer of 1943, prisoners complained of receiving only fifty cents for a full day's labor. Swiss officials explained their pay had the same value as two German marks and that American prisoners held in Germany were receiving only twenty-five cents per day.

One of the more serious complaints was lodged

after a machine gun accidentally fired two rounds during cleaning. The rounds struck a structure, causing it to splinter, and those splinters resulted in minor injuries to four prisoners. The prisoners complained the Americans fired exploding bullets, but Swiss investigators sided with the guards and declared the incident an accident.

Not all filings began as local problems. A few prisoners held at Chaffee filed a complaint against Polish Army guards they encountered in an English prison before being moved to Camp Chaffee. The Polish military guards were accused of kicking and beating the Germans, with some stealing personal items from the prisoners.

By the end of 1943, the prisoners were complaining about the lack of notification received before transfer to new camps. They also argued that Americans had no right to remove German symbols they constructed and displayed inside prisoner compounds.

Not all complains were to be passed off as trivial. In September 1943, the German spokesman complained to the Swiss Legation about the bayoneting of two prisoners on a special disciplinary work detail. These particular prisoners were segregated at work for being non-cooperative and using abusive language to guards.

These two members of the work crew were not functioning at a satisfactory level, they were refusing orders and continued to be abusive toward the guards. The guards, who were recently supplied with bayonets to retain control of prisoners in tense situations, “jabbed” the two prisoners “in their lower extremities.” In protest, prisoners in all three compounds of the camp refused to work the afternoon of the “jabbing.” The prisoners said they would return to work only when the bayonets were removed from the guards’ rifles.

As a response to the prisoners’ demands, the Commanding Officer closed all mess halls, all canteens, and stopped the delivery of rations to the prisoners. Detainees held in Compound One returned to work that same day, after missing two meals. Residents of Compound Two agreed to return to their assignments the following morning. Prisoners in Compound Three resisted for two days, returning to work after missing a total of five meals.

Two days after the initial “jabbing,” all prisoners agreed to cooperate and complete their work assignments without protest. At that time, all bayonets were removed from American rifles.

As a final effort to prevent future problems, all

three German compound leaders, “who proved to be rabid Nazis” were reassigned. New leaders were selected, and the amount of work completed by the prisoners increased immediately.

In early 1944, prisoners brought a serious complaint about not only the type of assignments made by the Americans, but the punishment received if they refused to complete the task. Prisoners asked to repair trucks for overseas use, and those required to load empty ammunition and carbine cases on flat cars refused to comply. Apparently, they believed these efforts would constitute helping the Americans in the war effort against Germany. In response to their refusal, the prisoners were placed inside a double fenced area near the front gate.

During the investigation by the Swiss, Camp officials explained that the ammunition clips were not bound for use in battle but were heading for salvage. As for the fences, Camp Chaffee spokesmen maintained the double-fenced work area had been used as a punishment space for prisoners since the camp first opened and was not designed especially for these workers. After a month-long investigation, the Swiss dismissed the German complaint.

German prisoners complained about the treatment of non-commissioned officers in relation to the treatment of enlisted men. The non-commissioned officers did not want to wash windows in the American officers’ quarters and were replaced by enlisted men from the German prisoner compounds.

A German medical officer who landed in the brig after interfering in an American disciplining a prisoner complained when detained with enlisted prisoners. The officer wrote the Swiss delegation demanding a transfer to a new camp. In response, the Swiss declared the officer was held in a separate cell, although the same brig, as the enlisted prisoners, so he was segregated. As for his request for transfer, he was reminded his American counterparts held in German prisons had no chance for transfer, so his request was denied.

When visiting the prisoner of war camp at Camp Chaffee, delegates of the Swiss Legation received several small complaints in the earliest days of the operation. Most were handled before the delegates left the camp. Camp personnel felt that, in the beginning of their detainment, the Germans had to be constantly reminded they were prisoners of war being held by their captor. The writer(s) state that when prisoners realized Germany was losing the war, their complaints decreased.

The report looks at discipline, courtesy, and control in relation to the Germans held at the Camp Chaffee

Prisoner of War Camp, all of which were under the domain of American military personnel. Primary to the control held by the Americans was the mandate that no prisoner had any authority based on his Nazi military rank to make any decision or order any action among the other prisoners. Certain prisoners, such as Compound Leaders and Spokesmen, were allowed limited authority among the Germans at the discretion of the Camp Commander.

Writing in the present tense, the author states, “all copies of local orders, local regulations, and court-martial orders relative to the prisoners of war are translated into the German language; usually these orders are printed bilingually.” Beginning in 1944, a notice was continually posted on all prison building bulletin boards stating that any prisoner requesting protection would receive it, regardless of religion or political beliefs.

A section of the report covers regulations governing what may seem today as minor details in a prisoner’s life. Before 1944, prisoners were allowed to sing marching songs learned in the German Army. After April 19, 1944, the prisoners were prohibited from singing any song outside the stockade. Standard procedures were in place to prevent fraternization between military personnel, prisoners, and civilians. The use of camp typewriters was allowed only while American personnel were present to observe the writing as it was created, and all typewriters were locked when American personnel ended their work shifts.

Prisoners underwent a thorough search before being transferred. There was strict censorship of all prisoner mail to prevent the names of certain detainees in the camp from being sent back to Europe.

There was attention given to the manner in which a German prisoner would salute. The Camp Commander originally permitted only the American salute to be used by prisoners. In March 1943, the Provost Marshal General authorized the use of either the American or German salute by prisoners. On April 25, 1945, the Provost Marshal issued a new order declaring prisoners would use only the American salute, and none of the others.

The author states that all control measures taken were continually firm with an emphasis on “no pampering and no coddling of the P.W.’s.” To that end, punishments given the prisoners were in accordance with the Geneva Convention and the Manual for Courts Martial. All incidents involving prisoner behavior were immediately investigated and records of the incidents were kept in the prisoner’s 201 or Intelligence File.

The Geneva Convention granted the camp’s Commanding Officer power to handle minor prisoner infractions and escapes. Only three prisoners at the time of the writing had faced general court-martial, and all those were charged with assaulting with attempt to kill another prisoner of war. Two prisoners received sentences of hard labor for driving nails into the tires of trucks they helped load. One prisoner received a year of hard labor for striking an American non-commissioned officer, and three received ten years of hard labor for attempting to start a riot in Compound Two with the intention of harming anti-Nazi German prisoners.

Prisoners refusing to work were held in a segregated detention area near the main gate while their work detail finished their daily duties. These prisoners were also subject to the “no work, no eat” policy, which meant they received only bread and water so long as they refused to work. If necessary, these prisoners were accompanied by a guard to the latrine. On April 27, 1945, a German prisoner set the record as the man who bore this punishment the longest, having survived three days and six hours.

In May 1943, a Prisoner Guard House was constructed in the Visitor’s Area using an old structure found on reservation grounds. The writer states that, on September 30, 1943, the guard house was turned over to the camp by the Post Engineer and was used “with excellent results” for punishing prisoners.

The Prisoner Labor Officer and the Prison Security Officer had the responsibility of operating the guard house safely. Prisoners held in the guard house for non-compliance were allowed shortened exercise periods but were not allowed to send or receive mail. After December 1944, no tobacco of any form was allowed to prisoners held in the guard house.

Large rocks were gathered at the Prisoner of War camp in early 1945. In June of that year, prisoners held on penalty of hard labor were put to work crushing stones from the rock pile to be made into surfaces for roads inside the stockade.

Prisoners held in detention were not allowed to possess sharp edged items, including knives and shaving equipment, to prevent suicide attempts. Prisoners were allowed to bathe and shave daily, and a vessel was provided in each cell for emergency relief.

The first request for protection at the camp came from a group of Polish nationals who were drafted into the German military. The Polish soldiers were moved from Compound One to Compound Two until a three hutment segregation area was constructed near the motor pool. While there, the prisoners used the 396th

MPEG mess and latrines. In February 1945, a separate area for protected prisoners was constructed. These men went under guard to a compound mess for food and used bath facilities in the prisoner guard house.

Political differences, or some unspecified personality perversion, were listed as the leading causes Americans would separate prisoners. Some prisoners sought relief from harassment by seeking segregation, and a few were removed from their groups after being beaten or forced to climb a compound fence. A few prisoners were removed from their unit upon arrival at the camp under the directions of an Intelligence officer. Segregated prisoners were transferred as soon as the Swiss mediators approved the action.

The writer(s) warn the reader that, “the continual threat of escape of PWs has always been kept in mind by camp personnel.” A complete listing of escapes and attempted escapes is provided in the body of the report.

The first attempt at escape was made in March 1943 by the prisoners held in Compound Two. A group of men attempted to dig a tunnel under the hutment using scrap material collected from other compound buildings to support the construction. The tunnel was discovered when the Americans called for all prisoners to leave their compounds, but two of the Germans in Compound Two did not comply and were found working inside the tunnel.

In May 1943, two prisoners escaped and were free for several days. The Americans believed the men escaped by clinging to the underside of a truck driving through the camp during a flood.

On September 17 of that same year, a prisoner seized an opportunity to escape from a work detail. When a large procession of prisoners was returning from a work assignment in a field, it rounded a curve in a dirt road. This gave the prisoner a chance to slip inside a culvert until the detail passed, and then make his escape.

The prisoner enjoyed two days of freedom before being apprehended some twenty miles from camp inside a Catholic Church in Charleston, Arkansas. The final escape of 1943 came on December 29 when two prisoners walked away from a logging detail. It was a short freedom for the men who were recaptured that same day.

The Army’s Branch Camp at Stilwell, Oklahoma, was the location of two escapes in the summer of 1944. The first came in June when two prisoners moved free of a work detail during a break, only to be recaptured later that evening. The second attempt came the next month when two prisoners climbed a fence during a

guard change. They were recaptured two days later at the railway yard in Sallisaw, Oklahoma.

A prisoner drove a truck away from a work detail in January 1945. The truck was found abandoned and the prisoner was located the following day in Poteau, Oklahoma. Civilians near Bonanza, Arkansas, notified Camp Chaffee of a prisoner seen in their area on June 16, 1945.

It was discovered the PW walked away from guards at the Mess at 5:20 that morning to get coal and did not return. He was found nine hours later almost nine miles from the compound. The next month, a prisoner walked away from his post at the camp’s incinerator and was at large for five days before being apprehended in Russellville, Arkansas.

The German prisoners spending the longest time away Camp Chaffee survived seven days before being recaptured. The pair escaped from a building cleaning crew and used the moon as a navigation tool to make their way through the countryside.

Unfortunately for the prisoners, they simply walked in circles and never traveled more than fifteen miles from the stockade before being found in Mansfield, Arkansas.

All prisoners attempting escape were punished with at least thirty days in the Guard House. They also suffered through extended periods of bread and water instead of meals. No prisoners who escaped made any attempt to harm an American civilian. Most were simply trying to find a large city, and all realized they had no conception of the tremendous size of the United States before spending a little free time on its back roads.

The report continues with sections on the types of labor performed by the prisoners, the social activities available to detainees, and the security system in place at the Camp. These will be detailed in part two of this series. Information on the prisoners held at Camp Chaffee and their service in the Nazi military will also be included in the next issue of the Fort Smith Historical Society *Journal*.

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Bobby Crabtree: True Grit Fighter

*Fort Smith man is
a championship boxer
who once faced
George Foreman*

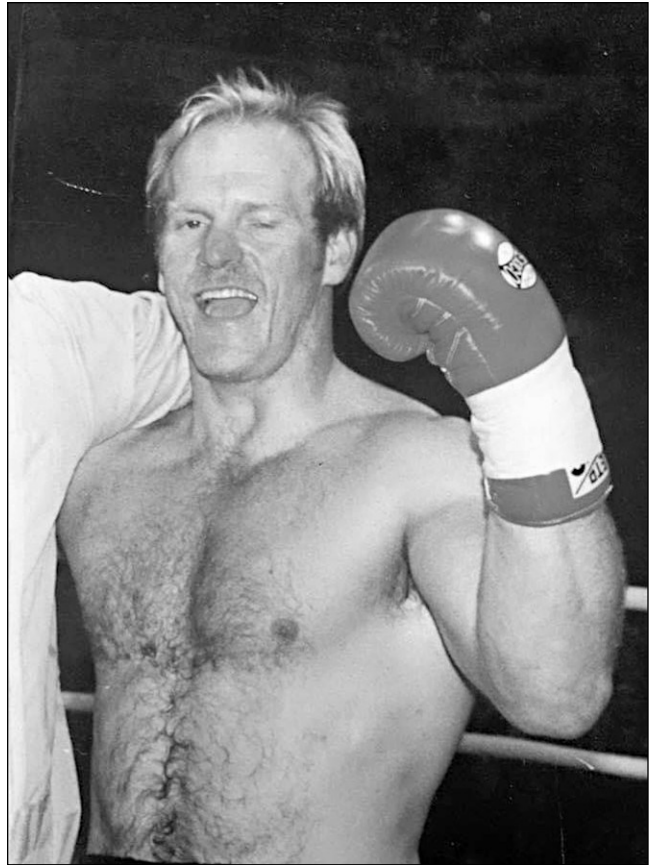
By Sammy Jackson

I met Bobby Crabtree in 2010 at the Eagles Club on Sixty-Sixth Street in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Bobby was shooting pool. I watched as he shot the bull with his opponent and everyone else around the table. He was dressed in cut-off blue jean shorts and a button-up shirt with the sleeves cut off. I had no clue at the time that Bobby was a boxer. His calm, cool, and humorous personality led me to think that he was just a knock-around guy, like me and everyone else in the room.

Weeks later I was at the Eagles Club with my friend Dennie Crowell. Bobby and his girlfriend, Jo, walked into the room, Dennie tapped me on the shoulder and said, “Hey! See that guy with all the muscles (which were easy to notice with the button up shirt with the cut off sleeves)? He’s a championship boxer! He fought George Foreman.” By this time, Bobby and I had already made each other’s acquaintance and were becoming friends. I liked him just fine for the comical bull shooter that he was. But wow! I was surprised and impressed. Bobby, Jo, and I became better friends over time. The more that I learned about the guy some people called the Arkansas Hillbilly and his life, the more I was intrigued.

Bobby Crabtree was born on August 6, 1959, at his Aunt Patsy Smithson’s home in Lavaca, Arkansas. His dad, Oscar Lee Crabtree, was from Fort Smith, and his mother, Joyce Marie Crabtree, was from Lavaca. Little Bobby was one of seven siblings, the third of four boys with three sisters.

Young Crabtree went to school at Oak Grove Elementary and attended Van Buren Junior High. He was expelled from school in the eighth grade at age fourteen for fighting. He would never return to school.



BOBBY CRABTREE

Instead, he moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma, to work with his dad and Uncle Jack at Jack Crabtree’s Body Shop. Later, he and his dad moved to Houston, Texas, where they continued doing auto body work.

Bobby would enter his first bar at age sixteen while living in Houston. This is where he had the first of many barroom fights. When I asked him if he ever went to jail for any of the fights, he said, “Nah, I always ran out of there and hid.” At nineteen, he returned to Fort Smith to work at Putman Lincoln Mercury on Towson Avenue.

Bobby developed an interest in martial arts, hoping it might be a way to structure his anger and his love for fighting. Bobby said to me, “I got my love for fighting when I was a kid. My brothers and I liked to settle our arguments with a fight. My brothers and sisters always

had my back. Over time, they instilled in me this way of thinking, 'If I'm gonna fight, might as well get good at it and try to make a little money doing it.'"

In 1979 Bobby made his way to a karate school in Van Buren. There he met Bob Ross, a local police officer who enjoyed teaching karate. He inspired rough-and-tumble young people like Bobby to use what they had and become the best at whatever they wanted to do in life. Ross was more than just a karate instructor to Crabtree—he also became a life coach. Bobby said during one interview, "If it weren't for Bob Ross, I'd still be going to jail or getting out!" He credits Ross for his work ethic. Ross once told Bobby, "If someone has to push you to do it then you don't need to be doing it cause you ain't going nowhere." This work ethic remains with Crabtree to this day.

Ross took Bobby to the tough-man arena where the fighter got a bye on the first night. On the second night, he would have two opponents. First, he fought the Raging Razorback, who would take first place on both matches. Second, he fought Bob Fields who would win the second-place trophy. Crabtree would claim the third-place trophy. Bob Fields, the runner-up in this tournament was a boxing instructor and trainer. He had previously fought Mohammad Ali at McAlister State Penitentiary in an exhibition fight. Fields took an interest in the young third-place winner. Bobby said that Bob Fields was "a short, short man and a very skilled fighter."

Fields wanted to teach Bobby the skill of boxing. They would first start training at Bob Ross's school of karate. Soon, they had need of a ring and sparing partners, and in 1982, their training moved to the Lincoln Youth Center in Fort Smith. Bobby said, "If it weren't for Bob Fields, I would never have had a boxing career." At about this time, Bobby met Robin Lee Ross. The two would have a daughter on July 30, 1984, and named her Destini. On June 10, 1985, Bobby and Robin were married in Van Buren. The two would divorce seventeen years later in July 2002.

When Destini was born, she was the sparkle in Bobby's eyes. That became the light of his life on June 9, 2005, when his granddaughter, Journi, was born to Destini and her husband, Joel Brown. Destini noted, "My dad was a real dad." When I asked her if her dad's professional boxing career and local celebrity status had any influence on her social life, she replied, "Well, I got a lot of respect," and then laughingly added, "I went on very few dates because my dad was my date!"

Crabtree would often go to Cavanaugh Elementary and later to Ramsey Junior High to have lunch with his daughter. She recalled once that her dad had a meeting



BOBBY CRABTREE with his
World Boxing Championship belt

scheduled at the same time as her lunch break and as she put it, "So, Dad brought the guy with him and the three of us had lunch at school." When I asked Journi the same question, she replied, "Nah. He's just my Pappy!" I saw the tears in Destini's eyes as she smiled and lovingly spoke of her dad's devotion to family. Journi spoke up and said, "Every Saturday Pappy comes over and we have breakfast together." Destini reiterated, "My dad is just a real dad." Journi added, "And a real Pappy!"

Bobby began a professional heavyweight boxing career on April 8, 1982, in a bout with Larry Jones in Roland, Oklahoma, at age twenty-two. He didn't fight his way up through Golden Gloves! He never had an amateur boxing match! With no experience, he went straight into the professional heavyweight ring. When I asked him how it felt to start a boxing career at twenty-two, he explained, "Well, twenty-two is a late age to start a boxing career, but when you start in the professional heavyweight ring, twenty-two in a pretty good age, I guess." Bobby weighed 200 pounds at the time. He said, "It's too light for heavyweight and too heavy for cruiserweight. Laughing, he added, "But I like the heavyweight class best because I could eat whatever I wanted." Even so he would enter the cruiserweight class.

After a dozen years of fighting in both weight classes, Bobby won his first title in a match-up with Kenny Keene in his hometown of Fort Smith on

February 10, 1995. The toe-to-toe slugfest went the distance that night at the Fort Smith Civic Center. The decision went to Crabtree, who described his feelings saying, "Beating Kenny Keene was the proudest moment of my boxing career, and Keene was my toughest fight ever." He added with a laugh, "I hit the man with everything I had, and he just kept looking at me. That night I wore the belt to bed and never went to sleep."

On April 22, 1995, just a month after winning the title, Bobby defended it against Mike O'Han at the Convention Auditorium in Hot Springs. This is the only time that he would defend his title. His manager at the time, Bo, failed to pay some sort of fee, as Crabtree remembers. So, Bobby was stripped of the title.

Bobby had fought a bout before the match with Kenny Keene on December 10, 1994. Bobby was preparing for his cruiserweight match with Keene, when he received a one-week-notice that promoter Don King had scheduled him with an up-and-coming heavyweight hopeful, King Ipitan. The match was scheduled in Mexico and Bobby agreed to the fight. So, at 200 pounds and his opponent being at 225 pounds, the fight was on.

Bobby recalled thinking that Ipitan was so big and physical that it would have to be a quick knockout if he hoped to win the fight. Bobby said that when Ipitan threw a jab, "I hit him with everything I had!" The knock-out punch by Crabtree hit Ipitan so hard that his opponent stepped back, and his ankle snapped on his way to the canvas. Ipitan never regained his status and retired from boxing. Bobby took no pleasure in ending the career of a fellow boxer. But he did add that, "Ipitan was there to end mine, so it all worked out!"

Crabtree remembered another fight but cannot remember the name of his opponent. He said the fight was stopped in the sixth round and "I can't remember getting knocked out, but I do remember coming to in the elevator." He recalls a fight back in the early years of his professional career that taught him the importance of Marquess Queensberry Rules. He says that he "studied 'em but was so raw that in my fourth fight, I knocked the guy down. I didn't realize that he was knocked out and I thought he was smiling at me through the mouthpiece, so I stomped his arm. They didn't disqualify me and I won the fight but I found out that those rules are in place; I had better follow them."

The big-time fight that everyone seems to remember the most is the headliner that the Arkansas Hillbilly would fight former heavyweight champion George Foreman. The match would take place in Springfield, Missouri, on September 15, 1987.



BOBBY CRABTREE, right, faces *George Foreman* in a boxing ring in Springfield, Missouri, in 1987.

(Courtesy photo)

Foreman was coming out of retirement and when asked who he wanted to fight, Foreman replied "one of them is that Arkansas Hillbilly Bobby Crabtree!"

Crabtree, at twenty-eight and 202 pounds, would match up against Foreman who was thirty-eight years old and weighed 245 pounds. Bobby laughingly recalls thinking, "Shoot! Foreman is thirty-eight years old. I'm gonna whoop that old man." He goes on to say "We kinda made friends." The week of the fight, George asked me, "Bobby, do you need anything? Are they taking good care of you here?" I was comfortable around George, and I thought, "Man, I got this!"

When we got in the ring, George was staring me down. I got a little uncomfortable and remember thinking to myself, "Hey, George! It's me. Bobby!" He was so big I thought, "Where am I gonna hit him?" Foreman would go on to win the fight in the sixth round. Bobby said, "I went down once and then he had me on the ropes. I was taking too many punches, so they called the fight." He added, "Most people think that Foreman was my toughest fight, but Kenny Keene was the toughest fight of my career."

These are some of the things I have learned about Bobby over our thirteen years of friendship. He and I are not best friends. We do not hang out all the time, but I do always enjoy spending time with him and his wife, Jo. We always meet somewhere in Fort Smith or Van Buren, where the food is good and the live music and dancing are fun.

Bobby and Jo met in 2005 at Gold's Gym in Fort Smith. Jo was the manager of the gym at that time. I would not meet the couple for five more years in 2010. By then they were already joined together at the hip. A

few years after I met them, they would marry in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 27, 2013. They always seem to have a draw on people, and not just because he is a local celebrity. I think it is more because of the way they love and care for each other: close to each other as they navigate downtown Fort Smith, along Garrison Avenue to their next destination. I always say that Jo is Bobby's best corner man ever—and he has had some good men in that corner. I've got to give a very special shout out to Ms. Pat Winton, one of Bobby and Jo's best friends. If Jo has her husband attached to her hip, then Mrs. Winton is almost always attached to the other. In October 2022, Pat Winton completed an application to nominate Bobby for the Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame.

Approximately seven years ago I told Bobby and Jo of my idea of making a documentary film on his life. To me, he was living in a *Rocky* movie, one of my favorites. Growing up, when the movie by Sylvester Stallone first came out, my best friend Speedy and I would act out the fight scenes. The biggest argument we had was about who was going to be Rocky. The movie inspired a lot of people like Speedy and me throughout the years. Speedy said, "Shoot, Jackson! I still watch it today!" I mention this so that you might see how I drew the conclusion that Bobby Crabtree has lived the real *Rocky* movie.

At this time, I contacted Larry Foley at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. Dr. Foley is a veteran broadcast journalist, educator, and documentary filmmaker. He is professor and chair of the School of Journalism and Strategic Media at the University of Arkansas. I also contacted Billy Higgins at the University of Arkansas- Fort Smith (UAFS). He has published four books and has co-authored another. He retired from UAFS on May 31, 2022. Seven years ago, we filmed an interview with Bobby at the 24/7 Gym in Fort Smith, which is archived at UAFS in the Pebley Center. After the interview, things just seemed to stop but we all stayed in touch while we pondered the idea of making a film.

In spring of 2022, we renewed our efforts when Dr. Foley put us in touch with Bernard Oliver, one of his graduates, who is now himself a skilled fighter. Now that fighter is a film maker. An interesting thing to mention is Bernard had his professional boxing debut on February 28, 2023, in Maumelle, Arkansas. When Bernard first came on board, I wanted to tell the story of Bobby Crabtree, the Arkansas Hillbilly, as George Foreman and others have described him throughout his career. I have tried to tell you about Bobby's professional and personal life: the rough-and-

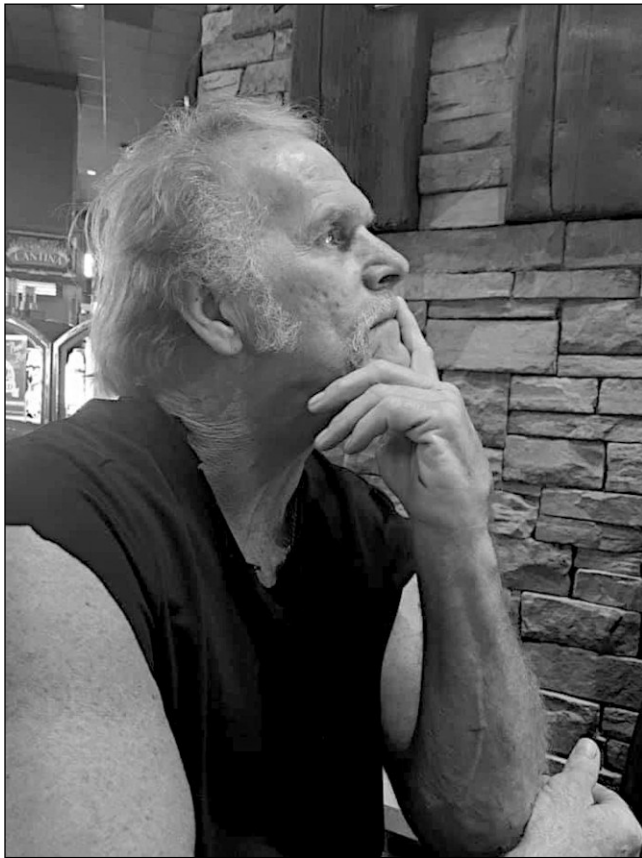
tumble kid who got into bar fights and street rumbles in his early years, and Bobby the husband and father who stayed home, stayed the course, and has never given up.

In early October 2022, I was invited by the Fort Smith Historical Society to do a short presentation at UAFS about the film I was hoping to do on Bobby. There were two presentations that night. First was mine and the second was about the True Grit Trail. I felt obliged to stay and watch the second presentation. It was interesting, and I listened closely, but I left that night not knowing how the True Grit Trail had anything to do with the film I was hoping to make. Even so, I felt it was a divine appointment that both presentations were on the same night.

For a month I prayed. *Heavenly Father! Please show me. I just do not understand!* Finally, one night I was exhausted with trying to make the connection between the two. I said "God, my heart is tired of praying about this matter. I'm sorry but I just do not get it." In an instant I heard, "Samuel, is not Bobby Crabtree the True Grit Fighter?" Wow! Suddenly it all made sense. I knew in an instant this is who I had come to know over the years: Bobby Crabtree, the True Grit Fighter! Thank you, Lord! Yes, he is! Thank you, Lord! He sure is! In religion, it is known as a revelation. In general terms, it is referred to as an epiphany. I understood it only as God spoke it to my heart.

You have read the story already. The True Grit Fighter, as he was born, chose to stay, and still lives here on the True Grit Trail. His career and life legacy remain here even now. What qualifies him as the True Grit Fighter, over any other professional championship fighter in the world, is not just what you have already read here. What qualifies him is the true grit that it took for a human being to go from the streets of Fort Smith to the professional heavyweight ring without any experience.

He did not fight his way up the ranks. He never had an amateur fight. He did not fight his way up through Golden Gloves. Bobby had opportunities to relocate for his career's sake or train for particular fights. Not long ago, Bobby said, "I just thought 'No! I'll just use what I've got and do the best that I can. I've got a family and a home. I can't just up and leave.'" He said, "Experience is the main thing! Training is important, but experience is key." Keep in mind that 75% of Bobby's fights were within a one-week notice. He became the Cruiserweight World Title Holder. Bobby's professional career, both cruiser and heavyweight, lasted for over twenty years. He fought a



BOBBY CRABTREE.
(Photo courtesy of the author)

total of ninety-three professional fights. His belt hung at the Fort Smith Museum of History for five years and it now hangs on the wall of Crabtree Auto Body on Towson Avenue. (Y'all go by and see it. Say hi to Bobby while you are there!)

Even though it takes grit for any fighter to enter any ring, where they hope to dish out exactly what they were trained to take, that, in itself, doesn't define true grit. Of all the books and fictional movies about true grit, none are known to have given a historically correct account of individual true grit.

Historical Fort Smith, Arkansas, was the venue and home of Judge Isaac C. Parker and many deputy U.S. marshals like Bass Reeves who toughed it out on the job as they sometimes risked their lives to bring law and order to some pretty rough places. From that, a writer named Charles Portis developed a novel made into a movie because he recognized that true grit existed here. In Bobby Crabtree, we have another amazing true grit story.

This film will focus on that true grit. The True Grit Fighter still trains in some capacity every day but Sunday. Six days a week he is up at two A.M. for

calisthenics. Then, coffee and TV on five days a week until time to open the body shop on Towson Avenue. Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday of each week he goes to Body Masters Gym in Fort Chaffee for two or more hours of weight training. Then, home for the evening. On Tuesdays and Thursdays after work he trains on the bag at his office and finishes with road work on his treadmill. Some Saturdays he does the bag and road work after he leaves the gym.

Bobby's professional career, both cruiser and heavyweight, lasted for more than twenty years. He fought ninety-three professional fights.

Mr. Robert Mladinich of New York invested much time in his work on Bobby Crabtree. Mr. Mladinich said to me, "Mr. Jackson, anything I can do to further Bobby's legacy, just let me know. Bobby is the real deal."

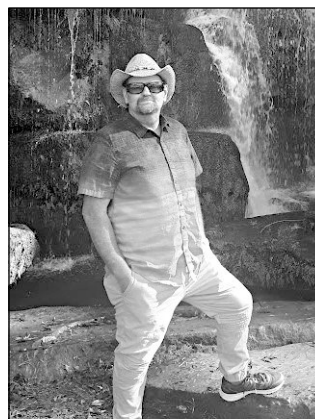
Robert Mladinich is a retired NYPD detective and author who interviewed Crabtree in 2020 for an article on Nyfights.com, a blog dedicated to fighting sports including Boxing and MMA.

True Grit Fighter Film Account

We have established a nonprofit account at First National Bank in Fort Smith, Arkansas. This account was started to receive, hold, and distribute donations for the filming process.

You can donate at any First National Bank branch. All funds received to this account will go toward the film itself.

In the event that any monies should remain in the account after the film expenses are paid, those funds will go directly to Bobby and Jo Crabtree.



Author Sammy Jackson once lived in Nashville, Tennessee, and now lives in Fort Smith.

Source

Mladinich, Robert. "The Fighting Hillbilly" Bobby Crabtree Faced a Who's Who of Heavyweights. NYFIGHTS. June 11, 2020. <https://nyfights.com/worldwide/the-fighting-hillbilly-bobby-crabtree-faced-a-whos-who-of-heavyweights/>.

Bobby Crabtree: 'You Don't Kick a Man When He's Down'

By Robert Mladinich

Despite being a veteran of more than ninety professional fights against a veritable who's who of prominent heavyweights, Bobby "The Fighting Hillbilly" Crabtree's face is not layered with scar tissue, he has no ambling gait, his memory is sharp, and his voice is rich and erudite, even with his thick Arkansas drawl.

At 6-foot-2 and a lean 202 pounds, the southpaw Crabtree, now sixty, is still blond and buff and looks more like an aging lifeguard or surfer than a boxer. He is as quick on his feet as he is with a joke or an anecdote about his career, which lasted from 1982 to 2002.

During that time, the heavy-handed Crabtree, who fought out of and still lives in Fort Smith, Arkansas, traveled throughout the United States and abroad in compiling an old-school record of 56-35-1 (51 by KO).

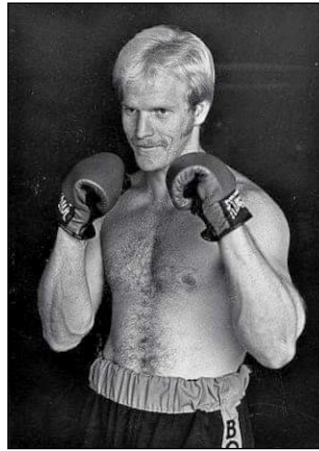
Among the champions and contenders that he faced are George Foreman, Michael Dokes, Tony Tucker, Trevor Berbick, Michael Moorer, Mike Weaver, Kenny Keene, Tyrell Biggs, Alex Garcia, Lee Roy Murphy, Andrew Golota, Renaldo Snipes, James Broad, Ricky Parkey, and James "Quick" Tillis.

"Nearly all of my losses were to world-class fighters," Crabtree said during a recent interview at Crabtree Paint and Body Shop on Towson Avenue in Fort Smith, a business he has owned since 1990. When asked who the hardest hitter he ever faced was, he was a bit circumspect. "Anyone who throws a punch can hurt you, especially at the higher levels," he said.

When pushed a bit, he singled out former cruiserweight belt holder Kenny Keene as one of his most memorable opponents. They fought three times in twenty-eight months, with Keene stopping Crabtree in four rounds in Keene's home state of Idaho in their first encounter, Crabtree won a split twelve-round decision in a rematch in Fort Smith, and Crabtree being stopped in nine rounds in their rubber match.

Among the spectators at the sold-out Fort Smith Civic Center for the second fight were actors Cuba Gooding Jr. and Lawrence Fishburne, who were filming the movie *The Tuskegee Airmen* in the area.

"Kenny was small, but what a tough guy," said Crabtree. "He was not a real good boxer, but he was tough, and he kept coming...and punching. All you



BOBBY CRABTREE, *World Cruiserweight Champion, 1995-1996*

heard was bang, bang, bang. The actors were treated to a real good fight."

The third bout, at the same arena, resulted in Crabtree receiving his career-high purse of \$10,000.

"Kenny was a tough hombre and we beat the hell of each other for a lot of rounds," recounted Crabtree. "In the third fight, I switched to righty and Kenny cold-cocked me."

Crabtree turned pro with very little ring experience. He had won a local Toughman contest and was 7-0 as a karate competitor. but he believed greener pastures awaited him as a pro boxer.

He won sixteen of his first eighteen fights, fourteen by knockout, when he was matched against Quick Tillis in April 1984. Tillis had already gone the distance with WBA Champion Mike Weaver and had a win over Earnie Shavers. Tillis stopped Crabtree in the third round, but they later became good friends.

"Tillis knew what he was doing in the ring," said Crabtree. "He had a lot more experience than me, but I gave him a run for his money. The ref called for a break and he waylaid me."

Leading up to Tillis, Crabtree said most of his fights were easy. Once the level of competition got higher, things were increasingly tougher.

"In the beginning, I had a lot of knockouts, so I had a lot of confidence," he recalled. "Things changed after fighting Tillis. He was very smart, and he showed me this was a tougher game than I thought."

Tillis was smart enough to be the first man to take Mike Tyson the distance two years later in a fight that Crabtree, and others, thought he won. Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, Crabtree was a very busy traveling man. He trekked to Italy in January 1986 to take on 1984 Olympic silver medalist Francesco Damiani.

"I didn't think he was tough because he looked soft

all over,” recalled Crabtree. “He was the first fighter to break my nose. He hit me with an uppercut, and it felt like my nose was in the back of my head.”

When Crabtree fought Foreman in Springfield, Missouri, in September 1987 in the early days of Big George’s comeback, he received a good lesson on Foreman’s well-chronicled mind games.

At the press conference Foreman could not have been more friendly, and even asked Crabtree how the fishing was in Arkansas. When they were receiving instructions in the ring, however, Foreman was staring at Crabtree with a malevolent glare that unnerved him.

“I said, ‘George, it’s me,’” laughed Crabtree.

Despite being stopped in the sixth round, Crabtree managed to land several of his vaunted left hooks on Foreman, resulting in Foreman praising “that hillbilly from Arkansas” for his powerful punch. Crabtree believes that Foreman earned \$25,000 for the bout, while he took home only \$900 of his \$1,500 purse.

Crabtree said Tucker and Snipes were big and powerful men, but he caught their attention several times before running out of gas.

The colorful Jerry “Wimpy” Halstead was the dirtiest fighter he ever faced, Berbick was the strongest, and Moorner, a fellow southpaw, was perhaps the most dangerous.

“He hit me in the left eye and shut it down,” he said of his first-round knockout loss to Moorner in November 1991. “He would have gotten to me anyway.”

When Crabtree fought Michael Dokes at Madison Square Garden’s Felt Forum in July 1989, he was blasted with a kidney punch that toppled him in the first round. “I thought I was going to die,” said Crabtree. “Joe Frazier later told me no one can take a punch like that.”

Crabtree’s biggest win came against King Ipitan, a highly-touted Nigerian who was promoted by Don King and was 13-0 (8 KOs) when they squared off in Mexico in December 1994. Ipitan was talking smack before the fight, resulting in Crabtree, the heaviest of underdogs, knocking him out with one punch in the first round. Ipitan broke his leg when he went down. The next day a member of Crabtree’s team taunted Ipitan, who was in a wheelchair. He made a comment about this being payback for his boorish pre-fight comments. Crabtree put an immediate halt to the comments, telling his cornerman, “You don’t kick a man when he’s down.”

Crabtree was training with the late Tommy Morrison in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1996, when it was revealed that Morrison tested positive for the HIV

virus. “We did a lot of hard work in the gym, but thankfully no one ever got cut so there was no blood exchanged,” said Crabtree. “I had to get tested, but I wasn’t worried. Tommy was a nice guy and a helluva puncher.”

Crabtree believes that with a bit more experience and the ability to train full-time, he could have left a greater mark on the sport.

One of seven children, Crabtree said his family resolved all their disputes by fighting. One time, when he and some siblings were too young to know better, they were going to hang another brother for some childhood hijinks. They went so far as to put a rope around his body.

Thankfully that was broken up, but Crabtree fought anyone and everyone, which resulted in him being expelled from school in the eighth grade. At about the same time his parents were getting divorced. Crabtree found solace at the gym and developed his lifelong affinity for physical fitness.

He began doing auto body work with his late father and eventually opened his own business, which still exists, in 1990. He also fought on short notice, whenever and wherever the opportunity presented itself.

Despite battling a slew of obstacles and challenges, Crabtree said he “got out at the right time” because, unlike many of his opponents, his faculties are intact.

Crabtree’s daughter Destiny (sic), now thirty-four, is as much of a fighter as her father. As a youngster, she endured numerous surgeries after being diagnosed with Perthes disease, a rare childhood condition that affects the hip.

As an adult she became Destiny Brown, a local singer of much renown. Crabtree’s pride and love for her is as apparent and immeasurable as his feelings for his granddaughter, Journey.

Crabtree, who is happily married to his second wife, Jo, an instructor at River Valley Fitness, seems like a man at peace who has his priorities in order. He fixes just enough cars to make a good living without being overwhelmed and he is in the shop at 7:30 am and out by 2:00 pm, when he heads straight to the gym.

He and Jo love to spend weekends hiking on trails or traveling to Branson, Missouri, or Memphis to listen to country music. His favorite artist is Conway Twitty.

Crabtree is a fun-loving man who is not averse to getting a laugh—even if it is at his own expense. Several years ago, at a local pro wrestling show, he donned skinny panties to get in the ring with a headliner named The Sheik.

They got into a verbal altercation and Crabtree

knocked him down with a punch, which resulted in him being carted away by the police while the audience angrily protested.

“People went crazy, they were mad that I got arrested,” said Crabtree. “When I came back twenty minutes later, they realized it had been planned—it was all part of the show.”

Crabtree has also engaged in wild cow milking competition, where participants use a rope to corral a cow and squeeze their milk into beer bottles. During one episode, an angry cow shattered several of Crabtree’s teeth and caused a facial injury that required twelve stitches.

“I went back the next day, but I wore a motorcycle helmet,” he said

Crabtree is currently being treated for nerve damage to his eyes, which sometimes causes him to

have double vision, as well as trouble gauging distances such as when he steps off a curb. Other than that, he is in excellent physical condition.

In April 2018, the Eagles Club, a Fort Smith civic organization, hosted what they called a Living Legend Award Ceremony, replete with live music for Crabtree; who is a revered local icon.

The modest Crabtree was very grateful for the attention but seemed to genuinely not understand what the hoopla was all about. “I’m still living,” he said, “but I ain’t no legend.”

This article by Robert Mladinich first appeared on the website NYFights.com and is used with the author’s permission granted February 23, 2023. Mladinich of New York invested much time in his work on Bobby Crabtree.

Memorial and Commemorative Gifts Important to the Historical Society

When making a gift to honor 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 both to 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 the area.

Gifts are tax deductible and may be made in any amount. Send your contributions to:

Fort Smith Historical Society
ATTN: Treasurer
PO Box 3676
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72913-3676

Please send only checks or money orders. Indicate whether you need a written receipt. The Fort Smith Historical Society cannot accept credit card payments.

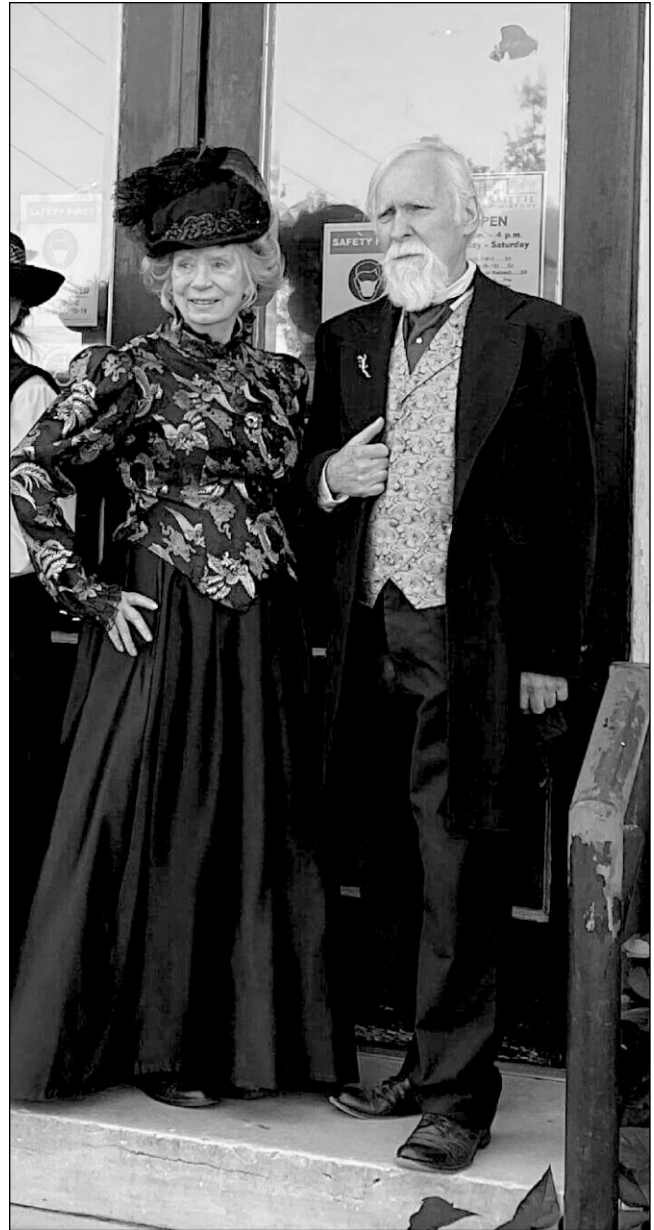
An Appreciation of **Sue and Floyd Robison**

By Caroline Speir

Nearly twenty years ago, Sue and Floyd Robison signed on to volunteer for the Fort Smith Museum of History as Judge Isaac C. Parker and Mary Elizabeth O’Toole Parker. Right out of the gate, Sue and Floyd shared Judge and Mrs. Parker with the public. They loaned their voices, their research, their passion, and their enthusiasm to those roles and lifted the Fort Smith Museum of History’s annual award-winning Murder and Mayhem fundraiser to the next level. Their research of the haunted, scandalous, and juicy side of Fort Smith history developed and expanded the tours to a sold-out level every year. In 2019, they stepped away from the narration but not from the museum or their volunteer roles.

Over their almost two decades of volunteer service Sue and Floyd have created and influenced numerous projects at the Fort Smith Museum of History. Events, fundraisers, and programs have benefited from their creativity and time. To name a few, “Walking Tours”, “Historic Strolls” such as “Coke Hill,” “Haunted Strolls,” and “In Judge Parker’s Court,” trials developed from the transcripts of actual trials over which Judge Parker presided, raise money for the museum but more importantly, these events develop historical characters of Fort Smith’s past through dedicated research that educate and entertain a public audience. They have assisted with the creation of a successful Summer Children’s Reading program that focuses on history, historical figures, and historical eras in Fort Smith history that are tweaked to appeal to children. These programs feature a reading portion, hands-on activity, and interactions with a costumed historical figure.

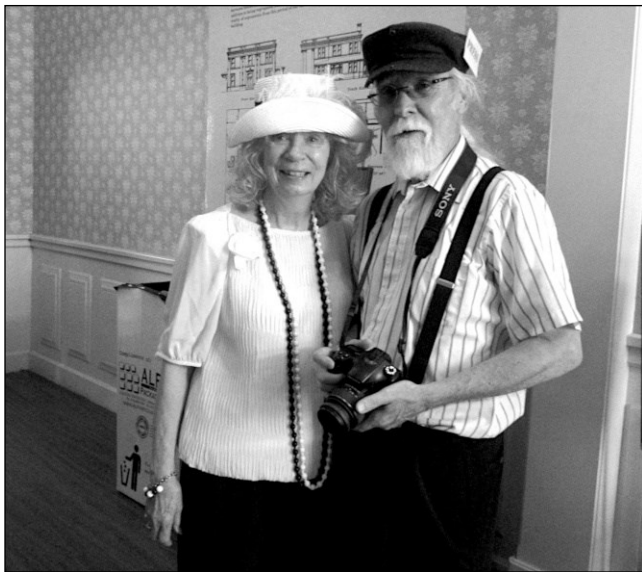
Sue and Floyd as “Judge and Mrs. Parker” are a unique and special draw for our school groups. The Robisons bring the Parkers to the museum for nearly every school group scheduled, equating to interactions with hundreds of schoolchildren every year. Word of mouth often means teachers specifically request their program. Their focus is to share the Parkers’ history. This includes the Parkers’ community work as private citizens, as parents of two boys, and of Judge Parker as a federal judge. In their portrayal, they address questions such as, what was the federal court was and how did it



SUE AND FLOYD ROBISON re-enact *Mary O’Toole and Isaac C. Parker.*

(Photos courtesy of the Fort Smith Museum of History)

work; who were the U.S. Marshals; what was the myth surrounding Judge Isaac C. Parker; and finally, what is his legacy. Their program does not forget Mary Parker. She was a proud and devoted wife and woman of the era who had her own mind, work ethic, and legacy.



(ABOVE) SUE AND FLOYD ROBISON *on assignment.*

(TOP RIGHT) FLOYD ROBISON *explains how the sail unfurls to youngsters in his interactive skiff that he built and maintains for the Fort Smith Museum of History.*

(LOWER RIGHT) FLOYD ROBISON *bricks the floor of the antique car exhibit at the Fort Smith Museum of History.*

(Photos courtesy of the Fort Smith Museum of History)

Aside from the federal court, the Parkers' involvement left the Fort Smith community with what became the Fort Smith Public Library and the Arkansas-Oklahoma State Fair. This history is shared enthusiastically, passed to school groups, adult groups, bus tours, and the individual visitor. When the visitor is especially young, they learn lessons of Victorian manners and proper etiquette of the era, such as how to tip a hat properly or how to acknowledge one another on the street. Lastly, visitors are deputized. A program by "Judge and Mrs. Parker" is not soon forgotten, nor are the two volunteers who bring them to life.

Independently, they have each devoted time to separate projects that enhance the museum's collections and exhibitions. Sue's background is as a writer and a journalist. She brings those talents to the museum and assists with exhibition research as well as authoring said text, reflecting professionally written and exhibited words and stories. She also takes readers on a journey through her support of the museum's social media with wonderful photos of Museum events posted alongside clever quips and fun tales. One of her passions is the history and fabric of the Victorian era. Sue will pitch in this spring to clean and document an archive area of vintage clothing that will become the basis for a fashion show this summer. Floyd is an artist



first, a carpenter second. Both skills have transformed exhibit areas. Floyd has constructed a scale model of an 1817 skiff, an 1817 Keelboat, a covered wagon, and a stagecoach. They are impressive pieces, down to the minute details. All have been used to enhance an exhibition area or as a hands-on education piece. He has created wooden building blocks for hands-on use by visitors in our turn-of-the-century wood shop; a supportive wooden frame for a piece of concrete sidewalk that shows the signature of a child who would become the first soldier to be killed in action in World War I; and created a "road" under our 1898 electric car with brick from the collection. Together and individually, Sue and Floyd have worked as volunteers for the museum with joy, commitment, loads of hard work, and lots of fun.



FLOYD AND SUE ROBISON BRING *their knowledge of local history to visitors to the Fort Smith Museum of History.*
(Photos courtesy of the Fort Smith Museum of History)

Sue and Floyd Robison: Bringing History to Life

For more than a decade, Sue and Floyd Robison have portrayed Mary O’Toole Parker and her husband, Federal Judge Isaac Charles Parker, in costume and with historical accuracy before numerous grade school groups in the western Arkansas region in classrooms and as the students and their teachers tour the Fort Smith Museum of History. They do the same for civic and historical organizations, in walking tours, and in Fort Smith National Historic Site re-enactments of historic Parker Court trials and hearings.

Sue Robison has researched and written on Mary O’Toole Parker and published an article on her in the *Journal* of the Fort Smith Historical Society for which she received the 2016 Walter Brown Award from the Arkansas Historical Association for Best Biography in a statewide journal.* She was present in Pocahontas

for the seventy-sixth annual meeting of the AHA to accept the award.

She has written or is writing six other articles for the *Journal*. Sue and Floyd serve on the governing board of the Fort Smith Historical Society and volunteer with historical organizations in the city. For example, Floyd constructed for the Fort Smith Museum of History a scale model of the skiff used by Major Stephen F. Long’s detachment of the first U.S. Army expedition up the Arkansas River to Belle Point, where Fort Smith was established in December 1817. The skiff is a popular interactive exhibit for young children visiting the museum.

While Isaac Parker is usually remembered as the “Hanging Judge,” his compassion and his community involvement reveal a much deeper commitment to create good circumstances for people and social life on the western frontier. He

served on the Fort Smith School Board at the time when the city’s African-American public schools were established and personally handed out their diplomas to the first graduates of Lincoln High School. Floyd and Sue Robison bring out such characteristics of historical people, important to our state and our region’s academic and popular historical knowledge.



Bill Word volunteers at the Museum of Fort Smith History, is a member of the Arkansas Historical Association, and serves as Vice-President of the Fort Smith Historical Society.

*Vol. 40, No. 1 (April 2016), pp. 30-34.



Our institution is lucky to share them with other institutions in town. The Fort Smith National Historic Site, the Fort Smith Historical Society, and the Clayton House have all benefited from the Robisons’ dedication and talents. The Fort Smith Museum of History is proud to call them volunteers and supports the Fort Smith Historical Society’s nomination of Sue and Floyd Robison for the Tom Dillard Award in 2023. The passion and commitment to our museum and their

role as volunteers is above and beyond.



Caroline Speir is Executive Director of the Fort Smith Museum of History and an author. Her most recent article in the Journal, “From Cuba to Fort Chaffee: The ‘Marielitos’ in Arkansas,” appears in Volume 44, No. 2 (September 2020), pp. 30-45.

The Life and Times of Carolyn Joyce

Joyce's 'Miss Laura' persona becomes one of Fort Smith's many amenities

By Joyce Faulkner

Carolyn Joyce's ongoing passion is to bring tourists to Fort Smith. For many years, playing the character of "Miss Laura," she entertained busloads of vacationers...old and young...and encouraged them to stay in local hotels, eat at local restaurants, shop in local stores, and visit the various historical sites around the city. While many associate Carolyn with lush period outfits and saucy dialog, Carolyn's life has been one of hard work and growth. Interestingly, that growth also paralleled the changes in Fort Smith from the post World War II era to the current time.

Carolyn began life in the mid-1940s in Brinkley, Arkansas. She was one of five children born to William Mark and Kathryn Clifton Haynes. Her mother and father were children of the Great Depression and young adults during the second World War. Those back-to-back experiences taught them to be both hard-working and frugal. And they taught their children those virtues. The family not only worked their own land, they also took on jobs with the bigger farms in the area. Carolyn says of her parents, "...they never really got through it...

when I look back, they lived their entire lives as if another depression was coming." And they needed to be prepared. Along with her four brothers, Carolyn picked cotton and worked in the rice and soybeans fields after school. She also did her share of the family's farm chores.

As a child, Carolyn was bullied by her older siblings. For example, when she was five years old and in the first grade, she and her brothers had to walk a quarter mile on a dirt road from their home to the bus stop. In the winter, that road was a muddy mess. She didn't have a little girl's raincoat, so on rainy days, her mother put a big "hand-me-down" black raincoat on her. However, her two older brothers wouldn't let her get on the bus wearing it. They made her take it off and leave it in the bushes by the side of the road. As a result, she was



CAROLYN JOYCE portrays Miss Laura for Fort Smith tourists.

(Photos courtesy of Carolyn Joyce)



(LEFT) PAINTING OF A HOUSE in Brinkley, Arkansas, where Carolyn Haynes Joyce was born and lived for her first eight years. Also, Carolyn Haynes at age 2 (center) and in third grade (right).

wet and cold during the ten-mile ride to school. Once she got to school, her concerned teacher repeatedly asked her why she wasn't wearing a coat. However, Carolyn was too shy to tell anyone what was happening to her. On the return trip at the end of the day, she retrieved the garment and wore it home. Her mother was none the wiser. That is, until Carolyn caught pneumonia. When Mrs. Haynes went to school to explain why her daughter wasn't in class, the teacher told her how Carolyn came to school on cold days without a coat. That's how she learned what her sons were doing.



CAROLYN JOYCE
*at her job with an
optometrist.*

Carolyn went to school with no lunch many days. She did have a friend who would share her lunch sometimes. However, many families in that era were in similar circumstances. Often all her classmate had to share was a biscuit.

As she grew older, Carolyn and her siblings took on work to bring money into the Haynes household. When she was fourteen and fifteen, unless she had to work in her family's fields, she chopped cotton on a neighbor's farm. He picked her up at 7:00 a.m. and took her home at 6:00 p.m. and paid her three dollars a day.

Carolyn says now, "I've always worked. Worked hard. I was taught that by my parents. They would tell us, 'When you get a job, you stay with that job. Don't quit for another job.'"

Despite these memories, Carolyn's retiring nature as a child hid a curious and creative mind. Fortunately, her English/literature teacher at Brinkley High School, Mrs. Lineback, recognized Carolyn's potential and selected her to play a lead in the senior class play. While nervous, that experience allowed Carolyn to discover her knack for entertaining. It would be a while before she used that talent to create the character of "Miss Laura," but she found new confidence in her first starring performance.

After graduation from high school, Carolyn worked for the local optometrist and was able to buy a new car at the age of seventeen. She says, "Daddy went down to the police station and told them I bought a new car and he needed to get me a driver's license. They filled it out and he signed it and brought it home. That's how I got my first driver's license!"

In 1964, Carolyn moved to Fort Smith with her new husband. The furniture industry was in full swing then,



CAROLYN JOYCE *in her senior play.*

and there were many opportunities for bright, ambitious young people like Carolyn. She immediately found a job at Hickory Springs Manufacturing Company. Hickory Springs produced products used by the various furniture factories in the area. Her first position was in the Accounting Department, but she was soon promoted to executive secretary to Vice-President and General Manager Charles Craig. It was in this role that Carolyn began learning the bigger picture: what things cost, how things work, and who did what...not just at Hickory Springs, but in Fort Smith and in the furniture industry itself.

In the early years of her marriage, Carolyn had two children. When that relationship ended, she focused on work and raising her kids. Her social circle consisted of the people she worked with at Hickory Springs and those she met through the company. As the 1960s came to an end and the 1970s began, change was in the air, for the furniture businesses in Fort Smith, the industries that fed them, and for Fort Smith itself. Carolyn, in her role as secretary to upper management, watched it all happen. And she'd been there long enough to appreciate all the implications.

In 1975, Carolyn married T. Bob Joyce, who was the manufacturing manager at Hickory Springs. This new relationship allowed her to be a stay-at-home mom. After years of juggling work and motherhood responsibilities, she appreciated this time of rest and financial security with her children. And through her relationship with T. Bob, she still had a bird's eye view of what was happening to Fort Smith businesses.

Then, her world changed again. In the mid-1980s,

Carolyn began working part time for the Coalition for the Redevelopment of Downtown Fort Smith. As the post World War II boom declined, the downtown area lost its image as the center of Fort Smith commerce and entertainment. The Central Mall on Rogers Avenue opened in 1971 and many of the retail stores on Garrison either moved to the mall or eventually closed their doors as foot traffic dwindled. Iconic buildings that were once the center of Garrison Avenue activities were boarded up. St. Anne's Academy closed in 1973 and was torn down in 1974. The Goldman Hotel was in decline too, although it lasted to 1994 before it was demolished. Banks, restaurants, and movie theaters closed or moved to the east and south sides of the city. The Coalition, supported by a three-year grant, was an effort to work with investors to bring life and businesses back to the downtown area.

The Advertising and Promotion Act was passed in early 1990. Dee Carroll was hired as the first executive director. Carolyn began working for the A and P Commission in early 1992. Her job was to assist with office duties and financials. The office was located at the Fort Smith Convention Center at first. However, a building known as "Miss Laura's Social Club" was empty after the previous tenant, the owner of a restaurant and bar, went out of business. The property had quite a history. The Riverfront Commercial Hotel on 123 First Street was built in 1896. Two short years later, a young woman named Laura Zeigler saw its potential... not only because of its location but also for its size and design. In 1898, she borrowed \$3,000 and bought it. Even though 123 First Street was only two years old, she renovated it, and in 1903, she opened "Miss Laura's Social Club."

The look of the building Miss Laura purchased and renovated in the early years of the twentieth century has remained the same for the last 120 years because Fort Smith residents chose to keep it that way. And that wasn't always easy.

Fort Smith was 150 years old in 1992, and it had never had a visitor center. People coming through town needed a place to pick up literature and maps and get information about the city. Miss Laura's had atmosphere and history, even if that history was "bawdy." In October, the A & P Commission leased Miss Laura's to house the offices of the Fort Smith Convention and Visitors Bureau to open Fort Smith's first Visitors Center.

Shortly before everyone moved in, the center received a phone call from a tour company. In the past, they had stopped to have dinner at Miss Laura's when it was a restaurant, but the restaurant had been closed a few years at that point. Carolyn told them that the

building would soon be used for a visitor center (which the guide was very glad to hear,) but it wasn't opened yet. Undeterred by that small detail, the tour guide informed Carolyn that her company was bringing four motor coaches to Fort Smith and wanted to know if they could at least get in to tour Miss Laura's. The answer to that was yes, of course. Then the voice on the other end of the line asked about cost of refreshments. Carolyn doesn't remember who came up with the idea of sarsaparilla and peanuts, but once that was decided, the deal was struck.

After the phone call, Carolyn was excited. Tourists (four busloads of them) were coming to the brand new Fort Smith Visitor Center even though they weren't quite ready for them. She decided she'd be behind the bar as she welcomed them with the planned sarsaparilla and peanuts offering. And then, she decided that she should wear a dress that mimicked those worn in Miss Laura's era... which of course, she didn't have. But she decided, just for fun, that she'd rent one. Since she'd be in period clothes, she decided that maybe she'd "be" Miss Laura herself for the evening. And when those first buses arrived at Miss Laura's, Carolyn enjoyed them as much as they enjoyed her improvised "Miss Laura."

After that first four-bus event, Carolyn put a lot of thought into possibilities. Fort Smith now had something no one else in the country had: a visitor center located in a former bordello. She was sure that the naughty novelty of it all would attract tourists. However, maybe it could be more than that. It could also be a museum with exhibits and displays. And after seeing Miss Laura's, those same folks might be interested in the Fort Smith Museum of History on the other side of Garrison Avenue and then, maybe those same tourists might want to see the Fort and Judge Parker's Courtroom... and after all that touring, they would probably be hungry and want dinner somewhere in town before they left. Or, maybe, there would be so much to see and do in Fort Smith they'd spend the night in a Fort Smith hotel. It was a thrilling idea and it niggled around in her head for weeks at a time.

To create the ongoing character of Miss Laura, Carolyn put more thought into who the original woman might have been and how she should portray her. She decided that since she would be representing Fort Smith, her version of Miss Laura should always be dressed in her finest attire and jewelry and represent the city of Fort Smith in a positive and fun way. However, it wasn't like she could stroll down Garrison and find the perfect outfit anymore. Styles had most definitely changed since Miss Laura's time and the clothes available at the mall didn't come close to what she had in mind. So she looked into



(ABOVE) THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY VERSION of *Miss Laura's Social Club.*
(RIGHT) CAROLYN JOYCE as Miss Laura in 2016.



who could create the hats and jewelry and clothes needed to transform “Carolyn Joyce” into Carolyn’s interpretation of “Miss Laura”—a charming, sassy and fun business woman. Ultimately, for hats, Carolyn chose Cathy Burk, who had created Jane Seymore’s hats for the *Doctor Quinn, Medicine Woman* TV series. For clothes, she turned to Les Johnson who was well known in this area for her expertise in making costumes. For jewelry, she found Jolene Wiltsie in Davie, Florida, as the expert to finish out her “Miss Laura” look. And seeing the joy and sense of creative purpose this all brought to Carolyn, her husband T. Bob picked up the tab.

After that first interaction with a tour bus company, the idea of “Miss Laura” welcoming tourists to Fort Smith evolved. When she was promoted to Sales and Marketing, Carolyn began attending travel marketplaces. At these events, she met with tour operators and encouraged them to visit Fort Smith as a side destination or an overnight stop. She educated them on Fort Smith’s other important attractions located near the Visitors Center—like the National Historic Site and the Fort Smith Museum of History. In the beginning, most of the touring company personnel she met had never heard of Fort Smith. So pulling out a map and circling Fort Smith became part of her introductory spiel. As time passed, Carolyn’s efforts to educate tour guides began to pay off. When she walked into a large marketplace, she began hearing “Fort Smith is here!”

Miss Laura’s soon became a popular stop and within a couple of years, Tour operators began asking if there would be evening entertainment if they chose to stay in Fort Smith overnight. In response, “Miss Laura’s Players” were born. With ten performers, they

created a musical/comedy and dubbed it “The Medicine Show.” In its first eighteen years, thousands of people saw it. Then it changed to a simple comedy skit featuring Miss Laura and a couple of the players. Carolyn was pleased with each small success. They were doing well and meeting each challenge as it arose.

Then, nature threw them a curve ball. A tornado tore through downtown Fort Smith on a Sunday night in April 1996. It lifted the roof off Miss Laura’s and left massive destruction in its path. It took two and a half years to get back in the building and during that time they relocated the Visitor Center to a construction trailer in the parking lot. The volunteer staff worked their regular shifts, welcoming visitors to Fort Smith and “Miss Laura” continued to host the motor coaches that came to town.

A tremendous amount of work and dedication and lots of fund raising went into the project to restore Miss Laura’s. Reconstruction included moving the building onto a new foundation, sixty feet south of the original location. The grand reopening was in November 1998. It was a full day of celebration with more than 1,000 folks coming by.

Although Carolyn’s goal in the beginning was to entice motor coaches into Fort Smith to bring “new” money into the city, state, and national media outlets picked up on the buzz she was generating. Soon the Fort Smith lady playfully portraying an early twentieth century madam was in demand, and she began appearing in national, state and local magazines.



(ABOVE) CAROLYN JOYCE with T. Bob Joyce.

(RIGHT) CAROLYN JOYCE, dressed as Miss Laura, appears on the covers of various magazines.



Creating and portraying the character of Miss Laura gave Carolyn the opportunity to be on all the major networks (ABC, NBC, CBS) as well as C-SPAN and many others. One day, QVC representatives came by the Visitor Center to get directions to another site for a taping. “Once they learned that Miss Laura’s was a historic building and I portrayed Miss Laura, they decided to do a five-minute skit here with me in costume.”

One of the highlights of this era was when the *New York Times* called and wanted to fly to Fort Smith to interview Carolyn. Not only did the writer fly down and interview her, two weeks later they sent two photographers who took twenty-six rolls of film and overnighted them back to New York so they could be printed in the Thanksgiving Day issue of the paper. That interview resulted in a two-thirds page article in the *New York Times*, which brought lots of positive attention to Fort Smith. And it was free of charge. If Fort Smith had wanted to purchase that same space at the time, the cost would have been in the range of \$275,000. It was a big microphone the media had handed Carolyn and as an employee of the city, she used it to promote tourism in Fort Smith.

In this role, Carolyn received awards from several organizations over the years, including the Arkansas Hospitality Associations Manager of the Year Award, the Arkansas Governor’s Conference on Tourism Award -Outstanding Volunteer Service Award and the Polly Crews Award for Hospitality Person of the Year.

The state of Arkansas recognized her accomplishments by inducting her into the Tourism

Hall of Fame in 2011. This is the most prestigious award given by the State Tourism Department and it is presented annually to an individual who has been most actively involved in Arkansas’s tourism industry for many years and who has made substantial contributions to the betterment of the industry as a whole.

Most satisfying for Carolyn was the filming of a documentary, *Step into Miss Laura’s*. Being in the last scene and locking up Miss Laura’s for the final time as a bordello was a career highlight for her.

After twenty-nine years with the Fort Smith Convention and Visitors’ Bureau, she now owns Miss Laura’s Tours LLC, and she continues to work with the motor coach industry as a receptive operator. The friendships and relationships she made with these companies did not end when she left Miss Laura’s. She continues to develop group itineraries and make arrangements when they come to the River Valley, Northwest Arkansas, and parts of Oklahoma. Of course, she continues to portray Miss Laura to entertain them while in Fort Smith.

Finally, Carolyn says, “My first job in Fort Smith at Hickory Springs changed my whole life. That’s where I met Dee Carroll who later became the director of the CVB and offered me the job which ended lasted twenty-nine years. I’ll always be grateful that he saw my potential in tourism. It’s also where I met my husband, T. Bob, the love of my life.”

Parker Elementary School

A Century of Service to Fort Smith Students

By Sue Robison

The city of Fort Smith welcomed the twentieth century with an abundance of optimism. Bolstered by a strong economy, spurred on by rapid population growth, and challenged only by limits they set for themselves, city leaders faced the new century with confidence and willingness to accept its challenges. The city grew inside established boundaries, with the announcement of new developments and subdivisions a common occurrence. To the south, business leaders created a central manufacturing community and to its north, the city stretched toward the Arkansas River.

One of the largest new city housing developments in the early twentieth century was known as the Main Addition. With North Sixth Street as its western boundary, the lots inside the Main Addition began near the downtown district and moved along the trolley line running toward Electric Park. An ad in the June 3, 1908, edition of the *Southwest American* newspaper described the Main Addition as a piece of land beginning north of Garrison Avenue that would put property owners within a five-minute walking distance of the trolley line. The Mayne-Bailey Real Estate Company was the primary sales agent for the Main Addition, which went on the market the first week of June 1908. Within a year, the Brockman Construction Company offered several new homes available in the addition, all with gas lighting and heating, and all affordable with payments low enough to fit a family's budget. With building lots selling for \$200, the area east of North Sixth Street proved to be a temptation for working families seeking moderately priced homes with the latest amenities. When the city stepped up with curbing and sidewalks for the new addition, real estate and construction companies found themselves pressed to keep up with the business of building homes in the Main Addition.

Fort Smith's school system in the early 1900s struggled to keep pace with its growing population. Children living in the new Main Addition were assigned to classes at Belle Grove Elementary School near the downtown area, DuVal Elementary on the corner of North Fourteenth and North L Streets, or the



PARKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL in Fort Smith.
(Fort Smith Public Schools website).



STUDENTS AT PARKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL in Fort Smith pose for a photo in 1931.

(Photo courtesy of Cindy Thurman,
If You Ever Lived in Fort Smith).

outdated and already overcrowded Trusty Elementary School at the outer edges of North Sixth Street.

By 1921, the Fort Smith School Board was in serious discussions regarding building a new school to ease the burden in existing classrooms brought on by the development of the Main Addition. In the "Summary of Directors Report on The Condition of The School System" published in May 1922 by the *Southwest American*, a school board spokesman reports, "It was found necessary to erect a new school to relieve Belle Grove, DuVal, and Trusty. The Parker School, named in honor of former Judge I. C. Parker, is located about midway between these schools. It will take care of the three-hundred pupils who are now on half-day sessions and provide to some extent for the probable increase of enrollment for the next year."

The School Board estimated the cost of opening the new Parker school to be \$90,000. This number

allowed \$5,000 to purchase a lot at North Ninth and North T Streets, \$75,000 for actual construction, and another \$5,000 allotment for fees, preparing the lot for utilities, purchasing furniture for the school, and other items.

By the time the School Board's comments were published, construction was already underway on the new school. Superintendent C. J. Tidwell declared bids for the new building closed on April 8, 1922, and project architect Charles W. Dawson immediately broke ground on the new building. A construction crew led by J. H. Reddick was charged with building what was proclaimed to be Fort Smith's first fireproof school building and executing a design made after close study of the latest improvements throughout the country.

The doors at Parker Elementary School opened to students for the first time on September 18, 1922. Classes began promptly at 8:55 a.m. that morning. Children of city residents living inside Parker's attendance area between Belle Grove, DuVal and Trusty schools attended class without fees, while parents of children outside the boundaries paid seven dollars and fifty cents in advance for each six-week period their child was enrolled in the school. Textbooks were loaned to all elementary school students without charge, and no child was allowed to register for class without proof of vaccination against smallpox.

Mr. C. E. Beard sat at the principal's desk when Parker School first opened its doors. He was joined by eleven full-time classroom instructors and one teacher listed as holding only half-time classes for one of the fifth-grade student groups. The remainder of the first through sixth grade classes showed two teachers assigned to each grade, and Winnie Turner was responsible for the single seventh-grade class available at Parker Elementary.

Parker Elementary School was constructed after a style popular across the country and considered quite modern for its time. Upon entering the red brick building's framed, arched front double doorway, a visitor stood face-to-face with its 75-foot-long auditorium. Featuring a width of 44 feet and an ability to seat hundreds of guests, the open space auditorium appeared almost majestic to first-time visitors. A reporter for the *Southwest Times* newspaper went into detail about his first visit to the auditorium in a March 1925 article describing the stage with its beautiful curtain and lights sitting at the head of the sunken auditorium. The same reporter told of noted educators from different sections of the country traveling to Fort Smith to visit Parker Elementary School and carry its

advancements in style home to their own planning committees.

The school auditorium doubled as a gymnasium for students kept inside by inclement weather, as well as a meeting place for parent/teacher groups, graduation luncheons for students leaving Parker for higher grades, and Christmas programs. It also provided seating for students at lunchtime.

The concept of a school cafeteria was new to public education. The cafeteria built into Parker's floor plan sat directly behind the auditorium. While it shared the auditorium's 44-foot width, its depth was shallow, and its space limited for even the earliest classes. The cafeteria was operated by one paid employee who cooked with the help of a female student. The use of a student assistant was an acceptable idea to school officials who explained the plan was an innovative idea for the girls, saying "It teaches them order, methods of preparing the food, and methods of serving."

By the 1924-1925 school year, a serving counter was added to the cafeteria by the Parent-Teacher Association. A plate lunch containing four foods was available for ten cents, with an occasional side item offered at a lower price. The menu for the following day was posted during the afternoon in each classroom. In a time when it was customary for students to bring their lunches from home, parents began taking advantage of the hot meals prepared in the cafeteria, especially during the cold and rainy months of the school term.

Parker's construction featured a single-level floor plan, which differed from the two- and three-level buildings housing older Fort Smith schools. The boiler system for heating located in the school's basement was considered state-of-the-art for both its function and its safety. Even the restrooms were worthy of note to those extolling the many features of the city's newest elementary school.

The classrooms in the new Parker Elementary School were expansive. The contemporary style provided a large space, lofty ceilings, and ample windows in the school's construction. The hallways were wide with their wall's lower sections covered in enamel to allow for easy cleaning.

A classroom in the eastern wing of the school contained a small stage area. Just a step higher than the floor, the stage was put to beneficial use by many instructors. One of the school's best remembered first-grade teachers from the 1950s and '60s, Patsy Patton, presented short plays on the stage with her students to enhance their reading skills.

While necessary to ease the hardships of schools



PARKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL teacher Patsy Patton, right, with one of her classes in the 1950s.
(Photo courtesy of If You Ever Lived in Fort Smith)

hosting half-session classes due to overcrowding, the construction of Parker Elementary was a financial burden to the Fort Smith school system. Less than two weeks before Parker opened its doors, Superintendent C. J. Tidwell released a report of expenses for the whole of the Fort Smith educational system. Responding to calls for the school system to operate within its budget, Superintendent Tidwell agreed it was possible to stay within those guidelines, but not if the citizens of Fort Smith wanted an educational system up to the task of truly providing a quality education for their children.

Tidwell reminded those reading the September 3, 1922, *Southwest American* article that school enrollment had increased 20% in the previous three years, but the school system's budget increased only 16%. Tidwell refused to consider returning to a hiring

practice allowing inexperienced teachers to work in city classrooms. The 1922 standard required a teacher to have at least two years of experience before entering a Fort Smith elementary classroom, and four years of experience before taking over a high school class. While these strict provisions required higher wages, and those wages were the leading expense in the school system's budget, Tidwell defended the practice by reminding those complaining that "cheap help is expensive help" when compared to what a student would lose if the quality of their instructors declined.

Parker Elementary School was designed and staffed under the same principles. It had the best material, the best design, the best construction, and the best staff available for its time, but budget cuts were soon made. Within a year of Parker's opening, the School Board announced it would no longer be able to

provide free textbooks to elementary students.

Before the beginning of the 1923-1924 school term, parents were informed it would be their responsibility to provide textbooks for their elementary school aged students for the new school year, as they already did for their children attending high school. The Fort Smith School Board was able to retain a few copies of elementary texts, which they offered on loan to parents who could not afford books for their children.

The issue of providing books in the classroom was addressed in numerous ways. The use of story books was popular with both teachers and students, and Parker's Parent-Teacher Association used a variety of methods to introduce new reading material to youngsters. In 1924, fifth-grade students volunteering to assist with the association's fund-raising play were rewarded with copies of Carolyn Wells' book *Dick and Dolly's Adventures* in appreciation for their work.

The Fort Smith School Board believed in developing a strong body to accompany the strong minds of their young students. In 1925, the board was able to add the services of a school nurse to monitor the health of Fort Smith students by using funds made available through the Anti-Tuberculosis Association.

Miss Pearl Wilson was the first person to hold the title of Fort Smith school nurse. A graduate of Sparks Memorial Hospital, Wilson gave up control of the hospital's operating rooms, a position she held for four years, to oversee the periodic examination of children in public schools. She was assigned to safeguard the health, vision, and hearing of students, while giving special attention to the malnourished and those showing signs of tuberculosis. The introduction of school nurses provided much needed care in the fight against tuberculosis. During the Great Depression years, school services were the extent of medical care received by many local children.

Medical care for students led to the implementation of health studies in the classroom. By 1930, students were developing plays in hygiene class extolling the virtues of healthy food and exercise. One Parker sixth-grade student even brought a chicken's heart to school so her 1930 classmates could carefully open its flesh to study arteries and ventricles.

Physical fitness and organized team sports brought attention to the health of Parker students. From the school's earliest days, Parker children organized themselves into a variety of sports teams and entered competitions with other Fort Smith schools. Basketball was popular with early Parker students. By 1928, both boys and girls entered teams who played many games

against fellow Fort Smith athletes. Baseball was another sport popular with both male and female students. Parker and Trusty made it to the finals of the 1928 baseball season. The teams met on the Twilight Diamond for the year's final game and, when the ending score was announced, Trusty took the game with a score of ten runs to Parker's six runs. Parker's girls did not sit out the games. The 1928 sixth-grade girls from Parker Elementary School were organized into a talented team capable of facing a full softball season, although it seems the final competition eluded them.

Sporting events were not the only way Parker teachers involved their students in physical activity. Even first-grade children were encouraged to "get up and move" by taking part in special activities such as autumn excursions into the nearby woods to study birds and trees.

In the early days of Parker Elementary School, its playground was used for organized events while students were enjoying summer break. Under volunteer adult supervision, a citywide checker tournament held throughout August 1928 invited boys and girls to join competition games at several locations around Fort Smith, including Parker's playground. When the tournament ended, Parker proudly announced its own students Marie Spear and Earl Smith the champions of the checkerboard.

Ideas about education and methods used in classrooms were changing in the early twentieth century. Fort Smith educators were part of the evolving relationship between instructor and student with their attention solidly locked on ways to enhance the education and futures of their students.

One of the newest classroom changes was known as the Platoon. According to a description of Platoon Schools in a 1925 issue of the *Elementary School Journal* published by the University of Chicago Press, platooning was a "rather complicated type of organization to take care of the greatly expanded and over-crowded school curriculum."

Platooning worked on the premise that individual teachers held strength in certain subjects over others, and their students shared a similar proclivity in their studies. The system offered a way for teachers of youngsters in a single age group to pool their resources, divide their duties to fit their strengths, and group the children into rotating schedules to expose them to a level suited to their ability to learn. This meant students might receive training in arithmetic and science from one teacher, then move to another classroom where a second instructor would offer

reading and American history. Platooning also called for a set of auditorium classes, allowing for rotating studies of music, literature, poetry, debate, and other studies considered extracurricular.

Fort Smith elementary schools instituted the Platoon system in 1926. When the first term operating under the new system was complete, elementary school principals were asked to share their opinions of the project. Each principal in the Fort Smith system extolled the virtues of platooning their students, finding the new method far superior to the traditional one teacher/one class system. Ralph Jones of Belle Grove boasted of the “achievements of the students” under the plan, while Ruby Washington of DuVal Elementary School said the new method offered “more encouragement for the children.”

C. E. Beard, Principal of Parker Elementary School, also found the first year of Platoon school successful. In a report published in the May 1, 1927, issue of the *Southwest Times*, Beard cited a marked improvement in pupil initiative, improved study habits, increased leadership abilities, and many displays of new interest in classroom subjects. Beard expressed pride in the eight auditorium groups across all grades who presented a program at the previous month’s meeting of the Parent-Teacher Association at the school. The meeting featured a program titled “Schools of Yesterday and Today,” as well as poetry, and a short play. As school principal, Beard took pleasure in reporting the entire program was conceived, written, and presented by Parker students.

To be certain the children shared their instructor’s confidence in the Platoon system, Parker school students were asked to vote on the program’s future in their school. The 1926 decision process delivered 237 votes to retain the new method of class schedules, while only twenty students asked to return to the former classroom organization.

Parker’s experience with the platoon system was interrupted in 1928 when students from Trusty Elementary School moved in to share their building. After years of overcrowding in a facility unable to fit the needs of modern students, the Fort Smith School Board decided to build a new Trusty school. The original Trusty school on North Sixth Street was constructed by Harry E. Kelley for the city of Fort Smith. The school board was able to trade Mr. Kelley the lots housing the old school for lots closer to the sewer system along North Sixth Street for their new school. The old Trusty building was stripped of its equipment, and in June 1928, it went on the auction block.



A PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION MEETING held in the 1950s at Parker Elementary School in Fort Smith.

(Photo courtesy of If You Ever Lived in Fort Smith)

While the new Trusty was under construction, its students shared the Parker building with existing classes. A rotation system was developed requiring Parker’s students and instructors to vacate the building during the lunch break so Trusty’s students and teachers could use it for afternoon classes. This rotating schedule continued until the new Trusty Elementary School opened at the end of 1928.

The construction of the new Trusty brought another rise in public concerns about the cost of education. Arkansas State Superintendent of Schools J. P. Womack spoke to more than 200 Fort Smith teachers before the opening of the 1928 school year. Womack conceded that most of the state’s attention had been focused on high schools but promised elementary schools and their needs would soon receive more attention.

Left with only a promise of increased funding, the Fort Smith school district continued seeking ways to cut expenses. One surprising method utilized was the practice of double promotions at the end of a school year for children with outstanding scores on the previous November’s Sanford Achievement Tests. Superintendent of Schools J. W. Ramsey explained in a 1927 interview with the *Southwest Times* that, “these children who are double promoted do quite well in skipping a grade.” The 143 children double-promoted in 1927 saved the school system \$3,621 in its budget.

As America slid deeper into a nationwide financial depression, the Fort Smith Board of Education sought more methods of keeping area classrooms available, staffed, and children in school. Voters were reminded

openly and often to pay their poll tax because those taxes paid in Arkansas were used to support public schools, and every bit of income the system received was put quickly to use.

There came a time when more extreme measures were required for meeting a budget built with dwindling funds. Before the 1932 school term, Belle Grove Elementary School classes were reorganized and students in the fourth through sixth grades were transferred to Peabody, DuVal, or Parker schools. This allowed the School Board to cut Belle Grove's teaching staff in half, removing six teachers from the annual payroll.

The physical condition of local school buildings added to the growing expenses faced by those in charge of financing Fort Smith's public education. By 1935, the school board needed \$150,000 to meet the costs of repairs on existing school buildings and for the construction of an athletic stadium at the senior high school.

School Board President J. R. Woods assured Fort Smith residents in a September 1935 issue of the *Southwest American* that the public would not be asked to suffer a tax increase for the planned projects. Instead, the Board of Education applied for a loan from the Public Works Administration to finance the modernization of existing buildings and construction of a sports facility.

The changes, which included a central flush-plumbing system for Parker Elementary School, were presented to the public in a series of newspaper ads and articles. Before the opening day of classes for the 1937 school year, the *Southwest American* published a follow-up on the loan and renovation program declaring, "Repairs and remodeling, innovations and interior decorating have been going on during a major part of the summer." Part of the remodeling at Parker included the rearranging of the principal's office and the addition of a new library space.

The federal government also made available programs to help the schools deal with the increased poverty seeping into students' home lives during the Depression's darkest years. While cafeterias were available in eleven Fort Smith schools by 1932, they were expected at the time to meet the cost of their supplies and labor from the price paid by students for the lunches they served. A severe downturn in America's economy made it harder, if not impossible, for the families of some Fort Smith students to pay for school lunches.

In February 1936, the federal Works Progress Administration began serving supplementary lunches

to undernourished and underprivileged children in Sebastian County schools. The free lunches were served to children selected by their teachers and were prepared using food and utensils purchased by the program. Fort Smith residents hired through the federal project prepared and served the lunches and were responsible for cleaning and maintaining school spaces. Every Fort Smith school took part in the program, which provided supplemental food such as a sandwich and a carton of milk, to selected students. Parker Elementary enrolled eighty-seven children from the approximately 300 in their student body for the first year of the new service.

Food insecurity was a problem throughout the community in the depressed economy. A January 1937 issue of the *Southwest American* reported a break-in and theft at Parker Elementary School. While every room, every teacher's desk, and every student's desk in the school were ransacked, the only items stolen were food supplies from the school's pantry. The police decided the crime was committed by adults.

Along with an increase in poverty, the continued threat of tuberculosis clouded the days of Parker students in the second decade of the school's service. By 1931, public schools had assisted the Anti-Tuberculosis Association with the sale of Easter Seals for several years. Fort Smith's students raised \$316 for Easter Seals in 1931, with Parker Elementary School students contributing \$25 to help fund the research seeking a cure for the disease.

The Fort Smith School Nurse program continued to operate with funds from the Anti-Tuberculosis Act. In the 1930s, the program adopted an aggressive campaign to improve student health. Under the leadership of school nurse Maryella Clayton, parents were urged to cooperate with their child's school and its programs to build healthy habits at home.

Despite Clayton's lofty goals, it proved necessary for her to continue administering tuberculosis tests to students in Fort Smith public schools. In March 1938, school testing uncovered eighty-five active tuberculosis cases among 359 randomly chosen students. Thirteen of the infected students attended Parker Elementary School.

Until the early 1940s, isolation and an intensive scouring of areas and items associated with a recently diagnosed patient were the common responses to tuberculosis. The threat of removal to a sanitarium haunted children and adults. Prevention and regular testing were the best weapons of school nurses battling "the white plaque" until the development of medications to treat the disease appeared in

laboratories around the world.

The turbulence of World War II settled heavily on Fort Smith. With Camp Chaffee just outside the city limits, patriotism rose to a level of general excitement and concern. Like all American public schools, the Fort Smith system's lunch program suffered under national rationing guidelines, children watched their fathers, brothers, and other family members leaving for war, and classroom studies included Geography centering on Europe and Asia.

Weary of the stress of war, Fort Smith relaxed into the 1950s. Amid a spirit of community and optimism, a renewed sense of partnership and community spread across America. The membership of Calvary Baptist Church, now located on Midland Boulevard, received a generous offering of support from Parker Elementary School after their first church building was lost to fire.

Left without a meeting place while they replaced their church, the congregation met in the auditorium of Parker Elementary School. Church members saved many photographs of the services held in Parker's auditorium, which were later published in their fiftieth anniversary album.

Photos taken from the auditorium facing toward the front of the building during this time show two rooms, one set to either side of the interior entrance to the school. During this period, the principal's office, which was originally located on a second level above the front doors, was moved to the rooms beside the main entrance on the ground floor to allow more space for office staff.

Library space became shelves provided inside each classroom. The Fort Smith Public Library later relieved the need for reading material at Parker by scheduling regular visits of their bookmobile to the school.

Students across the nation participated in the President's Council on Physical Fitness, which became active in Fort Smith schools in 1960. The incentive for healthy American children began with President Eisenhower, who believed European youngsters were in better physical shape than those in American schools. By the time it reached Fort Smith during President Kennedy's administration, the program included a physical fitness test. Children were called upon to demonstrate prowess with curl-ups, pull-ups, push-ups, sit-and-reach exercises, a 30-foot shuttle run, and a one-mile endurance run. Running on the sidewalk around the entire perimeter of the Parker lot is a vivid memory for many 1960 era Parker students.

Youngsters attending Parker in February 1962 remember televisions set up in their classrooms for the first time to allow them to follow the splashdown of



THE PARKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
being used for church in 1958.

(Photo courtesy of If You Ever Lived in Fort Smith)

astronaut John Glenn in the Friendship Seven space capsule. Glenn, the first American to orbit the Earth, made a successful return home with his fall into the Atlantic Ocean while schoolchildren around the world watched on small, black-and-white television screens like the one in Mr. Bartlett's sixth-grade classroom at Parker Elementary School.

Parker's parents were quick and generous with their support of students attending the school. The Parent-Teacher Association boasted a long history of developing programs to collaborate with teachers for the aid of students. From its first project of placing a serving counter in the school cafeteria, the PTA at Parker stepped forward with innovative fund-raising ideas.

One of the most popular projects undertaken by the PTA was the holiday open house hosted by the school. Instituted in the 1960s, the project continued for years each Christmas season. The open house consisted of games, such as a cake walk or musical chairs, held in every classroom for parents and students who visited the school the evening of the holiday program. In their eagerness to try their hand at each game available or purchase a sweet treat in the hallways, children led parents through every room in the school before settling in for the program presented in the auditorium.

A former student remembers an all-male review in the 1960s hosted by the PTA. The play, "A Hillbilly Wedding," featured the fathers of Parker students who took every role in the production, including the bride and her wedding party. Remembering the thundering echo of laughter in the auditorium, the former student recalling the event he experienced as a Parker third-grader admitted feeling overwhelmed at the raucous reaction of the audience.

The 1960s were a time of turbulence and change



THE PARKER CENTER IN 2022.
(Courtesy of Sue Robison)

across the nation. Fort Smith integrated its public schools, which led to changing class sizes throughout the system. When the historic Lincoln Senior High School for African American students closed its doors in 1966, the specter of segregation faded from Fort Smith schools. A general reassignment of students changed the make-up of classrooms across town, and Parker Elementary was one of the northside schools facing an influx of new students.

While the student body of Parker changed with the growing and shifting of ethnic groups in Fort Smith through the late twentieth century, the building's structure went through only a few changes until the 1980s. Air conditioning was added to the school to combat Arkansas heat, but the large open middle area of the auditorium could not be cooled. To solve the problem, Principal Rick Foti enclosed the auditorium in 1984 to cool the space which, by then, held the school's library.

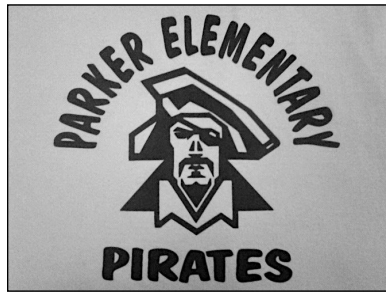
During the summer break after the 1986 school year, a Parker classroom teacher decorated the wall around the auditorium with painted scenes of Arkansas and Fort Smith history, as well as locations and events

familiar to Parker students. The final panel of the auditorium wall offered the work as celebration of Arkansas's 150th birthday.

Eventually, the rapid growth of Fort Smith to the south and east, coupled with the construction of new schools and renovation of existing classroom space, drew children out of the Parker district. Class sizes declined until the decision was made to close the doors at Parker. On May 25, 2001, the students remaining at Parker met on the school's front lawn. Slabs of concrete were supplied for each class so youngsters could etch their names below their teacher's signature as a gesture of farewell from the final group of students to meet in a classroom at Parker Elementary School.

The building's retirement proved to be short-lived, and it soon reopened as the Parker Center. Since the early days of the twenty-first century, Parker School has housed offices for several federal programs operated by the Fort Smith Public Schools system. Classrooms now house the operation for the Student Support and Academic Enrichment program known as Title IV Part A, as well as Title I parts A and D. The Gifted and Talented Education project operates from

the Parker Center, as do the Indian Education, Migrant Education, Parent & Family Engagement, and School Improvement Grant programs.



A group of volunteers maintains the Children's Service League in partnership with the Fort Smith Public Schools. In a space that once held classes for fourth-graders, the Children's Service League provides free clothing and toiletry kits for needy schoolchildren selected by classroom teachers across the city.

Former students who passed through Parker Elementary School's doors were living reflections of their time. In the 1940s, the Kasten sisters attended Parker. Reba Kasten would eventually assist in coordinating a medical fellowship program at Columbia University, while Anna would be appointed by President Bill Clinton to represent the American Historical Association on the John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Review Board. A Parker student from the 1960s became an educator whose career led him to the director's office of the Adult Education program in an eastern Arkansas county. A student from the 1980s became a bank president. While each youngster came from a different time with differing histories, all began as Parker Pirates.

While its methods have changed with the transformation into the Parker Center, the school continues to be actively involved in the education of Fort Smith's children. The purpose of Parker Elementary School remains to educate students to become good citizens and caretakers of the future.

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Book Reviews

***The Ozark Mountain Daredevils on Record: A Narrative Discography.* By Michael Kuelker. ((FM)) Books & Music, 2022 (<https://omdonrecord.com>).**

This is not simply a book about the Ozark Mountain Daredevils; it is not simply a comprehensive encyclopedic accounting of the OMD discography. This narrative accounting of the creation, existence, and perpetuation of the OMD walks you step-by-step, side-by-side with the key players. You will hear the story of the OMD from the perspective of each band member, from record agents, bar owners, and many a fan. Every release, every format, every documented appearance on TV and radio is accounted for here. Michael Kuelker tethers otherwise cacophonous strands of memories and creates from them a polyphonic story that creates as full of a picture of the OMD as is possible. From firsthand renderings to hours of extensive interviews with nearly every key member of the band and the expansive OMD posse, Kuelker creates a symphonic tempo that simultaneously explains why the OMD were as successful as they were, and why they elected not to be more so.

From Route 66 to *Ozark Jubilee*, all roads led to Springfield, Missouri, for the OMD. In the journeys to and from the city, you will get to know Randle Chowning, John Dillon, Larry Lee, Steve Cash, Michael “Supe” Granda, Budy Brayfield, Steve Canaday, Elizabeth Anderson, and many more. This narrative discography is arranged in eight temporal chapters but is not precisely linear. The circularity of time swirls in distant memories and is pieced together as new voices add to the many layers of life’s travels and travails. The rugged topography of the Ozarks lends itself to bricolage, to rhizomatic links. Kuelker’s underlying structure in this narrative discography mirrors this landscape while giving the reader a complex history of a band, of the music industry, and a sense for the necessary alchemy to realize five decades of music from the OMD. Don’t expect a similar number of pages for each of the eight chapters. That’s not how life works, nor should this narrative. The expansion and contraction of the text tracks with the gravitational time dilation of OMD’s existence.

Michael Kuelker is a seasoned, if self-trained, ethnomusicologist with serious chops. This narrative discography supplies you with the voices of those who created and supported the OMD. The social-historical context of band members is brought to life from their own and others’ vantage points, and Kuelker refuses to smooth over disparate accounts, but rather he leaves the reader to meditate on the complexity of the human condition, on the rough edges as well as the in between spaces. You’ve heard the parable of the blind interpreting an elephant? This OMD narrative discography touches nearly every side of the OMD mammoth. From original members to reconfigurations, from major record label creations to commercial jingles, from performing at the New Bijou Theatre to Caribbean Cruises, you will be given envoy to the intricacies of sustaining a band over five decades. You will become a fan and yearn for more OMD.

Kuelker concedes early on that music is “very thingy” but he manages to nail that jelly to the wall long enough for us to get a taste of what it must have been like sitting on a bar stool at the New Bijou Theater in 1971, sipping a lager, and hearing in the vibes of the Family Tree, the sounds which would become their trademark in the OMD’s first major record just eighteen months later. With the skill of a well-trained historical archaeologist, Kuelker blows the dust off the otherwise speechless material artifacts of vinyl records, cassette tapes, set lists, and such to tease from them a comprehensive tale of how the OMD came to embody Springfield, Missouri, how the OMD turned manifest in song and lyric a long-lost walk in the woods of the Ozark Mountains.

You will hear the story of how “Chicken Train Stomp” came into being, and you will learn to love it and find yourself singing, stomping, and clucking along with the band. Many an OMD lyric sprang from the Ozarks experience. True to life yet bigger, Kuelker reveals the OMD catalog to be a meditation on, and a Thoreauvian transcendence of, life in the Ozarks. While the Daredevils music can at times appear silly and flippant, ‘tis but the ploy of a trickster to lure the listener toward profundity. Unlike Evel Knievel, the Ozark Mountain Daredevils successfully traverse the

vast canyons of space and time. Michael Kuelker takes you along with them on that journey.

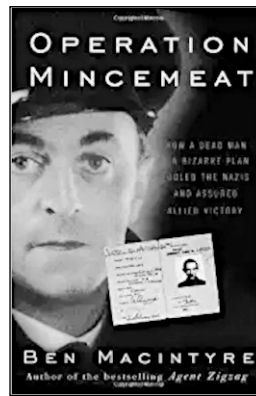
Experienced, hard-core OMD fans will relish the first-hand accounts and encyclopedic renderings of the OMD catalog offered in this tome. The unaware, and heretofore lost, will fall hard for this flannel-clad assemblage of long-haired chaps who create a single band that seamlessly shape-shifts from “If You Want to Get to Heaven” to “Jackie Blue,” from “Country Girl,” to “Chicken Train Stomp.” Kuelker demonstrates how the versatility in songwriting and instrumentation enabled OMD to create the sound of five different bands packed into one. This is not a book. It is an existential acid trip through your wildest musical imaginations.

Fair warning to the uninitiated. This account of the OMD will take you on a walk into the woods of the Ozarks that you will not want to return from. Your heart will swell with pride and joy at the rise of the OMD, your eyes will fill as your ears go *Off the Beaten Path*, and you hear the hard-earned wisdom in music and lyrics pressed from a life balanced between the Ozarks and the winding road that takes you far from home. The OMD is your favorite band, and you don't know it yet.

—Reviewed by Daniel R. Maher

***Operation Mincemeat: How A Dead Man and a Bizarre Plan Fooled the Nazis and Assured an Allied Victory.* By Ben Macintyre. (New York: Harmony Books, 2010, Pp. 401, acknowledgments, images, bibliography, index, \$38.)**

“It is possible to fit at least two people into one life,” Ben Macintyre writes in the last chapter of *Operation Mincemeat*, and much of his story is devoted to examples of how this can be done. Spies and even the desk workers in an intelligence operation are sometimes called upon to assume a different identity, as Jean Leslie, a secretary at the offices of MI5 in London, learned when she was asked to play the role of “Pam,” the fictional fiancée of “William Martin,” the equally fictional hero of this improbable tale of World War II intrigue. “William Martin” was the name given to the corpse which was to be left in the waters of the Atlantic so that it would wash up on the shore of southwest Spain. Chained to the corpse, which was dressed as an English major, was a briefcase with false correspondence alluding to an Allied invasion of Europe to be launched on the shores of Greece. This



was all contrived so that the neutral Spanish would allow the German intelligence forces in Spain to see the papers, which they would surreptitiously open and return to the briefcase with the appearance that they had never been opened. The Germans would then deploy most of their defensive forces to Greece, leaving Sicily poorly defended for the Allied invasion of Italy which was to begin there.

Such was the detail with which this operation was executed that an identity was created for Major Martin. Ewen Montagu, naval intelligence officer and the principal organizer of Operation Mincemeat, played the role of “Major Martin” in London in the days before the corpse was sent to the Atlantic, and during this time he took “Pam” to the theater, leaving torn theater stubs for the appropriate dates in the pocket of the uniform which would be found in Spain. Love letters and a receipt for a diamond ring were also stuffed into the pockets. During the weeks before the operation was to be launched, Montagu went beyond the call of duty in taking “Pam” to dinner and to shows. She even provided a photograph of herself, inscribed, “Till death us do part, Your loving Pam.” Willie Martin wrote Pam numerous love letters.

Jean Leslie had not been selected at random. All the girls in the office were asked to submit photos of themselves for consideration. And this was not a randomly selected group of secretaries. “Uncle John [Admiral John Godfrey] gave specific orders that only the prettiest girls should be employed, on the theory that then they would be less likely to boast to their boyfriends about the secret work they were doing.”



JEAN LESLIE,
aka Pam

As wartime liaisons go, this one was relatively harmless for the principals. It existed only as long as the Major was supposed to be alive. Montagu's marriage remained intact. After the war Jean married a soldier, William Gerard Leigh, “not entirely unlike the gallant and doomed William Martin.” He was later honored as CBE (Commander of the British Empire), and when this was announced in 1980, Jean's



EWEN MONTAGU, naval intelligence officer and principal organizer of Operation Mincemeat, is shown on the right in 1943. He also posed in London as “Major Martin.”

photograph appeared in the *Times*. Montagu, then a judge and seventy-nine years old, wrote her a note: “Dear ‘Pam,’ It was a voice from the past to see you in today’s papers and I can’t resist being another such voice and sending you congratulations. Ever yours, Ewen (alias Major William Martin).”

This amounts to little more than postwar trivia, but the secret of the success of Operation Mincemeat was the attention given to trivia. The object of the game was to provide misinformation in such a way that the Germans would discover it and believe it to be genuine. It could not be too obvious, or the Germans would know it to be a fake. It could not be too obscure, or they wouldn’t understand it. It had to be placed so that it would be discovered in such a way that it would get to the Germans. The English had to make a plausible attempt to retrieve the information, but not too eagerly, and not too halfheartedly.

In the end it worked. The Germans bit “hook, line, and sinker,” and the invasion, which might not have succeeded if Sicily had been fortified with all the German might, did indeed succeed. The story was too secret and too sensitive to be told at the time or in the years afterward when those involved were still alive, some of them still involved in undercover activities. But it was too good to keep, and the one who first began to tell the story was the commander-in-chief of the British forces, Prime Minister Winston Churchill himself, who couldn’t resist mentioning it at a wartime dinner party.

Ewen Montagu himself obtained clearance to tell the story in a “classic of postwar literature,” *The Man Who Never Was*. Even this, though, could not reveal how the Allies had broken the German Ultra code, which was not revealed until the 1970s and it was this

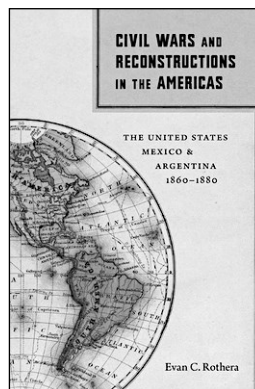
method which allowed the Allies to track the success of their ruse. Nor was the Spanish collaboration with the Nazis discussed. And the real identity of the dead man was concealed. *The Man Who Never Was* was made into a movie in 1956.

Ben Macintyre has provided an authoritative and exceedingly detailed account of the deception in *Operation Mincemeat*. It borders on the ungracious to complain about a book’s being too detailed. The overburdened reader can simply skip a bit and go right on, not missing too much in an entertaining and certainly well researched book which does justice to what must surely have been one of the best stories to emerge from the war.

—Reviewed by Taylor Prewitt, Fort Smith

Civil Wars and Reconstructions in the Americas: The United States, Mexico & Argentina, 1860-1880.
By Evan C. Rothera. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2022. Pp. 325. Acknowledgments, illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.)

Evan C. Rothera is an Assistant Professor of History at University of Arkansas – Fort Smith. His undergraduate degree is from Gettysburg College and his Ph.D. from Penn State University. He specializes in nineteenth-century U.S. and Latin American history. The effects of the Civil War on those who fought it, both North and South veterans are subjects of his prior publication from LSU Press, *The War Went On: Reconsidering the Lives of Civil War Veterans*, an



anthology that met with excellent reviews and created fresh avenues of thought about those veterans, their lives afterward, and directions in life that they took shaped by their sectional settings and sometimes by international settings as well.

Carrying forward his determination to show oft neglected patterns of the titanic struggle that appeared during and after the war in the present volume, Rothera details political, social, and military events over the twenty-year period of the U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction. His prescient study includes the experiences of Mexico and Argentina which, no doubt, will influence scholars to renew their lines of thinking

on war and people and will promote scholarly research and further serious study of the mid- and late nineteenth-century period based on a hemispheric perspective.

Placing paramount characters, most of whom are quite familiar to the public as well as the academics, into an international setting more completely explains the US Civil War and gives readers the “Gee Whiz, I never knew that” moments.

Abraham Lincoln and the Republicans of his day joined in sympathies and sometimes actions with Mexican and Argentine Republican leaders and their causes on many occasions. The monumental conflict going on in this land had counterparts in Mexico with the French-backed imposition of Ferdinand as Emperor and Benito Juarez’s resistance to that would-be monarchy in his country and in Argentina with the “long struggle to create a liberal state.” The liberal state meant one that was based on democratic and republican rule for a government opposed to one of reaction, aristocracies, monarchies, and oligarchies.

Rothera’s evidence in the book shows that Lincoln was quite aware of the stakes of the civil wars that erupted in these American countries and himself compared in letters that he wrote the forces arrayed on either side.

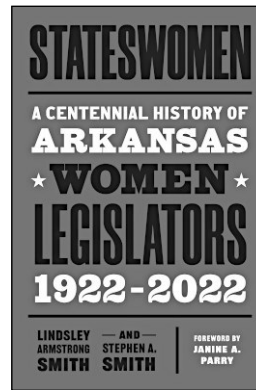
His own generals at times voiced the comparison and where Mexico and the struggle against monarchy there was concerned intuited that the U.S. Civil War would not be over until the battles in Mexico to restore republicanism were successfully completed.

Rothera has written a book complete with thorough documentation, direct quotations that read like a script, and plots to keep the reader turning the pages. A masterpiece of historical insight and inquiry and masterfully written to keep the reader turning the pages for this awesome contribution to US Civil War history as well as those period histories of our hemispheric partners, Mexico and Argentina. Bravo, Dr. Evan Rothera!

—Reviewed by Billy D. Higgins

***Stateswomen: A Centennial History of Arkansas Women Legislators, 1922-2022*, By Lindsley Armstrong Smith and Stephen A. Smith. (University of Arkansas Press, 2022, pp. 478, 205 images, index, notes, maps \$29.95 paperback).**

A stunning and remarkable tribute to the last century of women serving in the Arkansas Legislature



has come from the collaborative pens of Lindsley Armstrong Smith and Stephen A. Smith, a truly unique, political couple in Northwest Arkansas.

The book commemorates the last century 1922 to 2022 and the 146 women who served in the General Assembly. This book’s informational

biographical format achieved

its goal, giving each individual represented more than a commodity of dignity, respect, and admiration for their time of public service.

Readers of the *Journal* of the Fort Smith Historical Society will note its mention, as in her autobiography Representative Carolyn Pollan cites the time she spent writing for and editing the *Journal* among her many community activities and accomplishments.

Seven women from Sebastian County served in the Arkansas General Assembly as representatives and one as a senator over the last century. Those included in the book, in no particular order, are: Senator Peggy Jeffries and Representatives Bernice Kizer, Carolyn Pollan, Jo Carson, Shirley Walters, Tracy Pennartz, Stephanie Malone, and Cindy Crawford.

The Smiths, as a couple, are certainly no strangers to the mechanization and machinations of the Arkansas legislature, both having served in the state House of Representatives.

Stephen A. Smith, elected in 1971, was one of the youngest men ever to serve from Madison County. He stayed two terms and left in 1974 to help Gov. Bill Clinton implement various programs all the way from the Arkansas State Capitol to the White House. Later, his wife, Lindsley Armstrong Smith, a Louisiana native, was a bombastic and enthusiastic member of the Arkansas House from 2005-2010.

There is not a better pair of writers/researchers/editors for this book of such a historical and political undertaking, especially focused on women’s issues and free speech.

Former and current House and Senate members, on both sides of the political divide, now, or in the past, cannot find flaw to this wonderful, hefty tome on those who have served.

There is an intriguing forward, penning by UA Political Scientist, Dr. Janine A. Parry, setting the political landscape for many of these “game changers,” mentioned in the book.

Smith & Smith, in a long but informative ninety-six-page introduction, aided with classic photographs of many of the “glass ceiling breakers,” defines the crux of this fine volume. The introduction takes shape in relating the role of women in Arkansas politics alongside a “long history of resistance to a full citizenship right for women.”

The introduction, itself, is well worth the price of the book and is certainly through evoking reading and discussion worthy of book clubs, political gatherings and yes, education of a younger generation of Arkansas’s girls and women.

It should be required reading for anyone desiring to embark on seeing political office or a career in public service.

Two eye-opening maps of Arkansas counties that sent women to the legislature are featured. There are indeed areas of our state where women have blazed a bright political trail and where others have followed.

And indeed, there are dark corridors where resistance to female candidates is too clearly marked as being tough on female politicians.

This book is indeed a precious gift to both the state’s history and political sciences. It is a precious gift to those who served, their families and the legacy etched in this state by some of the hardest working, most earnest and dedicated politicians of the last century.

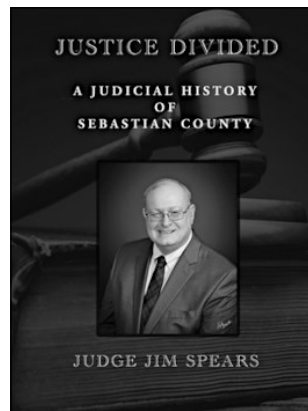
—Reviewed by Maylon T. Rice, Fayetteville

***Justice Divided: A Judicial History of Sebastian County.* By Judge Jim Spears. (Red Engine Press, 2022). Pp. 285. Acknowledgments, table of contents, illustrations, maps, sources. \$45.)**

From the title of this book, a potential reader might think, “Hmm, a dry subject.” That would be a mistake.

This is an exciting, well-written book by Jim Spears, who has served Sebastian County as an attorney, public defender, and circuit judge. This book chronicles the history of the Sebastian County Circuit Court, from 1851 to 2022. An anecdote is given about each circuit court judge, along with a classic picture of each. Cases from this district that are heard by the Arkansas Supreme Court are summarized in highly readable layman’s terms.

Spears did extensive research to find a theme and feature for each judge. He searched all the normal venues to gather information for an academic book,



and then went a step further by interviewing relatives, friends and acquaintances of as many judges as possible. He learned some rather colorful and salacious stories about some of the judges that couldn't be confirmed by any accepted documentation. However, they were too interesting not to be

included in the book.

For this reason, he decided to present this book as an informal history complete with notes in the back, but without footnotes. Spears and his editors worked to tell really great stories.

Although this is not an academic book, at the back of the book he has listed the sources for each chapter. Anyone wanting to do further research will find this information extremely helpful. Maps are included throughout the book to help readers understand jurisdictional changes of counties and judicial districts.

One of the most fascinating accounts includes the creation of the title itself. *Justice Divided* is derived from the big fight over location of the Sebastian County seat and courthouse. Spears explains why we have courthouses in two cities in Sebastian County and why it took a constitutional amendment to settle the matter.

Traveling through the book, you'll learn much, such as about 1850s push to create Sebastian County, how Arkansas’s affiliation with the Confederacy affected the judicial system, how Arkansas rejoined the Union after the Civil War, and what it took to re-establish a new state constitution and judicial system. Spears also reflects on the time it took for a female to be elected as a circuit judge.

Finally, there are insightful stories about aging courthouses, efforts to fix them, and what it took to get new courthouses built when the repairs did not correct the issues.

Readers will discover what legal corrections have been made to allow county business to be done at either of the Sebastian County courthouses by any citizen of Sebastian County. However, since both cities are still extremely protective of their courthouses it’s still: *Justice Divided in Sebastian County.*

—Reviewed by Bill Word

1923 Newspapers

By Al Whitson

As the city of Fort Smith awakened, cleared its eyes, and adjusted its sights on the year 1923; halfway around the world, Howard Carter was opening the tomb of a boy-king named Tut, who had lay in silent repose for 3,000 years; the Yankees defeated the Red Sox in the first game ever played in their new stadium, thanks to the help of a three-run homer by Babe Ruth; and the first issue of *Time* magazine rolled off the presses in New York City. Meanwhile, back at home, pioneer and former U. S. Deputy Marshal, A. P. Walker was laid to rest by his sons Ben and Talbot, and it seemed to all that an era was ending.

The once large and jubilant gathering of ex-confederates, of the Ben T. DuVal camp, was now a shadow of its former self—with only eight members remaining. But not everyone was going quietly into this new era; the Williams brothers' Horse and Mule business, in open defiance of the automobiles' dominance, made plans to expand and open a new Barn on South Eleventh Street.

For the first time in our city's history, a king was buried in Fort Smith, with all the pomp and circumstance one might expect for such an event. The Boston Store began its long tradition of using living models to show off its wares, but competition was brewing as a new store with the funny name, J. C. Penney, opened its doors here—it was a first for Arkansas. Turmoil over funding erupted in our schools just as a new superintendent arrived here to take charge.

A new shoe warehouse opened its doors, and one of our most prominent mayors watched as an interloper tried on his well-worn three-term loafers—after he was recalled by the citizens. And, unfortunately, the Ku Klux Klan continued to gain power and make inroads across the country, including right here in Fort Smith. Yes sir, 1923 shape up to be quite a year.

Tuesday, January 2, 1923

ANOTHER FORMER U.S. DEPUTY MARSHAL ANSWERS FINAL ROLL CALL IN FORT SMITH

Funeral services for A. P. Walker, 71, whose death occurred Monday morning at 6:45 o'clock following a lingering illness, will be conducted from the Church of Immaculate Conception, Tuesday morning. The Reverend Father Patrick F. Horan, pastor of the church, will celebrate Requiem High mass. Interment will be made in the Catholic cemetery.

Mr. Walker was a member of a pioneer Arkansas family, and had spent his entire life in this state. In his earlier life he was very prominent in political and civic affairs of Northwest Arkansas. For several years Mr. Walker served as United States marshal for the Indian Territory, and later as a constable, marshal and deputy sheriff in Sebastian County.

The deceased is survived by two sons, Talbot Walker and Ben Walker, and two daughters, Mrs. W. R. Eacret and Mrs. Spencer Bryana, all of whom reside in Fort Smith.

The pallbearers will be W. B. Pape, N. T. Richmond, Will O'Shea, T. P. Young, and C. C. Clinton.

News of the sudden death of Mr. Walker came as a distinct shock to his scores of friends and associates in Fort Smith and the state, among whom he was very highly respected.

FOUR "GUESTS" AT CITY JAIL OPENING NIGHT

The city police department again occupied the old city jail Sunday afternoon after a "vacation" of two

Base Ball Today

Fort Smith Black Twins
vs
Oklahoma Panthers

ALEXANDER FIELD

Game Called 3:30 P. M. Admission 55c

BATTERIES

Oklahoma Panthers— Fred Parks, Pitcher. Smith, Catcher.	Black Twins— Hunter, Pitcher. Lane, Catcher
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years, while city prisoners were being kept in the county jail. All city prisoners were removed from the county jail to the city prison Sunday afternoon, and Night Jailer Robertson took charge.

During the first 24 hours arrests that netted the city approximately \$50 were made. Mayor Fagan Bourland ordered the old jail reoccupied because he believes by working the prisoners on the streets the city can be saved a considerable amount of money. The mayor also said he wanted to have a "hold-over" for transients. The jailer had four "guests" the first night.

Wednesday, January 3, 1923

WILLIAMS HORSE AND MULECOMPANY INCORPORATED WITH \$50,000 CAPITAL

The Williams Horse and Mule company, with a capital of \$50,000, was organized and formally incorporated here yesterday, to deal in horses, mules and all kinds of livestock, real estate in city and county, automobiles, wagons, harness and saddles, to borrow and lend money, deal in stocks and bonds, and to do all other things necessary to the conduct of business.

Leon A. Williams and John B. Williams of this city, with Byron Williams of Coffeyville, Kas.[sic], who is not related to the local men, are the heads of the new company. Leon A. Williams being president, John B. Williams, vice president, and Byron Williams, secretary treasurer and general manager, who will be in active charge of the business.

Early in the spring the company will begin the construction of its modern barn on South Eleventh street, just one block off Rogers Avenue and it will conduct its business there as soon as the building is completed.

It was declared that although John B. Williams is a stockholder and officer in the new company, he will not be active, but will continue the conduct of his present business on South Ninth street, where he has been for years past.

Tuesday, January 9, 1923

SNEAK THIEF PLYS NEFARIOUS TRADE IN CHURCH—GETS \$22

A sneak thief slipped into the First Christian church last night while a meeting was in progress and stole a pocketbook containing \$22, the property of Mrs.

Earl Varnadore, 111 North Twenty-first Street, according to reports given to the police.

The thief escaped without leaving a clue, officers stated. Mrs. Varnadore reported that she left the pocketbook under her hat and while in another part of the building, the thief entered and obtained the purse and money.

Thursday, January 11, 1923

ORGANIZE "SCOUT MOTHER'S CLUB" FIRST IN STATE

Organization of the first Scout Mother's club in the state was perfected yesterday afternoon at Carnegie library. Mrs. J. C. Billingsley was elected president of the club for the year, at the election of officers.

Additional officers are Mrs. Herschel Hunt, vice president, and Mrs. Frank Hines, secretary and treasurer.

The next regular meeting will be held the fourth Thursday in January, when an interesting program will be rendered.

Friday, January 12, 1923

CONFEDERATE VET AND BUDDIES ENJOY ANNUAL CELEBRATION

For a number of years, Ben T. DuVal camp, United Confederate Veterans, has celebrated with an annual dinner at the home of one of the veterans whose birthday falls near the New Year.

Confederate veteran R. S. Grigsby, of 1201 North Ninth street, eighty years young, was this year's host entertaining with a bountiful turkey dinner at his home on Thursday.

Guests included his former "buddies," all young



NILE VIRDE

Play Ball!

And Play Pool On Our Brand New
High Grade Tables Now
Being Set Up
OPEN TUESDAY

The old dining room of the Leflore Hotel has been converted into a modern billiard parlor and the best and liveliest tables installed. It will be conducted as a high class amusement place, with Geo. Kuen a well-known resident as manager. You are invited to call.

LeFlore Billiards Parlor

GEO. KUEN, Manager 316 Garrison Avenue

chaps of nearly the same age, the youngest about seventy-two. With the ranks of Ben T. DuVal camp depleted to less than a baker's dozen, it was remarkable that eight were able to be present. These were Colonel Benjamin B. Chism, L. B. Lawrence, Chaplain Joe Scott, J. B. Williams, Dr. Osborn, J. M. Hopkins, [and] J. N. Williams. In addition to post [the] members were Mrs. J. B. Williams, Mrs. Betty Black, [and] Mr. and Mrs. Mike Gordon.

Wednesday, January 17, 1923

HOLD TWO YOUTHS TO GRAND JURY ON BURGLARY CHARGES

A. Roam and Richard Griffin, local youths held on a charge of robbing several local stores Saturday or Sunday, were bound over to the grand jury following their appearance before Judge L. F. Fishback in municipal court yesterday afternoon. They are accused of robbing the Ross Drug store, 1201 North Eleventh street Sunday night and of complicity in the robbery of several other stores.

Both Roam and Griffin gave their ages as eighteen, are said to have confessed to several robberies. At the time of their arrest at the corner of North Tenth and A. streets, each youth carried a sack of pennies. Griffin's sack contained 127 cents, and Roam's 244 cents. Griffin also had in his possession a watch, alleged to have been taken from the Ross store.

Officers found two lap robes, an overcoat and a quantity of smoking and chewing tobacco hidden near the railroad crossing near Mill Creek. The youths are alleged to have admitted hiding several other articles which the police did not find.

Another boy was seen with them at the time of their arrest, but escaped through the lobby of a local theater. The youth is being sought by the police.

Friday, January 19, 1923

LAW ON REMOVAL FILLING STATIONS FROM SIDEWALKS IN EFFECT TODAY

Owners of all gasoline filling stations which are located on sidewalks and parkways of the city will be fined \$25 in Municipal court beginning today, Mayor Fagan Bourland announced yesterday.

The ordinance requiring all stations on the sidewalk and parkway to be removed was adopted July

16, 1921. Owners were given eighteen months in which to comply, officials said. The ordinance went into effect December 16, 1922.

Saturday, January 20, 1923

CITY PRISONERS MUST GO TO WORK DECLARES MAYOR

Prisoners in the city jail will not spend their time in idleness after Monday, according to an announcement of Mayor Fagan Bourland yesterday. Beginning next week, prisoners will be put to work on the streets of Fort Smith.

It is probable that about ten men will be kept at work constantly, the mayor said. That is the average number of prisoners in the jail, but it will vary from day to day, he said. Plans for the working of the prisoners are not complete.

ELMO CARUTHERS, RETIRED MERCHANT, DIES AT HOME HERE

Following an illness of nearly a month, Elmo Caruthers, retired merchant died at the family home, 1120 Adelaide Avenue, early last night. All of his relatives and immediate family were at his bedside when death came.

Mr. Caruthers, who conducted a mercantile business on Garrison Avenue for thirty-five years, was well known, not only in Fort Smith but in the western section of the state.

Wednesday, January 24, 1923

A MAN WHO LOOKS FOR TROUBLE AND FINDS IT SHOULD NOT WHINE—COURT TELLS ALLEGED MEDDLER

R. H. Tankersley, sr., and R. H. Tankersley, jr., each were fined \$10 and costs by Judge L. F. Fishback in Municipal court yesterday in a suit brought by Arnold Kaylor, charging them with assault and battery.

Testimony brought out in the hearing tended to show that Kaylor had caused trouble between the younger Tankersley and his wife, which resulted in their separation.

Afterward, they were reunited and lived together without trouble until several weeks ago. Tankersley testified that he had made repeated efforts to meet Kaylor and settle the trouble, but Kaylor avoided him,

he said, refusing to come to his father's house to discuss the matter.

Last Friday, January 19, Mrs. Tankersley, sr., called Kaylor to deliver some groceries to her son's home on North R. Street, it was alleged. Tankersley admitted knowledge of the call, and said he was prepared to give Kaylor a beating.

Tankersley, sr., testified to the same thing and said he planned to be on hand to see the job well done. When Kaylor appeared he was met by the two men, and, according to the statement made to the court by young Tankersley, admitted calling at young Tankersley's home.

Before pronouncing sentence, Judge Fishback said, "I do not for a moment commend any man who takes the law into his own hands. If he does that he is subject to punishment, no matter what his provocation. On the other hand, any man who fools around with another man's wife is preparing for trouble and he ought to be able to take it like a man, and not whine when he gets it."

LOCAL MADE PICTURE "SAFETY FIRST" AT PALACE TODAY

The local made photoplay "Safety First" will be shown as an extra added attraction at the Palace Theatre on Wednesday and Thursday.

The picture was made in the interest of the recent safety first movement and embodies many details of how accidents can be avoided by the pedestrian. Several hundred people take part in the making of the film and many will more than likely recognize themselves on the screen, either taking part or being an on-looker, while the pictures are being made.

The feature picture on the program will be "Missing Millions," a Boston Blackie story featuring Alice Brady and David Powell.

Friday, January 26, 1923

ONE-MAN TROLLEY CARS SATISFACTORY, PUBLISHER INFORMED

Satisfactory reports on the one-man street cars in use in Fort Smith and Van Buren have been sent by Mayor Fagan Bourland in reply to a letter from George H. Allen, publisher of the *Lansing Industrial News*, Lansing, Mich., who is one of a committee to investigate street railway affairs.

Mayor Bourland replied that there are at present eighteen one-man cars in operation in the two cities

and that they are giving very satisfactory service. They are as easily and safely operated, and take no more time than the two man cars of the old type, Mayor Bourland wrote.

Wednesday, January 31, 1923

SUBURBAN RESIDENTS ASK FOR POLICEMAN

Police protection is needed in the vicinity of [the] Fifth and Eleventh street junction, according to residents of that neighborhood, who have written Mayor Fagan Bourland requesting that a special policeman be provided for that section.

The letter, received by the major yesterday, says:

Citizens of Fort Smith living near the Fifth and Eleventh street Junction feel the need of better police protection than the police are able to give us owing to the distance from police headquarters, [and] ask that W. T. Dempsey, 1912 North Eleventh street, be commissioned to assist in controlling the unlawfulness of the neighborhood. No complaint is made against the officers.

Signed, P. D. Howe,
E. E. Coleman, G. J. Dixon, R. L. Kaylor,
O. T. Banka, H. A. Whittaker

Mayor Bourland said yesterday that no action has been taken in the matter, but that he has it under advisement.

Thursday, February 1, 1923

COUNTY BURIES WILLIAM WEHMEYER

The remains of William Wehmeyer, sixty-two, who died from the effects of drinking denatured alcohol, were interred in potter's field yesterday morning. Wehmeyer died January 23, in the city jail, where he was taken while intoxicated after consuming canned heat.

The body was held at Fentress Mortuary, while an attempt was made to locate the relatives of the dead man; one brother was located in Ohio and notified of his brother's death, but gave neither instruction nor finances to defray the funeral expenses.

Sunday, February 4, 1923

HONOR GUARD TO ACCOMPANY THE CORTEGE TO THE CEMETERY

“The King is dead, long live the King.”

The funeral of Yankow Urich, late ruler of the Urich tribe of Gypsies, whose death occurred at a local hospital Thursday afternoon, will be held from the Church of the Immaculate Conception at 11 o'clock this morning, according to plans perfected late last night by leaders of his tribe, who are encamped near Electric Park.

Tuesday, February 6, 1923

WEIRD RITES MARK FUNERAL OF GIPSY [sic] KING

The body of Yankow Urich, in his lifetime, ruler of the tribe of Gypsies [sic] by that name, was buried Sunday afternoon at 1 o'clock on the gentle slopes of Forest Park cemetery.

The number of persons, who viewed the last rites accorded the dead chieftain, was estimated at several thousand. It was the first funeral of a ruler of this wandering people ever held in Fort Smith.

Early Sunday morning hundreds of persons began to wend their way to the center of the city and when the cortege with its guard of honor, composed of tribal comrades of the deceased, passed along Garrison avenue on the way to the Church of the Immaculate Conception, where funeral services were held, the pavements on either side of the avenue were lined with people who gazed upon a procession conducted as no other had been in this section.

Arriving at the church, the casket was taken in the building for a short service, after which, accompanied by a band marching behind the hearse and honor guard ahead of the mourners, playing a funeral dirge, the procession passed slowly along Garrison to the intersection of Sixth street, where automobiles awaited. Entering the autos, the marchers rode the four miles to the cemetery.

Measures the Corpse

Before starting to the church for the funeral service, the members of the tribe gathered about the casket at the Fentress Mortuary, where certain rites were carried out, as has been the custom since the first ruler died nearly 2,000 years ago.

Lifting the cover of the casket, the corpse was measured from his head to his feet with a white ribbon,

then with a silk cord, and the ribbon and cord passed to the waiting mourners. Lastly, a flat cord of gray-brown material was used to measure, and afterwards was rolled neatly and placed in the pocket of the shroud.

Various articles for the toilet, including a brush and comb, were placed within the casket by the widow, Lena Urich, who also placed in the hand of her dead husband a bank-note.

Other members of the tribe tossed in the casket small bits of metal curios, gathered from over the world, worthless in money value but rich in memories. It was their token of respect.

At The Grave

Arriving at the cemetery, the casket was placed beside the grave and the Gypsies [sp] first filed by for a final look at their dead [King], after which the hundreds of other persons marched past the bier, while the widow and her people crooned the death song of the dusky race.

Youngest Son Casts Overcoat into Grave

Just before the mourners left, it was noticed by one that, of all of the clothing cast into the grave, there was not included an overcoat. Miller Urich, youngest and the most tempestuous of the sons of the dead ruler, quickly removed his own coat and dropped it into the grave, and followed his people back to their camp, now ruled by the new king, Steve Costello, elected temporarily, to succeed Yankow Urich.

Sunday, February 11, 1923

LOCAL RADIO ENTHUSIAST WINS RECEIVER

James A. Barry, sixteen-year-old Fort Smith Boy Ranger, son of Mr. and Mrs. Clinton R. Barry, 823 South Twenty-fourth street, has been awarded a complete radio receiving set by the Crosley Manufacturing company of Cincinnati Ohio, following his prompt reception of signals from WLW station at the later city, last Tuesday night.

Station WLW made an announcement by radio, and it was the rules, that the first amateur in each district acknowledging by telegraph the receipt of the announcement [would win a new radio receiver]. Fort Smith is located in Midwest district No 5 and young Barry was the first to acknowledge [receipt in that district].

The offer was made to the nine districts.

Exactly twenty-five minutes after he had sent in his acknowledgement of receipt of the message, Barry received a telegram from the company that he was the

winner for this district.

**PICTURE OF KLAN COMING TO VICTORY
THEATER THIS WEEK**

A film story which ought to attract considerable attention in Fort Smith this week is the Ku Klux Klan production, which will be shown at the Victory Theatre Wednesday and Thursday of this week. It is not a picture for Klansmen only, but is for the general public, either Klan or anti-Klan.

The Klan film shows the headquarters at Atlanta and the home of the imperial wizard, William Joseph Simmons, as well as pictures of parades of Klansmen in full regalia, which were held in Oklahoma City, Tulsa and other places. The parade portions of the film were not made on a picture "lot" but show them as they were actually held and are declared to be very interesting.

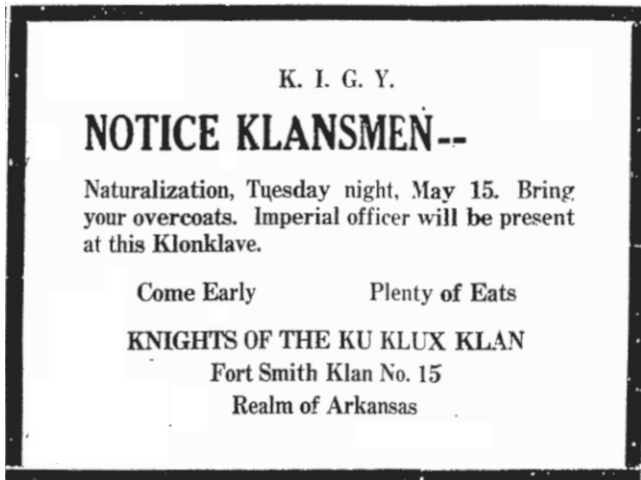
The film also depicts in the way of a story the manner in which the Klan is said to operate to secure the reforms for which it is said to stand; for the apprehension of bootleggers and other crooks, for the curbing of the drink and gambling evil and for the protection of womanhood.

Thursday, February 15, 1923

**PETITIONERS ALLEGE LAWS
NOT ENFORCED BY EXECUTIVE**

Removal of Fagan Bourland as mayor of Fort Smith and the election of a successor to the office is asked in a petition being circulated among voters of this city, it was learned last night.

The petition is addressed to the Board of Commissioners and J. F. McGraw, city clerk. The



number of signers obtained thus far was not ascertained, but it is reported that more than five hundred already have signed.

According to figures published in the *Southwest American*, April 6, 1921, following the election of Mayor Fagan Bourland, April 5, 1921, the total vote cast for mayor was 1,128.

Mayor Bourland was not opposed in the race.

Grounds for removal of Mayor Bourland as set forth in the petition follow:

Section 1, alleges "Inappropriate use of funds and particularly cites sec. 12, Article 13, of the General Assembly of Arkansas 1913.

Section 2, He has commissioned or caused to be commissioned one George Newton, alias "Hawkshaw" as a special police officer when in truth said Hawkshaw was engaged in operating a disorderly rooming house at South Sixth street in a building owned by the said Mayor. The said Hawkshaw having been tried and found guilty of said offense in Municipal court on Oct. 18, 1922.

Section 3, We believe he is responsible for the general laxity in the enforcement of laws against the manufacture and sale of liquor and against gambling and other immoral vices in the City of Fort Smith.

Section 4, We believe he has shown a general inability or indisposition to administer the affairs of the city efficiently.

WHEREFORE we respectfully petition the Clerk and Board of Commissioners respectively, to proceed in the manner prescribed by law to remove the said mayor and arrange for the election of his successor, this February—1923.

It could not be learned who is the sponsor or sponsors of the petition, nor when it is planned to [be filed] with the city clerk, but it is reported that it already had been signed by several hundred persons.

Friday, February 16, 1923

**MY ADMINISTRATION HAS SAVED
THOUSANDS IN TAXES—MAYOR BOURLAND**

Mayor Fagan Bourland, in regards to the allegations contained in a petition now being circulated asking for his removal from office, and the election of a successor, made the following statement to a representative of the *Southwest American*.

"What do the people of Fort Smith call a general

inability or indisposition to administer the affairs of the city efficiently, as charged in the petition? Since I entered office two years ago, thousands of dollars have been saved taxpayers in the city. Records show the police force to be more active than ever before and yet the petition charges inefficiency, I am told.

"Take for instance today; A contract was signed for improving the Fort Smith waterworks at a cost of \$12,500, only as a result of my arguing for thirty minutes with the engineer to lower the cost from the original bid of \$15,000. Within one-half of an hour, I saved the city more than a year's salary as mayor, yet this is 'general inability or indisposition to administer the affairs of the city efficiently,'" he added.

"Another example," continued Mayor Bourland, "is the merger of Fort Smith water districts. I do not take all the glory for putting this project over, but I do take credit for supplying much of the push that made the merger possible.

"Before the consolidation of the districts, property owners were paying one dollar taxes where now they are [now] paying less than five cents or four and three-tenths cents. Last year one property owner paid \$194.04 when previously his taxes in the water district would have been \$295.50. Records which are open to the public at all times in the courthouse show these figures to be an absolute fact.

"As for the howl about the \$35 allowance to city officials, which includes the mayor, commissioners, city engineer, city plumbing inspector, and the city electrical inspector, that allowance was granted by an ordinance passed some ten or twelve years ago.

"The money, which is mostly allowed for the upkeep of cars to be used in performing the duties of the office, is not as much as is necessary.

"Furthermore, if I stay in office the city of Fort Smith is going to buy [this office] a car because I do not propose to continue to use my \$5,500 automobile in riding around conducting the duties of mayor," concluded the Mayor.

ORANGOUTANG JACK GIVES COURT TREAT TO MANDOLIN MELODY

Municipal court was called to order Thursday afternoon by Judge L. F. Fishback, while the strains of music yet hovered within the room, following a mandolin concert given by Elmer Branson, better known to the "restless fraternity" as Orangoutang Jack, who was present for the express purpose of answering to a charge of being drunk.

Orangoutang Jack, a master of the mandolin, played more [songs] at the request of Judge Fishback,

who told him that he understood he was pretty good with a mandolin. By way of answer, the wanderer, who held his mandolin tenderly under his arm, quickly swung the instrument to a position of "play" and the snappy notes of "Three O'Clock In The Morning" permeated the room and the corridors, drawing a crowd to the door.

With the finish of the lively [song], the player's thoughts turned perhaps to his boyhood days on the farm near Oswego, Kansas, and he played softly "Tuck Me To Sleep In My Old Kentucky Home."

He was arraigned and did not deny that he had been intoxicated, and was fined \$15. He will spend fifteen days in the city jail in default of payment of the fine.

After court, Jack sauntered leisurely out of the courtroom, in the custody of an officer, on his way back to jail. As he descended the stairs, the soft plaintive notes of "Leave me With A Smile," were heard terminating with the player's favorite chant: "My Name is Orangoutang Jack, I'm just down from Heaven and now I'm going back."

SUDDEN REFORM WAVE PUZZLING UNINITIATED

Sudden and mysterious closing down of two leading gambling places in Fort Smith and the simultaneous exit of women from hotels and rooming houses of the city to other quarters or to other cities in the past two weeks has caused considerable quiet comment on the streets, cafes and other public places of the city.

"How come this reform wave?" a man asked his companion in a café yesterday. "Search me, but she's sure being closed up tight and all of a sudden," came the answer, and then the talk became general concerning alleged vice conditions said to have existed in the city, apparently without fear of being molested by authorities or other arms of the law.

Yesterday afternoon the northbound Kansas City Southern had for its passengers, four women who for the past year have been "guests" in two downtown hotels.

In bidding friends good-bye, one was heard to say, "We'll be back, when things quiet down a bit. Kay See may be a bit cold, but it is going to be too warm here in Fort Smith for some time."

Efforts, on the part of a reporter of the *Southwest American*, to ascertain the "why and wherefore" of the said change in alleged conditions, proved futile.

Sunday, February 18, 1923

BOSTON STORE TO DISPLAY SPRING FASHIONS ON LIVING MODELS MONDAY

Introducing an innovation in the Fort Smith field, the Boston Store will, on Monday, display the new in spring wearing apparel for maid and matron on living models. The idea of the management of the store is to permit their patrons to purchase garments just as the buyers themselves do after viewing them first on living models. It is not a fashion revue, where the models will show only certain garments, but a display in which the models will wear the garments requested to be shown, permitting Fort Smith maids and matrons the same privileges given the buyers in the east.

Friday, March 16, 1923

TO FIX TIME LIMIT FOR PARKING AUTOS ALONG AVENUE CURB

An ordinance, to fix a two-hour limit for parking automobiles on Garrison avenue between Fifth and Eleventh streets, will be ready for consideration at the regular meeting of the city commission this afternoon, according to statement made yesterday by Mayor Fagan Bourland.

Friday, March 23, 1923

REFUSES LICENSES TO ROOMING HOUSES ON NORTH FIRST ST

Licenses to operate three rooming houses on North First street were refused by Dr. R. F. Parks, district health officer when application was made yesterday by the owners, S. B. Barnhardt, Bertha Dean and Ella Scott. The houses will be closed April 1, when the 1923 licenses expire, unless the city commission reverses the decision of the district health officer.

Saturday, March 24, 1923

VETERAN CITIZEN SUFFERS IN FALL

X-ray pictures are being made of J. C. Irvin, eighty year old resident of this city, who suffered injuries when he slipped while attending a theatre Thursday evening and fell to the pavement. Mr. Irvin is a patient at St.



Boston Store
Presents the Authentic Styles in
New
Spring Fashions
Suits, Wraps, Frocks, Millinery,
Shoes and Accessories
in the
Spring Opening
Tuesday, March Thirteenth
A Very Comprehensive Display of

- The Newest Frocks for Streets, Afternoon and Evening Wear
- The Last Word in Sports Suits, Coats, Skirts and Sweaters.
- Daintiest Accessories — Gloves, Neckwear, Jewelry, Handkerchiefs.
- The New Shades and Styles in Shoes
- Millinery for Every Occasion.

We are Co-operating with Other Fort Smith Merchants in the Style Show at Joie Theatre, Tuesday and Wednesday, March Thirteenth and Fourteenth

John's hospital, where he was taken following the accident. No bones were broken but he suffered a severe shock and numerous abrasions, and these pictures are being made to determine the extent of the injuries.

Mr. Irvin is well known here. For more than thirty years he filled the position of toll keeper on the Missouri Pacific bridge, until the building of the new free bridge eliminated the need for a keeper.

Friday, April 6, 1923

NO MORE PLACARDS ON CAR PLATFORMS

If you happened to notice lately that Fort Smith street cars are not carrying on their front dashboards, placards announcing one thing or another, you probably paid no attention to the change, nor wondered if there is a reason. And, there is a reason, amply sufficient, in the opinion of the Fort Smith Light and Traction company.

Just a little while ago, the city commission adopted

an amended and extended privilege tax law. Soon thereafter the traction company was notified that a tax of \$2.50 per car had been levied on all street cars which carried advertising placards on the dashboards, the carrying of such placards being considered as putting the street cars in the same class as billboards.

Immediately upon receipt of the notification, Manager D. C. Green, of the traction company, issued orders that no such placards should be carried on any of the cars, as the company does not desire to be held liable for the tax, nor does it want to pay the tax.

"We have been advertising our own products or the things we ourselves sell," said Manager Green. "We have been advertising also, from time to time, baseball games, circus performances, carnivals, or other events, principally benefit affairs, and for none of this have we received any compensation, the company doing it only to help along worthy causes. But if we are going to be called upon to pay a tax for doing this, we will stop doing it. And we have already stopped."

Wednesday, April 11, 1923

OLD DOBBIN ENDS WORRISOME CAREER AT FILLING STATION

It was just too much for Old Dobbin.

Of course, automobiles are getting more and more common every day in rural sections as in the city. But to have automobile filling stations built right in what used to be the best part of a fine pasture—just where

the softest, sweetest, juiciest grass could be found—that was going just too far. It was just naturally heart-breaking, that's what it was.

And so, poor Old Dobbin just decided there was no further use in living and laid himself down, and passed into the place where dead horses go.

It happened across the river near the end of the new free bridge. And yesterday the owners of the filling station, just established, paid a couple of men to haul away Old Dobbin's carcass.

Friday, April 13, 1923

RAMSEY WILL ACCEPT POST WITH SCHOOLS OF FORT SMITH

J. W. Ramsey, superintendent of schools at Helena, Ark., has been offered the position of superintendent of schools of Fort Smith and has accepted. He will succeed Clyde J. Tidwell, who retires June 1 to accept the position of publications and purchasing agent for Columbia University at New York.

Mr. Ramsey was in the city Wednesday and attended the executive called session of the school board Wednesday night when, it is understood, the matter was definitely settled. His name had been presented to the board previously by Mr. Tidwell, it is understood, and he left for his home Wednesday night.

Members of the school board have made no announcement of the selection of Mr. Ramsey, beyond admitting that a superintendent had been selected, whose name would be announced officially Saturday. It was not explained why the name was being withheld until that date. Mr. Ramsey is not a stranger in Fort Smith, and the news of his selection leaked out through some of his personal friends.

Mr. Ramsey is one of the best known school leaders in the state, and just at this time is president of the Arkansas Interscholastic Athletic association, whose annual contests are to be staged at Pine Bluff next month. He is expected to be here in time to take over Mr. Tidwell's duties when the latter leaves for New York.

Saturday, April 21, 1923

AMUSEMENT PARK NAMED "JOYLAND" TO OPEN APRIL 29 ACROSS THE RIVER

That Fort Smith will have one of the finest amusement parks in the southwest is the declaration of

Use --



Everybody's Favorite

FORT SMITH COFFEE CO.
17 North 2nd St. Phone 2771



J. L. Landes, manager of the new Joyland Park, just over the bridge in Oklahoma.

The opening of the new amusement park has been announced for Sunday, April 29 and preparations are being made to make this one of the biggest days of the year.

Besides the special attractions which will play Joyland from time to time during the season, Joyland will have

three "rides," ten high end concessions, a fine dancing pavilion and, as soon as the weather permits, bathing and boating.

The original "Footwarmers" jazz orchestra has been engaged to furnish the music for the dancing. The Footwarmers comes here from Okmulgee Oklahoma, where they have been playing during the winter at the hippodrome. Last summer this organization was playing on one of the largest excursion boats on the Mississippi river.

Manager Landes has spent more than twenty years in the amusement business and has a nationwide reputation for giving people only the highest class entertainment.

Joyland has no connection with any other amusement place across the bridge. None of the attractions, not even the dancing pavilion, has ever been open before.

"I am going to give the people of Fort Smith an amusement park that they will be proud of—I know that to make a success of this venture I must have the support of the best people, and it is to those people that we will cater" declared Mr. Landes. "If we cannot succeed by having clean, wholesome amusement, then we will close down."

COFFIN FACTORY BUILDING ANNEX

Construction of a three story brick addition to the Fort Smith Coffin company's plant at South Fort Smith is well under way and when the building is completed, it will increase the company's quarters to approximately twice its present size, according to J. D.

Matlock, president of that organization.

Approximately 30,600 square feet of factory space will be available as a result of the addition to the coffin factory, each of the three floors covering an area of more than 10,000 square feet.

The present headquarters of the Fort Smith Coffin company were constructed about four years ago and since that time the business of the company has increased so rapidly that additional factory space was found necessary, Mr. Matlock said.

Sunday, April 22, 1923

CITY STOPS ALL HAULING OF GARBAGE

Holding that the city dump, located on the banks of the Arkansas river, not only is a private nuisance, as alleged by the plaintiff in the case of Bertha Dean versus the city of Fort Smith, in her petition for an injunction forbidding the city from dumping garbage on the dump near her property, but also is a public nuisance, Chancellor J. V. Bourland yesterday granted the petition of injunction.

The court not only ordered that the city discontinue its practice of dumping garbage at that point, but ordered that the dump be removed by the city, and stated that the sheriff would be instructed to see that the city moved the dump as quickly as possible.

FORT SMITH BRICK COMPANY MERGES WITH ACME COMPANY— PLANT TO INCREASE CAPACITY

Merger of the Fort Smith Brick company and the Acme Brick company of Fort Worth, Texas, effective immediately, was announced yesterday by W. R. Bennett, president of Acme company who arrived in Fort Smith Saturday morning to complete the transaction. The plant will be operated under the Acme Brick company firm name.

Friday, April 27, 1923

NEW CITY DUMP SITE IS APPROVED— TO BEGIN HAULING GARBAGE MONDAY

Petition for modification of the injunction governing the dumping of garbage by the city was granted by Chancellor J. V. Bourland yesterday, and following a favorable report of the special commission, composed of local physicians, the court issued an order

permitting the city to dump garbage and refuse near the mouth of the big sewer, about one-half mile northwest of the factory district.

The permit is for ninety days, during which period the city expects to complete the installation of an incinerator plant for burning garbage and refuse.

Sunday, April 29, 1923

NEW CHAIN STORE WILL BE OPENED BY PENNEY HERE

J. C. Penney & Co., of New York City, operating a chain of 375 stores, will establish their first store in Arkansas when they occupy 1104-1106 Garrison avenue, the Browne building, in July next. The deal for a five-year lease on the Fort Smith location was closed Saturday, according to announcement made by Fred Browne, owner of the building.

Penney and company are said to handle all sorts of merchandise, except hardware, groceries and furniture, and cater to men, women and children to the clothing, ready-to-wear and dress goods lines, shoes, etc.

The representative of the Penney company was recently in Fort Smith investigating local conditions and considering the future outlook for business here. He decided Fort Smith had splendid prospects for future growth and opened negotiations with Mr. Browne for a location. It is likely that stores will also be established in Russellville and Little Rock and other Arkansas towns, where there are available locations and business prospects look good.

The Browne building will be remodeled to some extent to suit the new tenants, the two store rooms being merged into one. The lease is dated five years from July 1.

Tuesday, May 1, 1923

CITY SCHOOLS RETAIN ONLY THREE R'S— HIGH CURRICULUM IS SLASHED— GRADE SUPERVISORS ARE OUT— NO ATHLETICS NEXT SESSION

According to letters sent to teachers in various departments of the city schools and especially the high schools, the school board has definitely and formally decided to eliminate from the curriculum for next year the following:

- ❖ Domestic Science,

- ❖ Foreign Languages,
- ❖ Industrial Arts,
- ❖ Physical education, including all athletics,
- ❖ Auditorium work,
- ❖ Laboratory work

All grade supervisors, including supervisor of music, supervisor of art, supervisor of athletics.

In addition, all salaries of faculty members, teachers, janitors and other employees will be cut 10 percent from the present term basis.

Enquiry among high school teachers Sunday and yesterday indicates that quite a number of present members of the faculty will not return to Fort Smith next year if they can get contracts elsewhere—and a score or more, it was indicated, already have under consideration contracts from other cities.

Members of high school classes have been informed there will be no electives, no library, no science offered at the school next year. No literary societies, no debating societies, no baseball, no football, for the High school year, has created much excitement but little enthusiasm among the 1400 students there.

The high school students have been informed that the following are the only courses to be available at the high schools next session.

- ❖ Seventh grade—English, hygiene, mathematics, history

- ❖ Eight grade—English, general science, mathematics, history

- ❖ Ninth grade—English, Latin, mathematics, social science

- ❖ Tenth grade—English, Latin, mathematics, social science

- ❖ Eleventh grade—English, Latin, mathematics, social science

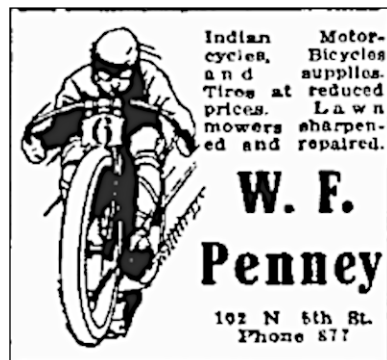
- ❖ Twelfth grade—English, Latin, mathematics, social science

The requirements for graduation, the high school students have been informed, will be as follows:

Six years of English, six years of social science,

four years of Latin and six years of mathematics.

The school board has issued no announcement of its plans following the meeting Friday night, in executive session, when members of the



board discussed the teaching organization and other plans for next school year.

There has been considerable discussion in all parts of the city, among people of all classes, over the fact that the school board has reduced the salaries of teachers of all schools and in addition has eliminated all except five courses at the high school. It had been the general belief that with the passage of the 5-mill special tax petitions, the school board would have been able to maintain the greater part of the school system, this belief having been created by the extensive propaganda issued in support in support of the 5-mill tax petitions.

ORPHANAGE TOTS ARE ENTERTAINED AT NEW "JOYLAND"

Children of the orphanage were entertained with a parade and trip to the opening of Joyland Park Sunday afternoon, when John B. Williams placed his band, chariot, and aggregation of [unreadable] to the disposal of [the] number.

The breezy little procession was outfitted and started from the One-One-One barn, led off by the band chariot, drawn by nicely groomed Arabian white horses and followed by children mounted on animals caparisoned in ranch style. Some of the riders carried monkeys and other pets, the pageant proving a wholesome and enjoyable recreation for those to whom unusual entertainments are rare.

Thursday, May 3, 1923

ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING CENSORSHIP OF MOVING PICTURES IS ADOPTED BY COUNCIL—MAYOR ONE-MAN COMMITTEE

A motion to draw up an ordinance making the mayor of the city official censor of moving picture shows in the city, with powers to order abated any show deemed by him to be objectionable, and to order theatre officials to appear in court, was unanimously passed by the city council at its regular meeting yesterday afternoon. The city attorney was instructed to draw up such an ordinance and present it to the commission at its next meeting, or as soon thereafter as possible.

With such an ordinance in effect, it was stated, it will not be necessary for a special committee to be formed for the purpose of viewing a picture before any action is taken. However, the mayor may summon other persons to serve with him as a committee if he so desires.

A petition signed by about thirty persons was read at the meeting asking that the chicken limits of the city be extended several blocks beyond the present boundary. The commission acted on the matter by ordering an ordinance drawn to extend the chicken limits to include all of the city within corporate limits.

On motion of Commissioner M. J. Miller, the council passed a resolution requesting D. C. Green, general manager of the traction company, to furnish the council with a written copy of his plans for handling traffic on the Eleventh street car line when the company substitutes one-man cars for the present cars.

Commissioner Miller stated that it was not clear in his mind, just how the company expected to handle the traffic with regards to the Jim Crowe law. Probably more negroes ride on the Eleventh street line than any other line in the city, Mr. Miller said, and he believed that it was the commission's duty to ascertain the company's plans regarding the matter, that there might not be any trouble later on resultant from carrying of whites and negroes in the same car, the car having only one door for entrance and exit. The one-man cars will go into service on this line about the middle of May, it is understood, and the commission will request Mr. Green to furnish them with a report not later than the next regular meeting.

**Voters of Fort Smith:
RECALL ELECTION
Thursday, May 17th**

To determine whether or not I will be permitted to serve the taxpayers of our city for the remaining two years of my term.

Three times have I been elected to this office. During the first two years of my present term several hundred thousand dollars worth of public improvements have been undertaken.

Will I be permitted to complete my term in office and see that these improvements are completed like they should be?

Your vote Thursday will decide.

FAGAN BOURLAND

Vote Against the Recall!

(Printed 4-17-23)

Sunday, May 6, 1923

**WHOLESALE SHOE HOUSE HERE CITY'S
LATEST DEVELOPMENT—FORT SMITH
IDEAL LOCATION DECLARE HUTCHESON
BROTHERS**

Fort Smith's first wholesale shoe house, owned and operated by W. L. Hutcheson and O. L. Hutcheson, brothers, will be formally opened for business at 201 Garrison Avenue, Monday. The new establishment is one of the largest wholesale shoe distribution centers in this section and will be exclusive distributors of a very high grade [and] make of shoes.

Friday, May 11, 1923

**CITY MAY MOTORIZE SANITARY
EQUIPMENT**

The change in location of the city dump, from a site near the Free Bridge, to a point nearly a mile distant from the center of the city, officials have decided, will require that steps be taken to move the garbage the greater distance, in the same length of time that it has been moved a much shorter distance, heretofore.

At present the department is equipped with horse-drawn garbage vehicles, which were able to keep the city clear of garbage, hauling it the short distance to the old city dump. By equipping the department with motor trucks, and the building of a new road from Sixth street across the Missouri Pacific and Frisco tracks, to connect with the new road being constructed leading to the new dump and the incinerator site, much time will be saved officials believe.

Sunday, May 13, 1923

**GOAT RIDES BECOME POPULAR WITH
YOUNGSTERS AT JOYLAND**

The goat ride for the kiddies is one of the main amusement attractions at Joyland Park, located on the Oklahoma side of the Million Dollar Free Bridge.

More than a dozen trained gentle goats, ready to take their turn around the goat track, stand hitched every afternoon and night to the two wheel carts, just large enough to accommodate two kiddies. The track is fenced off, and when the little ones take hold of the reins, off they go, with no chance of accident.

The goat ride is a new form of pleasure for the

children and has become most popular in the few days that Joyland Park has been opened.

The Merry-Go-Round is another popular amusement. Every circus and carnival in the country charges ten cents a ride for the Merry-go-round, but at Joyland Park, the kiddies, and grownups too, get a long ride for one nickel.

Dancing every evening has met with fine reception. The original Footwarmers Orchestra, from the Hippodrome at Okmulgee has been employed to play every evening and Sundays. A well constructed pavilion, with excellent floors, located right on the banks of the river, where you are kept cool by the fresh river breezes, provides an outdoor dancing pavilion unequalled in this section.

Manager J. L. Landis, stated Saturday that Joyland Park was not affiliated in any way, with any other dancing pavilion or park. Many people have been



Sporting Goods

Of Every Description on Sale at Very Reasonable Prices

Base Ball Uniforms: \$5.00 up

Boxing Gloves, Camp Cook Stoves, Fishin' Tackle, of the highest grade. All kinds in stock.

We are making a special reduction to Tennis Clubs on complete outfits. Get our prices.

In fact we have on hand the largest stock of sporting goods ever carried in Fort Smith for retail trade.



*SPALDING CATALOGUE
FREE

R. B. David Company

909 GARRISON AVE.

PHONE 349

under the impression that Joyland was affiliated with other interests on the Oklahoma side of the free bridge, but I desire to correct that impression, Joyland is owned outright by my brother and myself, and while we have charge of it, [it] will be operated as a high class amusement park.

Automobiles leave the Hotel Main at regular intervals for Joyland Park, providing transportation for those who do not own an automobile.

Friday, May 18, 1923

BOURLAND IS OUSTED AS MAYOR

Fagan Bourland, three times elected mayor of the city of Fort Smith, was recalled from that office yesterday by the vote of the city's electors, the petition for his recall being supported by a majority of 658 votes, out of a total of 2,816 votes cast. For recall, 1,737 ballots were cast; against recall 1,079 ballots were deposited in the boxes.

Thursday, May 24, 1923

GEORGE RYE'S HAT IN RING FOR MAYOR—PETITION IS FILED

A petition announcing himself as candidate for mayor of Fort Smith, to succeed Fagan Bourland, was filed by George Rye, florist, at the office of City Clerk James F. McGraw yesterday. The petition bears the signatures of approximately 125 persons.

Tuesday, May 29, 1923

CONTRACT TO INSTALL ELECTRIC STREET MARKERS AND SAFETY ZONE GUIDES LET BY CITY COMMISSION—TO COST \$1,100

Contract for the installation of electric markers for street intersections and markers for safety zones, along Garrison Avenue was let to the Fort Smith Electric Company yesterday by the city commission. The electrical contract was for \$683 and the cable and other parts of the markers will be installed when the paving is laid.

The markers will consist of heavy glass of oval contour, protruding above the level of the paving and discernible to motorists from all directions. They will

be placed in the center of Garrison Avenue at the intersection of each street from Fourth to Eleventh streets. There will be eight traffic guides and 38 safety zone markers.

The safety zone markers will be of iron, imbedded in the pavement, at each corner of the safety zones, for passengers boarding or alighting from street cars. The total cost of both markers and guides will be about \$1,100.

Tuesday, June 5, 1923

INFANT CHILD BRUTALLY BEATEN— JESS LITTLE PLACED UNDER BOND TO AWAIT HEARING IN CRAWFORD ON CHARGE OF ASSAULT TO KILL

Jess Little, who lives in Crawford County near Dora and close to the Oklahoma line, is under \$500 bond in Crawford county on a charge of assault with intent to kill and is awaiting preliminary examination, probably before Justice of the Peace J. F. Roberts, of Dora township.

Little is charged with having so brutally beaten the 14-months-old son of Mrs. C. McAfee, that physicians at first believed the child would die from his hurts. Last night the physicians declared the child will recover.

Real Old Fashioned Indian Ball

Played by Full Blooded Indians
in old Fashion Regalia

Today 3:30 o'clock
Andrews Field

Sunday, 3:30 o'clock
Alexander Field

Regular Admission

This game is played with sticks and ball used similar to a tennis ball. If you want to see real thrilling sport, see these Indians play. They are on their way to New York, stopping off here for two games.

Osage Amusement Co.
Of Oklahoma

The baby was brought to the Welfare building by its mother and a resident of Coke Hill Sunday afternoon. According to the mother, the child was sitting at the table in the kitchen in the home of Jess Little, for whom she was housekeeper, when the baby spilled hot coffee on his arm, which caused him to scream.

This seemed to anger Little, who seized the child and beat him with a big comb until his thighs were black and blue, the mother said. The baby's head also showed marks of the beating. The child was unconscious when brought to the Welfare Building.

The mother said she rushed off with the child. It has not been learned how she came from Crawford county to Coke Hill, where she sought refuge, and it was with a resident of this section of the city that she came to the Welfare building to seek aid.

Dr. R. F. Parks, county health officer, was summoned and treated the baby.

Almost continuously all through Sunday afternoon and evening hot packs were applied to the little fellow's body, to reduce the inflammation and discolorations and to relieve the pain from which he suffered.

At first, it was thought the child had been injured internally, because of marking on his chest.

Little is well known in police circles, it was said last night by officers. Some years ago he was charged with having killed a man and more recently he has been in the hands of authorities here and in Oklahoma for less serious matters. Much indignation was expressed in Van Buren yesterday, when the residents of the Crawford county capital, learned of the beating administered the baby.

Tuesday, June 13, 1923

FORD LEADS FOR MAYOR— LIGHT VOTE POLLED HERE

David Ford and George Rye will be candidates for mayor at the election to be held June 26, having made a runaway race of it in the elimination primaries conducted yesterday.

An unexpectedly light vote was cast in yesterday's primary, only 2120 votes being polled. Ford obtained more than three times as many votes as his three opponents; Rye, Lawrence and Jones. The total vote for each man was as follows: Ford 1593, Rye 447, Lawrence 68, and Jones 12.

Ford carried every voting place in the city, with

Rye coming close behind. Jones failed to obtain a single vote in the entire third ward—and he failed to get a vote in precinct one of ward four. Jones highest vote came in the second precinct of the second ward, when four ballots were cast for him.

Friday, June 22, 1923

PICKWICK COMPANY BUYS OUT DURDEN'S—TO USE YELLOW CABS

A most conspicuous thing around town is the yellow cab. There are four now, and four more brilliant yellow ones are expected soon. These are owned by the Fort Smith branch of the Pickwick company, which will be known as the Fort Smith Yellow Cab company.


Regulation meters will be used on the cabs, which will ensure the customer fair treatment and prevent haggling over charges.

The Pickwick Yellow Cab company bought out the Fort Smith Taxi and Baggage company Wednesday, according to the announcement Thursday of R. A. Staton, manager of the Pickwick company.

The local manager will be Rodney Walton of Springfield, Mo. Staton said the line would start operating here at once. The investment was made through the Landers investment company of Springfield.

Similar lines will probably be put in all sizeable towns in the southwest, and an attempt will be made to buy lines to centralize the company, where the Yellow Cab already is in operation.

The 22 cars formerly owned by the Fort Smith Taxi company, are to be sold and the equipment will be new, with the exception of the bus to the ball park and amusement park across the river.

SERVICE PLEASURE BUSINESS	TAXI-CABS Anywhere — Anytime	PARTIES WEDDINGS FUNERALS
	PHONES FORT SMITH 16 and 136	
HACOC	16 Yellow Light 16 and 136 Taxi-Cab Co. 136	
FIVE CAR SERVICE	12 Years experience in the Business. Reliable Chauffeurs Day and Night. Yellow Electric Sign Lights on Cars. Chauffeurs Wear Uniform Chauffeurs Caps	HAROLD A. GACHES, Manager OPPOSITE UNION STATION

Saturday, June 23, 1923

**BIG MEETING KU KLUX KLAN IS HELD
HERE**

Explosions of bombs at stated intervals, firing of skyrocketes, lighting of a giant fiery cross topped by an American flag and an automobile parade on Garrison avenue at midnight were the principal, outward and visible events of a big meeting of the Ku Klux Klan, held in a large pasture approximately a half mile southeast of the Athletic smelter in South Fort Smith last night.

All evening long, the several roads through South Fort Smith were choked with automobiles, those bearing Klansmen, being admitted to the pasture by white-robed and hooded guards. Sightseers lined all available parking spaces along the sides of the highways fringing the pastures.

The scene was weird and picturesque. Automobiles within the pasture were parked in seemingly orderly fashion in half-circles and late in the evening the headlights were turned on. A brilliant light illuminated the scene about the base of the big cross, but features were indistinguishable to those on the outside.

One of the participants of the affair, who said he spoke with authority, admitted there was a large initiation, but he said [that] should he give figures on the number of persons present, and the size of the class, his statement would be challenged as an exaggeration. He declared, however, the meeting was very satisfactory, from a Klan standpoint, [and] that there was a prominent speaker from national headquarters present, and that the organization continues to grow rapidly in numbers, both locally and nationally.

Wednesday, June 27, 1923

**FORD ELECTED MAYOR
BY MAJORITY OF 1300**

David L. Ford, attorney, today was elected mayor of Fort Smith over George Rye, florist, by a majority of 1300 votes cast. Ford's vote was 1824, Rye's was 524. Ford's election was generally conceded a Ku Klux Klan victory.

The election was held to fill the vacancy caused by the recent recall of Fagan Bourland. Ford and Rye were nominated at the non-partisan primary election, held June 12, when Ford obtained 1593 votes and Rye 447, the defeated candidates at the primary obtained the following: Lawrence 68, Jones 12.

**NOTICE
KLANSMEN**

**NATURALIZATION
FRIDAY NIGHT**

**BRING YOUR OVERCOAT
A VISITOR FROM AFAR**

**KNIGHTS OF KU KLUX KLAN
FORT SMITH KLAN 15
Realm of Arkansas.**

The new mayor will be inducted into office Monday. M. J. Miller, Commissioner No. 1, has been acting as mayor since the recall of Bourland.

Thursday, June 28, 1923

**ANONYMOUS ELECTION CIRCULAR
AROUSES IRE OF BUSINESS MEN WHO
CHARGE STATEMENTS FALSE AND
DAMAGING TO ENTIRE CITY**

Increased indignation was shown yesterday, over the distribution of the anonymous circulars Monday night, just before the city mayoral election, particularly because of the erroneous and damaging statements made in the circular about conditions now prevailing and which, it was said, would prevail in the immediate future if David Ford was elected mayor.

While large numbers of the circulars were distributed during Monday night, most of them went into the residence sections of the city, and there were many business men yesterday who had not [yet] seen a copy, and who sought opportunity to read for themselves the statements made in the circular. Many requests were made for copies of the circular, as well as of the circular letters mailed to the negro voters of the city, and when these were obtained, there were scores of the city's most prominent business and

professional men to publicly express their indignation at the circulation of such statements.

While much of the circular is devoted to a denunciation of the Ku Klux Klan, fully half of the circular is devoted to the statements bearing on Fort Smith's alleged [unreadable] condition and the horrible conditions which the circular declares will follow Ford's election.

This part of the circular says:

Shall the Ku Klux Klan rule and run Fort Smith?

Fort Smith is in the throes of a panic. The [unreadable] of your city are at stake. Municipal improvements will have to be abandoned; Loan companies are threatening to withdraw their money from your city, which is used for building homes. Many workmen will lose their jobs.

Voters, you can save your city by voting against David L. Ford, the Ku Klux candidate for Mayor.

Never in its history has Fort Smith been in such a dangerous position.

Your city has been torn asunder by the actions of a secret organization known as the Ku Klux Klan. This organization is bent on controlling the political affairs of your city. In its ranks are a number of disappointed office seekers, who want to get even with someone, and seek to put in office incompetent men to govern your city.

The Ku Klux [Klan] have used every means to gain these offices. They have stirred up religious and racial prejudices in your city; something that was never done in all the history of Fort Smith.

The Serpent spreads its poison.

Extensive improvements were being worked out for your city, and [just] at a time we were to see them put into motion, along comes a serpent, the Ku Klux Klan, and injects its poison into the community. This serpent has caused lifelong friends to become enemies. This serpent has caused business to suffer; and money for the support of your city government and loan improvements will not be forthcoming, because the financial institutions will not [unreadable], while the city is contaminated by this serpent.

Ford is [the] Ku Klux candidate for mayor.

David L. Ford has lived in your city about two years. Now, Mr. Voter, do you think he understands the needs of the city during his short sojourn here?

It seems to be a [unreadable] with the Ku Klux Klan to pick up strangers to fill your city offices. Why should Fort Smith be the dumping ground for the cast off politicians, from other communities?

The city of Fort Smith, your city, will soon face

the necessity of securing funds to run its affairs.

The prediction has been made, by those who are competent to judge, that in the event a Ku Klux mayor is elected, your city will be on a scrip basis in thirty days. This scrip will only be worth 60 cents on the dollar and will mean that every person who works in the city, will lose 40 cents of every dollar he earns.

The reason for the city going on a scrip basis, will be because financial concerns are not going to assist Ku Klux officials, in carrying out their program, which is detrimental for all classes of business in our city.

MANY KLANS REPRESENTED AT MEET HERE

Approximately sixty heads of klans in cities and towns in western Arkansas, in territory extending from the Louisiana line to the Missouri line, met in Fort Smith yesterday, under the chairmanship of J. A. Comer of Little Rock, grand dragon for the state.

After the meeting, Judge Comer declared it was merely a "get together" affair, to allow the heads of the klans to get better acquainted, to discuss [the] ways and means and consider the good of the order. Delegates to the meeting adjourned to their homes last night.

Friday, June 29, 1923

NEGROES SAY CIRCULAR LETTER WAS OVERT ATTEMPT TO AROUSE ANTAGONISM BETWEEN RACES

Although no effort has yet been made, to ascertain the identity of the author of the anonymous election circulars, distributed in the residence sections of the city Monday night, or the anonymous printed circular letter, sent through the mails to colored voters, the belief is expressed that there will be little difficulty in this respect, because of the fact that the circular and the circular letter both carried the label-imprint of the international typographical union.

There are only four or five printing establishments in Fort Smith which may use this label, and the proprietors of these shops will be forced to divulge the identity of the man or men who ordered the printing done, or to face the courts themselves for violation of the state corrupt practices act.

Prosecuting Attorney Sam Wood is busy this week in the trial of criminal cases in circuit court, and because of this fact, has not been able to make any investigation into the circulation of these anonymous circulars. It is confidently believed that when the next

grand jury is convened, the matter will be the subject of a full and complete probe, and because of the apparent plain violation of the letter and spirit of the law, disinterested citizens yesterday expressed the belief that indictments will follow.

Colored voters who are leaders among their race, have openly expressed their indignation at the wording of the circular letter distributed among the colored people, declaring it to be an overt attempt to stir up race antagonism, which does not now exist in Fort Smith, nor has it been noticeable here for many years past.

The letter to the negro voters read[s] as follows:

TO THE COLORED VOTER—As long as YOU, or anyone else obey the laws and pay your taxes, are you not then a 100 percent American?

The Ku Klux Klan says YOU ARE NOT a 100 percent American, even if YOU obey the law and pay your taxes.

Then, can you vote for the Ku Klux candidate for Mayor?

If YOU will do your duty, you will go to the polls on Tuesday and vote against the Ku Klux. If you will do this the Ku Klux will be buried so deep that it will be impossible to even hear of them anymore, even through a first-class wireless.

Go to the polls Tuesday and cast your 100 percent vote for GEORGE RYE who is a PROPERTY OWNER. RYE-for-MAYOR-COMMITTEE" (Union

Typographical label)

Saturday, June 30, 1923

OLD TOWN BRANCH TO BE FILLED IF CITY COMMISSION APPROVES

The old town branch, in the Fort Smith factory district, will be filled in immediately and converted into valuable factory sites, providing the city commission approves action taken yesterday by the district health board. Harry C. Pratt, representing factory interests, presented the matter before the health board. Filling in the branch, will reclaim at least three acres of valuable land, it was said.

The city commission must agree to make an opening in the sewer, on the south side of the branch, before the work can actually proceed, according to the health board's ruling on the proposition.



Al Whitson is the editor of the Journal's long-standing feature of reprinted articles, photos, and advertisements from 100 years ago about Fort Smith, a city and a history to which Al is dedicated and serves well.

Letters from Readers of the *Journal*

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

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

Send to:

Managing editors
The Journal of the Fort Smith Historical Society
PO Box 3676
Fort Smith, AR 72913-3676

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- NOTES:** # — Some sort of graphic, other than a portrait, is used.
 * — A portrait of the person(s) named is on the 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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Arkansas Freedmen of the Frontier—The African-American experience in northwest Arkansas is chronicled here.

Arkansas Historical Association—This association promotes the preservation, writing, publishing, teaching, and understanding of Arkansas history through the publication of *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* as well as other activities.

Arkansas History Commission & State Archives—The commission is one of the oldest existing state agencies in the Natural State and Arkansas' official state archives.

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.

Center for Local History and Memory—This center 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 info on Arkansas' participating in the 150th anniversary of our nation's struggle with itself.

The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture—The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History project is proud to present these entries.

Fort Smith Trolley Museum—For more than twenty years, the 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—This museum 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 Regional Airport, the museum is a treasure trove of facts and artifacts that tell the story of Fort Smith's aviation history.

Historic Fort Smith—Contains general info about Fort Smith history, heritage tourism in the city, and links to other sites.

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

Old State House Museum of Arkansas History—Set in the oldest surviving state Capitol west of the Mississippi, it houses a museum of state history with a special emphasis on women's history, political history and special programming for kids.

Richard C. Butler Center for Arkansas Studies—The center proudly presents what it hopes will one day be the premier online resource for historical information related to Arkansas.

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

Wikipedia Entry for Fort Smith—This online, user-created encyclopedia has a descriptive entry about the largest city in Western Arkansas.



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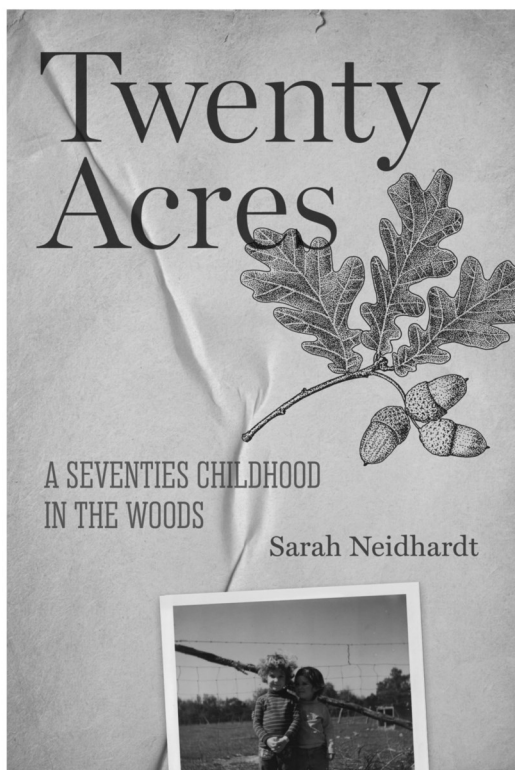
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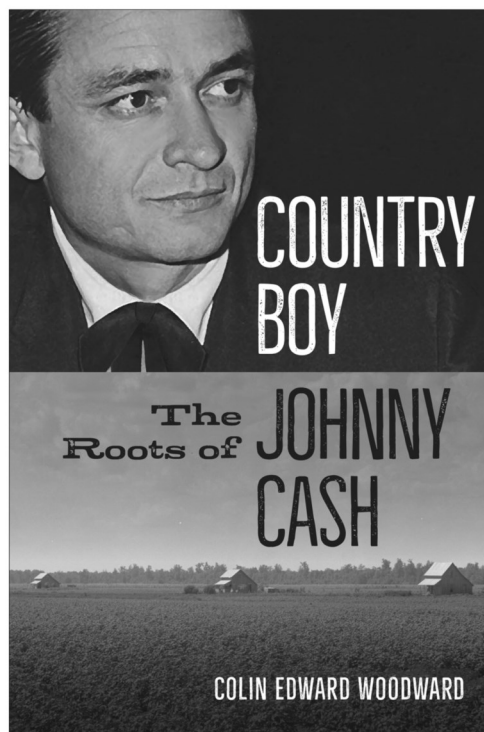
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