

Out of the Attic
by Phelps County Hist. Soc.

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OUT OF THE ATTIC



Phelps County
Historical Society

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A collection of historical sketches gleaned by
members of the Phelps County Historical Society
from early newspapers (and other sources) as
published in the ROLLA DAILY NEWS.



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6-68 Shelby County Hist. Soc.

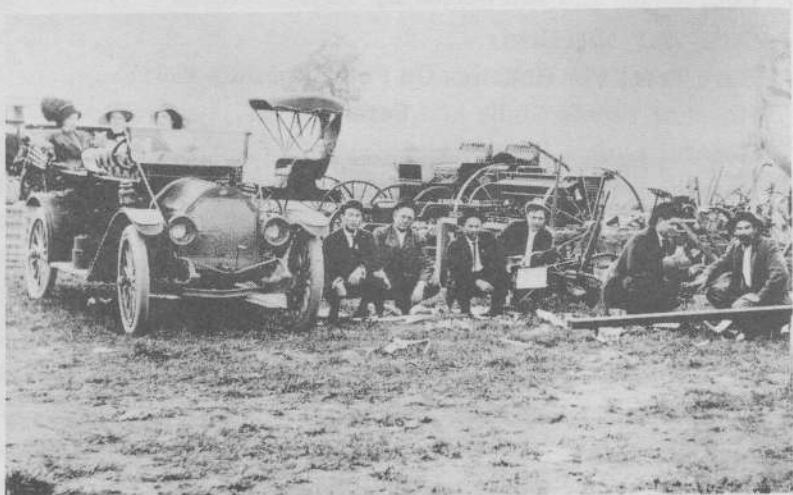
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Early St. James



Farm Machinery display of Schneider Bros. Tie and Timber Co. at early Rolla Fair. Is the first auto in St. James, 1905 Overland. Ladies (l-r) Mrs. John F. Schneider, Miss Gertie Schneider and Mrs. Louis Schneider.

Maramec Iron Works Waste Books

September 5, 1826

Information Gathered and Compiled By Ford Hughes

"Recently we had the good fortune of examining the earliest known 'waste books' recorded at the fledgling Maramec Iron Works, dated September 5, 1826. 'Waste book' is a British term meaning 'day book' or daily transactions.

Even though the ozark land, mainly Phelps County, had been surveyed and base lines established, few settlers had found homes in this wild region of the Meramec River Valley.

The opening of the mine at Maramec Spring in 1826 gave rise to a movement of settlers to this area to either work at the mine and future iron furnaces, to make a living selling produce to the Maramec settlement, cutting timber or work for the new village.

The old waste books record numerous transactions made by settlers and workers for the Massey & James Iron Works.

Names appearing in the earliest accounts very closely resemble residents of today's Phelps County. Such names as George Waggoner purchased 1 pair of shoes—\$1.50; Abel and James Benton for 426½ bushels of corn paid \$142.16; Edward Wilson, ¾ yard of linen—29¢; George Cole 1¾ yards shirting—43¾¢. Other prices recorded are: tobacco—1 pound 25¢; ladies shoes—\$1.75 pair; tea 1 pound \$2.00. Another interesting

entry is "cutting out Potosi Road"—labor \$10.00; also 1 bushel of potatoes sold for 62½¢.

The old recording is quite indicative of the startling growth of this young land. The recordings were all made at the Massey and James Company store.

At first there seemed to have been little money changing hands; the conditions evidently were to trade produce for supplies or labor for supplies.

All goods in the company store were shipped by boat to St. Louis and near Ste. Genevieve and brought by wagon or mule train to the Maramec settlement.

The first roads of any consequence were wagon roads to mines by the way of farmsteads. Wagon roads existed in the most primitive fashion from St. Louis and south to Potosi.

Probably one of the most valuable reasons for keeping such historical records intact is the beginning names that appear and as the years of Maramec production progressed a marked increase in trade, production, people and settlements can be traced to their originations.

The Phelps County Historical Society has accumulated a fine early history in recordings such as the old "waste book" from a highly important, but almost forgotten era.

County Court at Dillon

November 25, 1857

Information Gathered and Compiled By Verna Lee Hayes

"In pursuance of an act of the General Assembly of the State of Missouri: Organizing the county of Phelps, the County Court of said county met at the residence of John A. Dillon in said county (the temporary seat of justice for said county) on the 25th day of November 1857. Present: the Honorable William C. York, the Honorable John Matlock and the Honorable Hiram Lane, justices of said county. Whereupon there being no sheriff, the court appointed Francis M. Wishon to act as sheriff for the time being when the court was regularly opened in due form when the following proceedings was had to wit . . . Lyle Singleton is by court appointed clerk of the County Court . . . and ordered to give bond with approved security in the sum of Five Thousand dollars. Lyle Singleton presents his bond . . . with J. A. Dillon, P. E. Hawkins, B. Wishon and G. H. Coppedge as securities which bond is by the court approved. The Honorable William C. York is by the court appointed presiding justice of this court for one year next ensuing.

"Tuesday morning, Nov. 26, 1857 — It is ordered that the regular terms of this court shall hereafter be held on the first Mondays in January, April, July, and October.

"January 4, 1858—The court proceed to district the county of Phelps . . . and lay off the

same into four districts Relfe township, Little Piney township, Johnson township, Hawkins township, Massey township, and Green township.

"Tuesday, January 5, 1858— Election judges, assessors, justices of the peace, and road justices were appointed for the various townships. Franklin Wishon was appointed treasurer and ordered to give bond in the sum of twenty thousand dollars. "The court proceed to lay off the different roads within the county of Phelps and number them respectively.

"Wednesday morning, Jan. 6, 1858 — Ordered the "clerk to keep his office at Little Prairie in Phelps County (this was the Flat area around Dillon) until otherwise ordered by the court." District road overseers were appointed. Lyle Singleton was appointed School commissioner to hold the office until a commissioner "is appointed and qualified.

"January 18, 1858 — Hiram Lane appointed president pro tem.

"January 19, 1858 — G. W. Brown authorized "to exercise the functions of an auctioneer in said County of Phelps.

"January 21, 1858—"took into consideration the report of the commissioners appointed to locate the county seat of Phelps County and find that said commissioners had located the coun-

ty seat at the residence of Harding & Bishop (who have donated fifty acres of land to the county for said county seat . . . which report is by the court approved.

"Feb. 8, 1858 — "Court convened at the Pacific Railroad office and on Feb. 9 appointed five commissioners to locate a county seat or seat of justice near the residence of John A. Dillon."

Grape Industry at Rosati Predicted 100 Years Ago

1859

Information Gathered and Compiled By William C. Hayes

In his geological report to the President and Directors of the South-West Branch of the Pacific Railroad (1859) Dr. G. C. Swallow, first State Geologist of Missouri, describes the mineral, agricultural, and other resources which may affect the value or income of the railroad.

Geological surveys were required of the state geologist along lines of all the railroads aided by the State by a legislative act of March 3, 1857.

Of particular local interest is Dr. Swallow's description of soils in Crawford, Phelps, and Pulaski counties and their adaptability to grape culture. He states that the soil is all that could be desired for their culture of the grape and that the slopes and ridges throughout central and southern Missouri "...occupying millions of acres, now deemed worthless, are in fact, by far the most valuable lands in this part of the State for the cultivation of the grape."

On page 21 we find some interesting predictions where he writes "...at least 5,000,000 acres might be selected in the most desirable localities, much of it on the line of the South-western Branch, and devoted to vineyards without encroaching upon the lands most desirable for other departments of agriculture. And, so far as we can

judge from the characteristics of soil and climate, and the indications of native vines, these 5,000,000 acres in the highlands of Southern Missouri, present rare inducements to the vine-dresser—such a combination of favorable circumstances as will not fail to attract the attention of those who would engage in this most pleasant and profitable department of husbandry. And so important will be the results, that every effort should be put forth to hasten the time when these 5,000,000* acres shall be covered with flourishing vineyards; giving profitable employment to 2,000,000 people; yielding more than 1,000,000,000 gallons of wine; and an annual profit, at the lowest estimate, of \$500,000,000. And, what is still more important, the pure nourishing juice of the grape would take the place of the vile, mad-dening compounds used in the names of wine and brandy; drunkenness would give place to sobriety; and our people, nourished by the grape and its pure wines, would become as robust and hardy as they are now daring and indomitable."

**France has about 5,000,000 acres in vineyards. They yield 925,000,000 gallons of wine, besides the 95,000,000 gallons distilled into brandy, and give profitable employment to 2,000,000 people mostly women & children.*

Rolla Express Is Named

Rolla Express

July 30, 1860

Information Gathered and Compiled By Verna Lee Hayes

C. P. Walker
Editor & Publisher

"With this number the Rolla edition of our paper appears with a new head, styled 'The Rolla Express'... This is the third number of the paper... The name was suggested to us by a friend who has taken a lively interest in the growth of Rolla and who seemed to manifest a solicitude in the welfare of the paper which should be established here... The movement of establishing our office in this place is not an entirely new affair; it had been in contemplation several months — Not quite a year ago for it has not been twelve months since the place began to take a start. At that time, Phelps County was holding its session in the log building used as the engineer's office, and now occupied by J. L. McClure, Esq., and the Corps of Civil Engineers. Then we were assured that "Everybody" would subscribe to the paper, provided it was enlarged a little. We promised to enlarge it provided a list could be obtained. We were told if we would but establish the press, the list, with the "material aid" would be forthcoming, immediately. Now, friends,

we have moved our press to Rolla, we have enlarged our paper, we have done all we were required to do, and now we look to those who are friends to the enterprise, to come forward and redeem the pledges that have been made. (Editor required payment in advance for newspaper subscription)... No man, but a dunce, will expect to make anything out of the business like newspaper publishing, unless he adheres, to the advance payment system, and that is the system we intend to adopt. — and now, another thing, be it remembered, when you hear people talk about your little county paper, and you begin to be ashamed of its diminutive proportions, that "money makes the mare go". Give us the money and business to do with, and we will give you a paper as large as any published in the State, and edited with equal ability... depend upon it, friends, if we have your cooperation — and we think we will — you will find us making improvements upon the past and present, as fast as the county around develops its resources and demonstrates its appreciation of the services of a servant, ever watchful of its true interest.

ROLLA EXPRESS EXTRA

"We intend in the course of a few weeks to give a complete report of all the improvements in Rolla and vicinity. Some of our friends would like to be possessed of this number of the Express because it will contain some very interesting statistics

of Rolla and Phelps County. Let such as would like to have extra copies of that edition send in at once. They will be sold at the rate of TWO DOLLARS per hundred or three cents a copy. Orders sent in will be registered, and must in all cases be accompanied by the money."



Old Phelps County Jail

Rolla Grows Up Like Magic

Rolla Express

July 30, 1860

Information Gathered and Compiled By Verna Lee Hayes

"Wonders never cease. From being an open prairie ridge which had been entirely unimproved, we have seen a town grow up like magic! Where there was not a house six months ago, there are upwards of seventy-five, nearly completed and others in various stages of progress, and all occupied. Where a year ago, nobody lived, now upwards of six hundred people make their abode. So by a peculiar chain of circumstances there are here a good many people, nearly all strangers to one another thrown together to form a community. In the prosperity of this community we all have a common interest... we want to offer inducements to men who are possessed of capital to come among us, who will unite with us in making business and drawing toward this as a common, natural center, the trade of this region of country. This trade we ought to avail ourselves of, because we do not believe there is a point between St. Louis and Springfield, where it can be more easily concentrated... A good business can be established

here in wholesaling Dry Goods, Groceries, and indeed every branch of commerce, calculated to meet the demands of an inland country may as well be established here as at any other point on the road, and it becomes every man who is an owner of real estate or interested in the growth of Rolla to seek to encourage every branch of industry and enterprise that is calculated to meet the wants of the country, and contribute to our substantial growth and prosperity. In addition to this we must build churches, schools and seminaries of learning, that our moral and social well-being may keep pace with our material prosperity. All newcomers will, of course, find many obstacles to contend with, as in all new countries, but these are easily overcome and as time wears away and matters settle down, if we all act wisely, there is a time to come when our young place which has already taken so fine a start, will be one of the first in commercial importance, in the Southwest."

Real Estate Boom In 1860

Rolla Express

July 30, 1860

Information Gathered and Compiled By Verna Lee Hayes

Rolla Markets—Wheat, Oats, New Potatoes, Corn, shelled and unshelled, Cornmeal, Green Apples, Dried Apples, Beeswax, Tallow, Hides, White Beans, Sugar ten cents a pound, Coffee sixteen cents a pound. Molasses forty-five cents per gallon, Whiskey twenty-five cents per gallon, Salt two dollars and twenty-five cents per sack, Bacon and Hams, Fish by the barrel including Mackerel, Mackanaw and Cod, Iron by the bar, common jeans fifty cents per yard and indigo blue seventy-five cents per yard, tobacco thirty cents per pound.

August 6, 1860 contains business cards of seven Rolla Lawyers, two resident practicing physicians, and the following services.

—Ornamental painter and glazing. Paper hanging, grain-ing, marbling, and gliding done with neatness and dispatch.

—Rolla Lumber Yard, Dealer in building lumber, flooring, dressed weather boarding furnished to order.

—Western Saloon and Tin-Pan Alley, Main Street opposite Tiffany House, Rolla.

—Rolla City Meat Market — fresh and salted beef, pork, lamb, veal, and mutton. Vegetables of all descriptions bought and sold.

—House builders, carpenters, and joiners.

—House, Sign, Carriage, and Ornamental Painting.

—Real Estate — Since the twenty-seventh of June front lots have been sold in Johnson and Coleman's Addition to Rolla, at an average of about \$25 a lot.

In James' Addition some thirty-eight lots have been sold, at an average of about \$34, since the first of June.

About forty lots have been sold in Bishop's Addition since May averaging about \$100 each.

About \$10,000 was realized by the County Court in the sale of lots.

—E. W. Bishop—proprietor of Bishop's Addition to the town of Rolla. Lots, situated in the most central part of Town for sale. (Ed Note: Mr. Bishop would seem to be the only local realtor advertising in the first editions of the newspaper. He was one of the founders of the city, supervised the construction of the Phelps County Court-house, lived where the new Rolla Postoffice now stands, and may very well have been Rolla's first philanthropist).

—Lake Spring Marble Works Italian and American Marble.

A few items of hardware and china are also advertised here, along with St. Louis firms offering goods and services not yet available locally.

Four Days By Stage

Rolla Express

August 20, 1860

Information Gathered and Compiled By Verna Lee Hayes

August 20, 1860 — "Messrs. Burder and Woodson of Springfield, who have taken the contract for carrying the U.S. Mail from the terminus of the Southwestern Branch Railroad, new St. James, some ten miles east of Rolla, have within a few days, put on a line of fine Concord stages, drawn by good strong four-horse teams, and managed by experienced drivers. Now the traveling public may depend upon a steady and reliable conveyance from Rolla to Springfield every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

"The line runs a stage from St. James to Rolla every evening, immediately on the arrival of the train from St. Louis. So a traveler for Springfield can

start from St. Louis on Saturday and reach Rolla the same evening, pass Sunday here, and on Monday morning early be on his way to Springfield, which place he will reach after 2 days ride from Rolla, stopping about half way, overnight.

"Travelers may rest assured of the courtesy promptness and attention of the enterprising proprietors of this line. This is now the shortest, and, we think, the best route to the Southwest, and we may now safely recommend it to our friends as a reliable one." We are also pleased to learn that an effort is being made by them to put on a daily line and we hope it will be effected.

Rowdies Annoy Citizens

Rolla Express

August 27, 1860

Information Gathered and Compiled By Verna Lee Hayes

"Disgraceful—Tuesday night the citizens of Rolla were annoyed by a company of men, apparently drunk, who for a long time promenaded the streets hooting, yelling and crying. After calling upon a few of the grocers in town, and bothering not only the inmates of these houses, but every person in the neighborhood, disturbing the sick and frightening the timid, they finally made an assault on the Rolla City Meat Market building, and completely demolished the windows and shash of that house, by throwing stones and missiles against the doors and windows. Now, if we are correctly informed there were those connected with this affair of who we had a better opinion.

"Had the pirates been mere loafers and blackguards, that the community never expected anything of, we might not have

noticed an affair so disgraceful to our new town. This breach of the peace was committed by those we had thought to be gentlemen. And what makes the matter worse, the destruction of property does not even so much effect the pirates against whom the malice of the company was directed, but counts to the loss of one of our most peaceable and worthy citizens.

"All rowdy demonstrations like these, also ring-fights, dog-fights, bull-fights, cock-fights, and the boisterous demonstrations of braggarts in our streets, are far from contributing to our popularity abroad, or holding out inducements to men of business and good citizens to take up their abode among us. It gives people at a distance an idea that we are rough and barbarous, rather than a civil community."

Postal Service Inferior

Rolla Express

September 3, 1860

Information Gathered and Compiled By Verna Lee Hayes

"Something is rotten in our Post Office arrangements, surely, for if we are to judge from the complaints we hear, not one-half of our subscribers who should receive their papers thru the mail, ever get them, or if they get them at all, they're not received until they are old. Now there is no good reason why every one of our subscribers should not get their papers, for they are mailed from this office, regularly, so must be delayed at some post offices on the routes. Why cannot papers that leave Rolla on Monday, get to Cliftydale, in Maries County the next day as well as to be a month about it? They have but one post office to go thru and that is Little Piney. But here Mr. Harrison has competent clerks, who, we think always attend to their business, and the mistake ought not to be made there because it is quite an important trading point as well as a Post Office. But when we go out upon the hills where post offices are put in private houses, and are more accommodating to the public than profitable to the P.M. is not that officer sometimes off duty, fixing up fence or hunting steers or something else, when the mail comes up, and so it is obliged to pass on to the next office... We find that in St. Louis and Post Offices on the Railroad our papers

are regularly distributed from the offices, but off the line it is not so. Papers can't go regularly from Rolla to Meramec Iron Works even, or to Bloomgarden, and we don't know how many more places where there are Post Offices. What is the reason for this? Is it not manifest that Postmasters are negligent of the duty they are sworn to perform? Unless our subscribers misinform us, some of Uncle Sam's officials are very remiss. It is not us, however that find fault, but the readers who have paid for their papers and want to get them."

Later the editor relates complaints from people who did not receive their papers at all or received them so badly worn that they could not be read. He suggests that the postmasters in some cases are loaning the papers to non-subscribers and that they are being used for purposes such as wrapping paper. The editor then (in very strong language) reprimands people who are too stingy to buy their own newspapers and must rather depend upon borrowing papers someone else has paid for.

ED. NOTE: We were curious about the place called Cliftydale, and upon further investigation learn that it was located one mile north of Thox Rock Resort, or one mile southwest of Stickney).

Stage Coach Accident

Rolla Express

October 1, 1860

Information Gathered and Compiled By William C. Hayes

"On Tuesday last, when the mail coach from Springfield had arrived within half a mile of Rolla on its way hither it met with a blockhead of a teamster with an ox-team, who refused to give the road to the coach but instead, "poped" his whip at the leaders and of course the horses took fright and taking a sudden turn in the stage was brought suddenly up to a "blind stump," breaking the tongue from the coach and pitching the occupants of the drivers seat to the ground. After a little the fore wheels became detached and the body of the stage turned a complete somerset and the passengers inside were forcibly thrown together in a pile, in one part of the stage, Mrs. McNair, of Springfield, who was on her way to meet her husband at Dillon, had her shoulder dislo-

cated and her face severely hurt. Mr. Woodson one of the stage proprietors, received some slight bruises, also one or two of the passengers, but, wonderful to tell, no one was killed! The lady who was injured is rapidly recovering from her bruises. We hear no one blamed the driver of the coach, but everyone compliments the promptness and energy with which Col. Long, the stage agent here, acted upon being appraised of the difficulty. Oxdriers who have so little sense as not to give the road, but crack their whips at passing horses, should be made to smart for their lack of manners and wit. There is law made to fit all such cases."

"Poped" his whip is the spelling used in the Express; also we record the punctuation as written there.

Phelps County Jail Is Built In 1860

Information Gathered and Compiled By Rex Edmondson

A Rolla landmark, familiar to citizens of the area for 106 years, is the old county jail. The jail stands on the block bound by Second, Third, Main, and Center Streets, just west of the courthouse. This building is constructed of rock blocks which were quarried locally.

In the "History Of Phelps County," pages 638, we find that in April, 1860, the county court appropriated \$3,000 for the stone jail. It was to be twenty-two by twenty-two feet, two cells, a hall, a stairway with one room above. James Wilson was named contractor.

The ROLLA EXPRESS, one of Rolla's old newspapers, states in one entry dated September 3, 1860, "The derrick which fell a few days ago has been erected again and the work upon the jail has been resumed." Still another entry dated November 26, 1860, says, "Our county jail is now completed."

(ED. NOTE) The Jefferson City dolomite blocks used in the construction of the jail were hand dressed and measure up to eighteen inches high, twenty-four inches thick, and five feet long. Such a stone is estimated to weigh as much as a ton. (Small wonder that the derrick collapsed!) The walls are as thick as the stones, varying from twenty-two to twenty-four inches. The building is thirteen blocks high, and the interior remains much the same today as in yesteryear — cold, dark, with earth floors in the ground floor dungeons — forbidding surely to even the most hardened criminal. Two cells were on the second floor where evidence of the iron bars which were later torn out and moved to the new jail can still be seen. A reasonably safe stairway has been installed so that interested citizens may see the structure on special tours

Editor Promotes Phelps and Maries Counties

Rolla Express

September 17, 1860

Information Gathered and Compiled By William C. Hayes

"WANTED—In South Western Missouri, TEN THOUSAND able bodied men to cultivate the soil, plant vineyards, open rich deposits of iron, copper, and lead, manufacture butter, barrels, boots, bacon, and bedsteads; to blow the bellows and swing the sledge, break colts, and the virgin soil, make the forests echo with the shouts of cheerful labor, to build in our towns and fill them with a thrifty and industrious population. TEN THOUSAND industrious mechanics, merchants, schoolmasters, men of education and means, to establish factories, enliven trade and educate the rising generation. TWENTY THOUSAND maids and matrons to act as co-laborers in this new theatre of enterprise — to cheer by their presence, aid by their counsels, educate the youth and be help meet for the men. Though lazy, unambitious, hand-

to-mouth fellows may cry against our soil and people, the industrious and frugal never go empty away. Phelps and Maries Counties will make room for all these."

On September 3, 1860, The Rolla Express records the following very newsworthy item. "Last Wednesday the turntable upon the Southwestern Branch of the Pacific Railroad was moved again, and the present terminus of the road is Dillon-ton, some six miles east of Rolla. Another hitch and the steam-horse will come snorting and puffing into the county seat of Phelps. We are here waiting in anticipation of seeing the train in Rolla about the first of November."

The train actually arrived in Rolla the first of January in 1861 and was duly recorded by the EXPRESS.

Struggle To Build Church

Information Gathered and Compiled By Mrs. C. T. Galloway

The influence of "the Church" was apparently of little consequence to most of the earliest inhabitants of Rolla. Being a "Child of the Railroad" it attracted a great many unsavory characters—gamblers, adventurers, land sharks, and speculators. However, amongst those earliest citizens also emerged a few substantial men and women of strong pioneer stock who later became the backbone of both the civic and religious life in this newly created community.

No doubt it was to this latter group that C. P. Walker, publisher of the Rolla Express (and a few years later on the Building Committee of the M. E. Church) addressed the following editorial on July 30, 1860: "Where there was not a house six months ago, there now are upwards of seventy-five nearly completed and others in various stages of progress, and all are occupied. Where a year ago, nobody lived, now upwards of six hundred make their abode. So by a peculiar chain of circumstances, there are here a good many people nearly all strangers to one another, thrown together to form a community."

Editorializing on its varied advantages and possibilities, and envisioning Rolla as an industrial center, Mr. Walker urged its citizenry to be more enterprising and cited the need for capital to invest in its future. No doubt cognizant that no community

will long prosper without facilities for education and worship. Mr. Walker concludes his editorial with these words: "We must build churches, schools, and seminaries of learning that our moral and social well being may keep pace with our material prosperity."

In the December 3, 1860 issue a letter signed "Illinois" took to task the real estate men of Rolla for not donating lots for church sites, quoting the scripture that "Man is not fed by bread alone," ending his letter with: "It does not look well for a place where so many fine buildings are going up and nary a schoolhouse or a church."

A week later in the same paper, a Thomas C. Johnson of Johnson and Coleman of St. Louis (apparently a real estate firm with holdings in Rolla) answers this criticism, quoting in part: "We have donated lots 99 and 100 in the Johnson Coleman addition to the Trustees of the Methodist Church, South. We hope to see the members of that denomination in a short time erect on these lots a neat substantial Church. We are prepared to make donations to other denominations as soon as we are satisfied they have the ability and willingness to erect a Church."

No evidence was found of either the M. E. Church, South erecting a church or of any other denominations accepting Mr.

Johnson's offer of a site. However, it does indicate that Rolla had some semblance of religious activity at this time. It is known that circuit riders of various denominations supplied sporadic preaching in areas adjacent to Rolla and in all probability these itinerant preachers came to this new community as well.

That there were religious meetings in 1860 and also that certain elements resisted this movement is evidenced by the first ordinance passed on February 9, 1861 by the newly formed council and signed by Rolla's first mayor, D. R. Parsons (who in 1864 was one of the founders of the First Presbyterian Church): "That every person who shall wilfully and contemptuously disturb any congregation or assembly of persons meeting for religious worship or for any other legal purpose either by day or night in the corporate limits of the town of Rolla by using profane or indecent language or otherwise, shall be deemed a misdemeanor and punished by a fine of not less than

five dollars."

The following article was printed in a March 1861 issue of the Express: "There will be preaching at the Tiffany House on Sunday (the 17th) by Rev. Mr. Curry, a Cumberland Presbyterian minister who has come to this place for the purpose of seeing what can be done towards building and establishing a Church of that persuasion here. It is hoped he will meet with that encouragement which the worthy object he contemplates warrants, and the urgent wants of this community demands. For the time, at least, let all sectarian feelings be laid aside until some Church of some denomination shall remove from our community the reproach of utter disregard for the institutions of education and religion."

There is no further report in regard to this meeting, and no doubt the bitter struggle between the Secessionists and the Union sympathizers overshadowed all other interests for the time being.

Courthouse & Jail Seized By Yankee Troops

Rolla Express

June 17, 1861

Information Gathered and Compiled By Verna Lee Hayes

"There was a good deal of sensation created in Rolla on Friday last by the unexpected appearance of glistening bayonets at various points commanding the town, and before the people were aware of it the town was filled with armed men. Our "braves" very soon made themselves scarce. Col. Schnable couldn't be found "nowhar". H. Andrae started suddenly in pursuit of his 'minute men'. Lieut. Trigg's head looked like a fiery meteor as it shot swiftly through the black jacks. Those wonderful men who were ready to eat Dutchmen without salt couldn't be found. But as one secessionist is equal to five or ten "Hessians", there will probably be "heaps" of dead bodies scattered over the hills and in the vallies around about this place. The surprise was complete. No person had any idea of the movement. The flag of the Confederate States which had been swinging to the breeze since the great secession Camp Meeting here some weeks since, was summarily taken down by a small detachment of German volunteers from Col. F. Sigel's Regiment, and the glorious Stars

and Stripes now float where the Confederate Flag had waved."

"The troops soon took possession of the Courthouse and pitched their tents upon James' Addition. The keys of the jail were demanded of the sheriff and that institution now answers for a "guard house" for such refractory secessionists as have signified a disposition to rebel against the General Government. Some of our citizens, who, in a time of general excitement had made some ugly threats against Union men, are now under guard until they express a willingness to return to their former allegiance."

On the same day, at a called meeting of the Town Council, an ordinance was passed "prohibiting the sale of all kinds of intoxicating liquors, for the following reasons; whereas there is at this time a large body of troops encamped within the corporate limits of the town of Rolla, and for the better government of said town, the protection of its citizens together with their property. Therefore be it ordained by the Town Council of the Town of Rolla that all persons including Dram Shop Keep-

ers, and Merchants, are hereby required not to sell or give away intoxicating liquors of any kind whatsoever nor in any quantity ... fine for the first offense not less than fifty dollars ... and for the second offense by both fine and imprisonment." This was signed by E. W. Bishop, President Pro tem of the Town Council.

On June 26, 1861, the Express editor is attempting to encourage and calm his people with the following item titled "Don't Be Frightened".

"The coming of troops among us has caused a great deal of terror among many of our neighbors. Now we wish to say to all who are frightened away from their home, neglecting their farms, allowing their cornfields

to grow up in weeds, and their wheat to go unharvested, that they are actually in more danger than persons who stay at homes and pursue their daily avocations... When the troops see men hiding away in the brush and neglecting their business, the presumption is they are traitors, and fleeing from merited punishment, consequently such characters are generally arrested and put under guard until they swear allegiance to the Constitution. Go to work, then, every man who can work, and let there be a good deal of corn raised. The soldiers will not commit any depredations upon any property without the owners being compensated. Nor will any person be persecuted on account of his political opinions."

Civil War Miscellany

Rolla Express

June, July, August, 1861

Information Gathered and Compiled By Jessie Rucker

June 24, 1861 — "PARADE — Wednesday evening the Regiment of Light Infantry, under command of Col. Brown, assembled in an open field near town and had a grand parade. The manner in which they performed their military evolutions was highly incredible to the officers and men. It was a beautiful sight, truly to see them gathering together, in martial array, with the noble flag, the stars and stripes floating to the breeze. This regiment numbered some 825 strong and comprises a fine lot of men as we often see together. The citizens of this place can all testify to the good deportment of this command."

July 15, 1861 — "SPIES — On Thursday morning the constable of Rolla Township (name omitted) was arrested, charged with being a spy, and that night (name omitted) was arrested for the same offense. They were sent to St. Louis Arsenal, to wait an investigation."

"QUIET — We are happy to be able to say that Rolla is quiet. The 1800 men here are quiet and orderly, and there is not as much excitement in town now as there was when Fox Jackson's 34 brass soldiers held the place."

"FATAL AFFRAY — We learn that two of the soldiers who left Rolla on Friday, got into difficulty at or near Yow-

ell's store, on Little Piney, in which one killed the other."

July 22, 1861 — "Something like 300 mules and one hundred and fifty wagons have come to Rolla in the past week over the Southwest Branch Pacific Railroad designed for transportation. The wagons are all new and substantial, and the mules are a fine lot of animals."

"NOTICE RECRUITS—All persons enlisting between this time and the first of August will stand a good chance to get 320 acres of land in addition to the \$100 bounty money offered by the Government."

"HOME GUARDS — Some 36 Home Guards from Lane's Prairie, arrived here yesterday, for the purpose of arming themselves. They were handed to them by Col. Wyman this morning."

August 31, 1861 — "The remains of Gen. Lyon were brought on to this place on Sunday evening, and were shipped on the cars yesterday to St. Louis. They were accompanied by two wagons of wounded soldiers brought from Springfield."

"An attempt was made to blow up the train yesterday as it came up in the evening, about 2 miles beyond Dillon. A keg of powder was buried between the ties, and so arranged, that when the engine passed over it ignited. It was not sufficient,

however, to do any serious damage. The engine was raised a little, and the hands shocked and probably burned a little. The shock extended to the passenger cars, and it was thought to be the firing of a cannon. The train was stopped and search made for the Rebels who did it, but no discoveries were made."

We have for some time believed it would be the part of wisdom to forward to this place the forces and equipments designed for the Southwest at an early date as possible. For should any disaster occur to the road the consequences must be the most serious. To have to haul army supplies and march troops from St. Louis to Springfield and a hundred miles beyond would so retard the progress of the companies as to give

the Rebels an advantage that would not soon be overcome. And it is to be hoped that those who have the control of matter will have a special eye to this thing, as well as to place guards when any danger may be apprehended."

"And it occurs to us, too, that in this case it would be proper to adopt the plan of Gen. Pope—levying a fine upon the property and effects of those in the vicinity to be released on producing the perpetrators of this murderous design. But a few days ago a man went to Dillon, as we are informed, and cut down a Union flag pole with the flag upon it in open day light, while a widow lady was threatened if a flag was not taken down from her residence."

Rare Treat for Rollaites on 4th of July 1861

Rolla Express

July 8, 1861

Information Gathered and Compiled By Jessie Rucker

"On account of the disturbed state of the country and the various rumors of attack upon the town by the secession forces, the community had become uneasy and it was anticipated that there would be but few present from abroad, consequently there had been no preparation made by the citizens for celebration of the Fourth, until the morning of that day, when his Honor, the Mayor, at the request of the citizens called a special meeting of the council, and a committee consisting of Messrs. E. G. Morse and E. W. Bishop was appointed to wait upon Col. D. Boyles and extend to him an invitation to deliver an oration on that day, at some suitable time and place. Mr. C. P. Walker was also invited to read the Declaration of Independence.

"At four o'clock several of the ladies and gentlemen from the town and vicinity met upon the parade ground, near the railroad depot to witness the military evolutions of the forces concentrated here. When we arrived upon the ground the following companies were drawn up in a line and passed through their evolutions with a good deal of credit to themselves and their commanders, under the direc-

tion of Col. Boyles, assisted by Lieut. Madison, acting adjutant ... After passing through the different military maneuvers, much to the gratification of the spectators, three rounds of blank cartridges were discharged by the several companies, in honor of the day, when troops were drawn up in a hollow square about the speaker's stand, within which seats had been provided for the ladies by the gallant soldiery. We saw no expressions of fear upon the countenances of the fair ones as they passed through the lines of fixed bayonets to their seats, being surrounded by the horrid Minnie rifles and sabre bayonets which have caused many of our former citizens so much unnecessary fear.

"The clerk of the town council called the meeting to order and His Honor R. M. Case was elected to preside over the proceedings.

"Upon invitation, Rev. J. Brooks, Chaplin of the Rifle Battalion, offered a fervent prayer to the Throne of Grace for the success of our arms.

"The speaker, after alluding to the majesty of the government and the high tone of its voluntary army, ended in these

words: "Let us appeal to the old, the veterans and contemporaries of war, to cherish in the minds of the children and youth the actual and real blessings of political and religious freedom; to the young to nerve themselves with the thought that although peace should be our first desire we must be willing to strike in defense of those rights as dear to us as life, and those principles as imperishable as Eternity: and to the soldiers let us say: "draw not your swords ex-

cept for your rights, and do not sheath them till those are attained."

"After the speaking the meeting was dismissed, every one complimenting the officers and men, who had, upon so short a notice, provided so rare a treat.

"In the evening, we called upon Mr. Wilson, who had provided a party at the Tiffany House, where we saw the Colonel and his officers mingling in the maizy dance."

Hospital Treats Chills & Fever

Rolla Express

July 22, 1861

Information Gathered and Compiled By Jessie Rucker

"We have neglected heretofore to mention this important branch of the U.S. Army stationed here. The building owned by F. M. Lenox, and vacated by him on the approach of the troops, has been fitted up and occupied by Dr. Smith, Physician and Surgeon for Col. Boyles' Rifle Battalion, assisted by Drs. Fuller and Holly, who are good physicians and attentive to their patients. The building is in a fine, healthy locality, and well designed for the purpose for which it is being used

... Dr. Smith tells us there are now some 25 patients under treatment, generally improving; the principal diseases being chills and fevers of various types. There is no epidemic, and have, as yet, been no deaths. The hospital belonging to the 13th Regiment is upon the camp ground of the Regiment under charge of Dr. Plummer, assisted by Dr. Law. We learn there are some dozen cases under charge, but none that appear to be dangerous.

General Lyon's Remains

Rolla Express

August 31, 1861

Information Gathered and Compiled By Jessie Rucker

"Gen. Lyon's remains reached this village on Sunday evening at half past five. Capt. Edgar and undertaker Lynch, the persons having the body in charge, left Springfield with it Friday about noon and were two days and a half in getting through. They were accompanied by Messrs. J. B. Hosler, brother-in-law and D. Knowlton, a cousin of the deceased. It will be recollected that Lynch started from this place for Springfield on Monday, bearing a flag of truce, while Capt. Edgar and his party, unaware of Lynch's departure, came from St. Louis the same day and left here for Springfield on Tuesday morning. Lynch arrived a few hours ahead, having met with no detention on the way. He proceeded to the Phelps farm, where the body of Gen. Lyon was buried, a mile and a half out but was stopped at the gate by the guard, and obliged to return to the city. Here meeting Capt. Edgar the latter procured a permit from Gen. Price to pass Gen. Parson's pickets, as the latter was encamped on the Phelps farm and they had no further difficulty. After the disinterment of the body it was transferred to a cast iron coffin. Gen. Parsons came forward and kindly offered to detach a guard to watch the

coffin 'til next morning, an offer which was accepted. The ambulance moved towards Springfield with the body Friday morning, as before stated. Capt. Edgar and his party speak in high terms of the kindness received and the facilities extended to them in order to accomplish the object of their visit. McDonald and some other officers tendered the party a military escort, but the offer was not accepted.

"The remains will be conveyed by his friends to Webster, Mass., thence overland in carriages to Ashford, Windham County, his native place where they will be deposited in their last resting place by the side of his father and mother."

EDITOR'S NOTE: General Lyon was promoted to Brig. General on May 30, 1861, and assumed command of the federal forces in the Missouri area. He was killed at the Battle of Wilson's Creek near Springfield on the morning of August 10, 1861. A complete account of his Civil War record can be found in "The Heritage of Missouri" by Dr. Duane Meyer, professor of history and Dean of Instruction at Southwest Missouri State College, and in the October 1966 issue of the "Missouri Historical Review" available at the Rolla Public Library.

Courthouse Becomes Post Hospital in 1861

Rolla Express

October 19, 1861

Information Gathered and Compiled By Jessie Rucker

"We made a visit yesterday to the Post Hospital recently established here. The Court House now used for that purpose, had been before occupied for Quartermaster Store house and up to September 21 was filled with hay, and oats. These were removed at that date and the next day patients from the departing regiment began to crowd the building, so that within a week over 250 sick were lodged and cared for in that and surrounding buildings hired for that purpose. Without cots, medical stores, cooks or nurses, the task of caring for this multitude was accomplished without difficulty."

"The building will accommodate comfortably 120 patients and if furnished would be well

adapted to hospital purposes, but in the present condition will be difficult to warm in winter. But carpenters are now at work, making alterations and "additions" will soon render everything comfortable."

"The institution is under the charge of Brigade Surgeon N. R. Derby, assisted by Dr. Buck. There are now about 80 patients under medical care, the most of whom seem to be doing well. The principal diseases are typhoid fever, dysentery and measles. We take pleasure in commending the neatness and cleanliness that pervades the building as well as the kindness and attention with which the physicians and attendants discharge their duty."

Fort Wyman

Information Gathered and Compiled By Rex Edmondson

Fort Wyman was situated on a military crest about a mile south of the city of Rolla. Most of the information concerning the fort must be gleaned from old newspaper accounts; for to my knowledge, there are no actual photographs of Fort Wyman. There is a copy of an enlarged pencil sketch, which was rendered by a newspaper correspondent, in the Rolla Public Library.

Fort Wyman is mentioned in an article in the Rolla Express dated February 24, 1862 "Celebration at Rolla"... "On Friday evening... party assembled at the Tiffany House. At sunrise the big oration from Fort Wyman opened their mouths and gave thirty-two guns in honor of the day"...

"The History of Phelps County" published in 1889 mentions the Fort Wyman ruins.

The National Archives have on file a plan of Fort Wyman. This plan shows the fort to have been an earth embankment with the powder magazine in the center. According to the scale, the fort was two hundred and twenty-five feet square with two gun emplacements.

We learn of the fate of Fort Wyman by again referring to

the old newspapers. The Rolla Herald of September 14, 1871, carried the following article: "Commencement of School of Mines"... "The bids for razing the embankments of Fort Wyman, preparatory to laying the foundation of the School of Mines, were opened Tuesday at the office of Seay and Williams. The bidding was spirited, Henry Wolf being the lowest bidder was awarded the contract... the work to be finished in thirty days. Mr. Wolf's bid was six hundred dollars."

Perhaps the best piece of evidence concerning the fort was discovered when the aerial photographs were flown in 1962 for the revision of the topographic map of Rolla. The outline of the fort was clearly visible on these aerial photographs.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Many citizens have inquired as to the location of Rolla's Fort Wyman. It was located on the hill behind the excavation which is now taking place on Highway 63 south, directly to the rear of the two or three small dwellings which are located on the hill. The property is privately owned, but may be seen fairly well from Fort Wyman Road.)

Ye Local About Town

Rolla Express

May 17, 1862

Information Gathered and Compiled By Verna Lee Hayes

"The New Store, painted so prettily, and rather alone by itself, is about 'the' place to get good bargains. Its proprietor has replenished his stock to the fullest extent and the shelves fairly groan because of their heavy burden of bright, new wares of every cast. Mr. Miller says he is determined to sell goods as cheap as the cheapest. We have had a former acquaintance with Chestine and know he won't lie. Try him.

"Reed & Wheeler, one door east of the Rolla House are businessmen of the first order; and if we rightly understand good jovial human nature, our friend Wheeler weighs heavy in the scale of honesty, and is a gentleman, every inch of him. Messrs. Reed & Wheeler are about receiving endless varieties of merchandise in the drygoods, grocery, hardware, and cookery line, together with Yankee fixings and many other kinds of articles almost innumerable, and decidedly difficult to mention on paper the dimensions of this. This firm design giving a word of advice to the public through the medium of the press next week. Notice if you please, the image of the clown, and enter the highest 'hole in the wall' thereto, when you'll fetch up right where you cannot fail to get the worth of money invested.

"John Butler, who has recent-

ly opened a Fancy and Staple Drygoods Store in the west end of town, is just returning from St. Louis with a large stock. The modest little building at the angle of the street, near the printing office, has become one of the most famous establishments in town. From early morning 'til twilight falls, Butler's store is crowded with admirers of his choicely selected stock.

Rolla Public Houses

"That the traveler upon approaching Rolla by railroad or stage may become familiar with the names of the several public houses of this place, we give them below for his benefit:

"We have four very respectable taverns, viz. Lamb's Hotel, Webber House, Rolla Hotel, Tiffany House. We get our 'tater' at the Webber House where is always an abundance of various kinds of eatables to satisfy the inner man; besides, good clean, soft, beds, wherupon may be found ease and comfort. Though, all of our hotels are equally as well prepared for the accommodation of the public.

Ye Local About Town

"Ye Local ventured outdoors the other day, not withstanding the great heat, after taking a long nap, was somewhat surprised at witnessing the improvements that are progressing.

"Our old friend Mr. Malcolm

has been embellishing his mansion near the Depot by making a fine piazza in front.

"Our enterprising friend S. H. Harding, who commenced a bakery in a little house in the hollow, last summer, has gradually been improving until he is just about finishing a fine two-story building attached to his bakery, upon one of the prettiest lots in town.

"Near Head Quarters, shutting a part of the old railroad office from view is a large new building, erected by McElhanny, Jaccard & Company, recently from Springfield, Mo., who have opened a large wholesale estab-

lishment near the railroad track.

"A little further westward, near the new store, of the present Sheriff, Chestine Miller, is a new frame going up, owned by Lee Love.

"One of our newly appointed Justices, Squire Webster, we perceive is also putting on style, and towering above his former humble cot rises a two-story addition with an aristocratic bay window in front. And so it goes—every day is marked with some improvement, showing that not withstanding the war and rumors of war, our little community have not forgotten the arts of peace."



Jesse Frazier Blacksmith Shop on 8th St., Later Chevrolet Co.

Wagon Burning

Rolla Express

May 24, 1862

Information Gathered and Compiled By Verna Lee Hayes

On Monday evening last, just about dusk, a supply train bound for Springfield, consisting of seventeen wagons, loaded with bacon, was overtaken by a band of marauders belonging to Coleman's band, who cut the mules from the wagons, turned them loose and set fire to the wagons. The train was completely destroyed, though some of the bacon has since been saved and many of the mules recovered. On Tuesday another train consisting of twenty-five wagons bound for the army by way of Houston, was attacked by marauders and the mules were cut from thirteen wagons. Five wagons belonging

to Capt. McKay's train, loaded with ordnance stores was taken with the rest. Before the work of destruction had been completed Liet. Segit, who with a squad of cavalry was escorting another train in the rear, drove in the rebel pickets, and the thieving crowd took to their heels and fled.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The attacks on wagon trains got to be so common that Rolla's second Mayor, along with other citizens of the town were accused of "tipping off" the marauders about the departure of the trains.

Letters from a Union Soldier

1863 - 1864

Information Gathered and Compiled By Verna Lee Hayes

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following report is composed of excerpts from letters written by Pvt. A. H. Stone, Company K, 2nd Wisconsin Cavalry Volunteer, 1863-1864 to Miss Ida Ford, Female Seminary, Oxford, Ohio. It describes the winter encampment of Stone's unit at Big Piney.

"Big Piney, Mo., November 10, 1863 — Dear Friend Ida, Your welcome letter was received several days ago though it had been mailed October 13, we were absent from here 19 days on a scout and did not get any mail during that time, since we came back, we have been very busy putting up our winter quarters, we have now got things nicely arranged, for the coming winter though we are in the "wilderness" and if we are not driven out by our neighborly Bushwhackers we will enjoy life (a soldier's life) "hugely" ... Ida, you must not let your correspondence with me interfere with your studies in the least. I should hate very much to lose you as a correspondent but do not on any account neglect your studies, as they are of more consequence to you than any correspondence you can have ... I volunteered my services for three years more from the first of last June, my time would have expired in one year

from the 18th of this month, but now it is not out until June 18, 1866. A long time to think of remaining in the service: don't you think so?"

"Big Piney, Mo., December 6, 1863 — You asked me how I spent Thanksgiving. I wish I could remember where I was, but as I cannot, I shall have to own up that I did not know when the time arrived. I had seen the President's Proclamation, but when the time came around, I did not heed the order, for in this wilderness, we know no civilization, and hardly know when the Sabbath comes around or how to regard it when it does come ... I like camp life first rate, we are having nice times this winter. There is lots of wild Turkeys and deer in the woods and it is fun to hunt them and Bushwhackers. My father is here; he came last week with 24 new recruits from my town for my company ... I am expecting a trunk from home full of delicacies, and it seems to me they will taste much better to me than anything we get here, though we have everything that we can ask for."

January 2, 1864—Dear Friend Ida, I have just returned from Rolla this evening and found your letter waiting for me. I

was much pleased to receive it.

"I will enclose one of the tickets for the party I attended while in Rolla — we had a splendid time. I enjoyed myself so well I forgot all business and attended only to pleasure.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The ticket mentioned here reads: Fancy Dress Ball, At City Hotel, January 1, 1864, G. W. Wilson.) I had intended to have my photograph taken while there but did not have an opportunity. I shall try hard to get them the very next time I go there which will be next week I think.

"You asked where I spent Christmas. I was very sick upon that day as well as for three or four days before, so I did not enjoy the pleasures of that holiday as I would have done had I been well: there was three dances in the vicinity of Rolla which I think I would have visited.

"It has snowed nearly every day since the twenty-sixth, and consequently it is getting to be very good sleighing although the inhabitants here don't know what a sleigh is. I have never seen one in the state except a jumper we made last winter (and after we got it done the snow went off before we got a chance to ride on it) ...

"The snow was never known to be as deep here before. It is now about eighteen inches deep. It makes the poor natives huddle around the old fireplace closely, they are not prepared for such weather as this and they suffer considerably." (EDITOR'S NOTE: Pvt. Stone, of the Second

Wisconsin Volunteer Cavalry was evidently not bothered by the Missouri winter.)

... "The recruiting officer has just come so I will have to close.

"Hoping you will write again at your earliest convenience I bid you good night.

"I shall surely send you a photograph next time. If you have any of yours please send one."

Your Friend,
Ave. H. Stone

"February 20, 1864 — The Bushwhackers are becoming quite plenty in this district, they are a cowardly set of villains and manage to keep clear of any troops it is very seldom we can catch any of them. We killed two last week. There was 11 seen last night about nine miles from here. I have got men out watching for them and I hope they will manage to find them. I gave them orders to fetch no prisoners into camp, and if they find them I don't believe they will take any alive. I attended a dance in Rolla the 17th, had a pleasant time for Missouri; the ladies are very poor dancers... I don't suppose you care about dancing any more or if you did it would do you no good, for owing to the strict Christian principals of that institution I judge such exercise would not be allowed. You can console yourself as a soldier does in that there is a prospect of becoming FREE sometime."

Your friend,
A. H. Stone

1870 County Statistics

From Campbell's Gazeteer of Missouri

1874

Information Gathered and Compiled By Verna Lee Hayes

Phelps County contains 429,163 acres.

Population in 1860 was 5,714. In 1870 was 10,506, of whom 10,212 were white and 294 colored; 5,292 male and 5,214 female. 9,692 native and 814 foreign. (5,317 of the native population were born in Missouri.)

Agricultural Production — all kinds of grains, stock-raising, fruits and vegetable suited to the latitude.

Mineral Resources — iron, brick, and fire clays, sandstone and limestone for building.

Manufacturing Interests — Maramec and Ozarks Iron works, eight large flouring-mills and several smaller ones, two wagon and carriage manufactories, one cigar factory, two planing mills, one tannery, four wool carding machines, three saw mills, two saddle and harness manufactories, and one woolen mill.

Wealth — Valuation of county, per census of 1870, \$5,000,000. In 1873, assessed valuation \$2,657,434. Taxation \$1.75 per \$100. Bonded debt, \$128,000.

Railroads — Atlantic & Pacific Railroad, 33 miles of track. Beaver Branch Railroad, four

miles from Beaver Station to Beaver Mines.

Exports — Iron ore, pig iron, wheat, flour, cattle, hogs, tobacco, and wagons. 35,000 tons of iron ore shipped from mines of county in 1873.

Educational Interests—51 organized sub-districts; 54 school houses (11 frame, 2 brick, and 41 log with a total value, exclusive of furniture, of \$45,000.); 75 teachers; 4,571 children of school age, of whom 2,976 were enrolled in the schools.

Rolla — County Seat — population about 2,500. One public school, 4 churches (M.E. Church Presbyterian, Catholic, and Colored.) Two weekly newspapers: The Rolla Express published by Cleino and Wagner; the Rolla Herald, by H. S. Herbert. During the third year of MSM 1873-74 there were 105 students who each paid a nominal charge of \$20 per annum.

Other Towns — in county include Arlington, Beaver Valley, Blooming Rose, Buckland's, Dillon, Edgar Springs, Flat Wood, Jerome, Little Piney (later Ozark), Maramec Iron Works, Relfe, St. James, Spring Creek, Taylor's, Yancy Mills.

St. James Schools 1870-1900

Information Gathered and Compiled By Verna Lee Hayes

The photographs in the "Old Album" at the James Memorial Library at St. James gives a pictorial history of the local schools.

The earliest picture on file shows a one-room school located on a street just south of the present Verkamp Lumber Company. Used as a school during the week, the Episcopalians and Lutherans alternated in using it on Sunday. This picture was taken on Washington's Birthday with fourteen American flags and numerous pine boughs decorating the building. Miss Anna Gorman (Mrs. John Brucher), the teacher, is surrounded by forty-four children.

In the east end of St. James (on W. Hardy) stood one of the early schools, built shortly after the town was incorporated (about 1870). Prof. Allen was the first principal, succeeded by G. W. Davis. Miss Alice Ten Eyck was the teacher. The building now houses apartments.

A picture dated June 1889 shows the student body of the St. James Normal School housed in the Schneider brick, now the Bishop Apartments. A later picture (1895) included in the faculty Ola V. Forester Powell, teacher of Music; Professor Ar-

benz, science and math; Eunice Delaney, art and elocution; and F. M. Smith, Superintendent.

In 1896 school was conducted in the Renick houses at the corner of S. Maramec and Johnson Streets with Mrs. Blände Laughlin, the teacher. A picture dated 1897 shows the teachers' institute continuing in the Schneider Brick.

In August 1900, the local photographer took great pride in displaying pictures of the 'new' school, a two-story brick building constructed on the site of the Renick house. This building, with additions, was in use as an elementary school until recent years. The annual school pictures from 1900 on record a procession of pioneers in the field of education: J. L. Lovelace, James Hess, Mrs. M. E. Elliott, Miss Ola Forester (Powell), Miss Anna Powell, and John F. Hodge.

In the school photographs many of the students have not been identified. Miss Grace Muller, librarian for the James Memorial Library, invites former students, especially those from the Summer Normals (1900-1920) to call at the library to assist with the identification.

Announcements

Rolla Herald

1877

Information Gathered and Compiled By Jessie Rucker

Arrangements have been completed for the grand masquerade ball on the eighth of February. The Social and Germania Clubs have united for the purpose of giving a grand ball and no doubt it will eclipse any previous effort in that line.

Last Tuesday evening a most pleasant entertainment was given by Mr. D. Donahoe and lady to a number of their friends in this city. The house was crowded by an equal number of both sexes, who enjoyed themselves so much that it brought forth the remark from a long-faced biped that "it was a sin to be so happy."

Having sold out my book store and news stand at the postoffice to the Walkins Bros., I respectfully request all my old friends to continue their patronage assuring them that they will be as well treated in the future as in the past. — (O. M. Hatch)

We will sell on Tuesday, January 16th, a large and complete assortment of pure china glassware, Bohemian vases, parisian marble statuary and a full line of china ware, sale to begin promptly at 10:00 a.m. Terms cash. (M. Heller and Son)

The ladies of the Presbyterian

Church will give a supper and tableaux on next Thursday evening at the Grant House. All are cordially invited to be present. (EDITOR'S NOTE: The Grant House also known as Shaw's Opera House was located on the northwest corner of Eighth and Pine.)

Wagons are daily passing through Rolla loaded with goods and chattles of the workmen from Maramec Iron Works going to the Ozark Works.

The railroad company has furnished the rails to build a fence along their line at the Stock pond, and the Rollaites can rejoice over the openig of the pond to the use of the public.

The latest and nobbiest styles of hats at auction next Saturday.

Capt. Shaw has informed us that he will not be able to occupy the new hotel before the first of March. The severe weather for the past three months has greatly delayed work on the building.

W. E. Weber of Spring Creek was in town Monday. "Lige" looked pleasing, and after quizzing him for sime time we learned that Santa Claus visited his house on Christmas and presented him with a fine ten pound

boy and that was the cause of "Lige" good humor.

Rev. Wm. Johnson of Lebanon, will hold Episcopal services next Sunday at the Masonic Hall. Morning services at 10:30. All are cordially invited.

Dr. S. F. Arthur, Physician, surgeon, and Druggist, Edgar Springs, Phelps County Mis-

souri. I keep on hand a full supply of Drugs, Wines, and Liquors for medicinal purposes.

The auction room of M. Heller and Son continues to draw large crowds, and we judge from the way they dispose of goods the people think it is a mighty good place for bargains.

"Recollections"

From Amanda Livesay

Information Gathered and Compiled By Verna Lee Hayes

Amanda Livesay recalls early Rolla in an essay contest conducted by the Phelps County Historical Society in 1940. Miss Livesay died a few days after this essay was written. The Livesay Store was recently burned by the Rolla Fire Department and was located across from Community Hall at Fourth and Main Streets at the north end of the railroad bridge. Following are excerpts from her essay:

"Rolla was a pretty nice town when we moved here more than twenty years after it was founded, with streets laid out and well built up with nice modern houses, both business houses and residences.

"My eldest brother, James, who attended college at Rolla before we came here to live said that Main Street was formerly the business street, and that more business was transacted on Main Street at that time than is transacted on Pine Street today.

"My father acquired about nine farms in Phelps County, but was a merchant, both wholesale and retail. He owned the entire triangle downtown between the railroad and Elm Street, extending from Sixth to Seventh Streets. It was cov-

ered with buildings filled with merchandise of almost every description. He also bought all the grounds across the street on the east, containing a house for the convenience of his customers.

"The head men or store owners were always accommodated at our home, but the house and large lots were for teamsters, & teams. They were called wagon freighters & usually each crowd comprised six teamsters. They came from the southern & southwestern counties of Missouri and even from Arkansas to replenish their stores. They did a wonderful business at that time.

"We have on file Rolla Herald that repeat news of the past that tell of the store selling as high as \$5,000 worth of goods in one day, and as much as \$20,000 in one week. We doubt if any store does this amount of business now. One crowd was no sooner supplied a stock and gone until another arrived.

"My father and his partners purchased goods not only in St. Louis, but Cincinnati, Ohio, and New York City. Such beautiful material — delaines, empress cloth, silks, velvets, satins—such breathtaking beauties.

"The town was a very aristocratic town. It took good char-

acter, as well as culture and refinement to gain entry. My father was always public-spirited, and was ready to do anything to advance Rolla. He gave liberally of his money, and also donated beautiful Fort Wyman (site) on which to build the School of Mines. My father generously allowed them to sell Fort Wyman (EDITOR'S NOTE: after another

site was agreed upon), and apply the money on their new purchase, although the location of the school there would have made him and his heirs wealthy, for he owned most of the land surrounding it (Fort Wyman Site), especially the farm which now comprises Sunshine Hill and Willow Valley."



Dunmoor Mansion, Home of William James, St. James

Weekly News Highlights

Rolla Herald

1881

Information Gathered and Compiled By Jessie Rucker

The fireman's ball given on New Year's Eve, at Malcolm's Hall, this city (Rolla) was largely attended and all who participated, pronounced it the most pleasant party of the year. The supper at Crandell House was simply grand and beyond description, and the fifty couples who partook of the same will long remember it. The "Boys in Red" realized from the dance about \$30.00.

New Cabinet Shop — January 13, 1881 — I have just received one of the largest stocks of coffins and caskets of all kinds, and shrouds and trimmings which I offer at the lowest possible prices. I also keep on hand mouldings and picture frames and do all kinds of repair work in cabinet line. Call and see me when you want anything in my line. Signed — John D. Mericie, Woody's Old Stand.

"Honest John" will be in Rolla next Monday and remain during the week, for the purpose of buying Horses and Mules. Headquarters at Thompson's Livery Stable.

Miss Lola Shaw will give a private masquerade party at the Grant House on next Friday evening. Owing to a slight misunderstanding she came very

near having two parties on that evening—one of them a surprise.

Students continue to enter School of Mines in large numbers. At the present rate the roll will soon reach 100, ninety already having matriculated.

Ladies of the Rolla Chapter M.E. Church will give a grand festival on Feb. 16, 1881, at the Goettelman building, proceeds to be applied on pastor's salary. Admission and supper 25 cents children under 12 years ten cents

The reason we suggested the vaccination of our citizens recently was because of the prevalence of that dreaded and loathsome disease, smallpox, in several towns and cities in different parts of the State. And as Rolla is almost continually visited by traveling people it may be brought here any day.

Wm. Degan of the cigar firm of Finn and Degan, departed Sunday morning for Carthage, on a visit to his parents.

If you want a self recommending wagon, go to F. Strobach, Rolla, Mo., manufacturer of the celebrated "Star Of The West Wagon". Guaranteed for 12 months, it is beyond contradiction acknowledged to be the best wagon manufactured in

the State of Missouri. Regarding durability and acute workmanship it challenges competition. I am also agent for Oliver Chilled Plow.

The "Social Hop" given by the young men of Rolla on last Friday evening was the most pleasant and successful party ever given in the city. Thirty-two couples, comprising the cream of our crop, participated, and all enjoyed themselves beyond measure. The music of Coffman's String Band was

excellent, while the "calling" of Fred Herbert was pronounced just the thing. Dancing was kept up until after 3 o'clock in the morning.

On last Thursday evening the parlors of the Grant House was the scene of a happy little gathering given in honor of Miss Lola Shaw's lady friend, Miss Mamie Rozier, of St. Louis. Dancing, vocal and instrumental music and candy-pulling were the order of the evening.

Tie-Rafting In The Late 1800's

Information Gathered and Compiled By Leola Millar

Who today knows about tie-rafting? In the late 1800's, it was a colorful and important industry. Mr. B. H. Rucker, one of Rolla's influential citizens, was recognized as the boss of the rafters at one time. As an industry, tie-rafting was the finding of the lumber, the cutting of the trees, the making of the ties for the railroad, and the shipping of the ties to their destination. Phelps County was rich in the kind of forests necessary for ties, and it was close to the railroad; this meant the tie buyers were numerous here in the latter part of the 19th century. Often the tie makers did not own the land they cut; but as custom dictated, it was not considered a crime to use the timber. The finished ties were bought, when delivered to the railroad, at fifteen cents a tie.

Mr. Rucker came into this area back in 1889 and began to float ties on the Big Piney and the Gasconade rivers. In February, 1889, he drove a wagon through the timber trail on what is now Highway 63. At that time the tie-cutting country was along the river banks. The ties could be floated with less difficulty than loading them onto oxen and trudging over the muddy roads.

Young Mr. Rucker bought a good deal of land and hired

crews to work the forests. The men would often work in groups—one would score the tree, another would cut it down; but (for some reason) each man usually made his own ties. They would cut the tree into ties eight feet long, and squared into a 6 by 8 in. size. Wooden mauls were used to split the tree into the required size, which took great skill. Ties were then dragged to the river by oxen or horses and perhaps they would let them slide down the steep slopes to the rivers, where they were "nailed in" to be rafted. From 100 to 500 ties were used to make a raft, and several of them were joined together with rope or in some cases grape vines. The men stayed on top of this raft as they floated the tie rafts down stream to the railroad, where the tie buyers would be found. Rafting was dangerous work and the one in charge had to be expert in handling the "pole" which was used to push the raft one way or another.

B. H. Rucker (president of The Phelps County Historical Society in 1943) gave several items to the society which were a part of his tie-rafting days. At the present time, some of these are being displayed at the Rolla Public Library in the new exhibit case. Included is a long cane with a metal tip, a short

paddle used for a small boat, and a Johnnycake board. Johnnycake (for the benefit of our younger readers) is a variety of cornbread. Bread was baked during this time on such a board. The men would make up the dough, pat it out on the board, and put the board over the fire until the baking was complete.

At the same period in the history of Rolla meeting a train was the highpoint of the day. Arrival and departure of trains were real social events. The Meteor was due to arrive about five in the afternoon and it was met

every day by almost the entire student body of the Missouri School of Mines, the local belles, and practically everyone in town. Practical jokers existed in full force in the early 1900's. One is told that when B. H. Rucker married Margaret Southgate, and they left on their honeymoon on the "Meteor", Fred Lane boarded the train ahead of them and went through the cars distributing handbills to the passengers on the train. These handbills said to be kind to B. H. and Margaret, they were newly married.

Like Grandma Used To Make

Information Gathered and Compiled By Mrs. Roy V. Gaddy

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mrs. Roy V. Gaddy is the wife of Phelps County's Western District Judge Roy V. Gaddy and has written the following article for the Daily News' "Out of the Attic" Series.

Recently I was recalling the methods of cooking and other household tasks necessary to survival in grandmother's day. In recording a few of the more interesting ones, it is hoped that the present generation will realize that opening a box or can to prepare dinner is no burden.

My earliest recollection of preparing food brings to mind the fire to be built in the iron wood range. To stand by and watch the fire being laid and the blazing results coming up through the grates was very fascinating. All the food that was prepared for the table or for canning and the cornbread baked for the dogs (there was no dog food at that time) was cooked on top, or baked in the oven of the iron stove which got its heat from the roaring fire within it. Imagine how hot the house must have been in the summertime.

Everything was cooked and baked from scratch. Making smear case (cottage cheese) required setting the sweet milk aside to clabber, which would

take a day or so. Then it was put on the wood range and heat-rate from the curd. After two ed until the whey would separate hours of draining in a cloth bag, the curd was mixed with cream and salt. Then it was ready to be served at the finest table.

Yeast was made for baking bread. Gathering wild hops to be used in the yeast, was a chore for the older boys in the family. One roamed the field to find the hops, and gathered them in the fall. Yeast was prepared by mixing hops with wet cornmeal and drying into cakes. The hops could also be dried and made into cakes at a later time.

The word deep freeze was unheard of in grandmother's day. She could not freeze her corn, so she made hominy from it and made it often. Field corn, white or yellow, was put into a large pot on the stove, covered with water, and lye added. The lye would eat away the hard shell from the corn, leaving the soft kernel from the inner part of a grain of corn. Then it was boiled in water again and again, changing the water often, in order to remove the lye.

Most all foods were prepared, canned, or dried for winter use. The canning was done in stone jars with sealing wax used for

Stockton, Calif.

sealing the lids on. The glass jars and two piece lids of today are much more convenient. The drying process took yet more time, since many days were required to bring fruit to the dry stage to prevent molding. The fruit was cut and put on the wire bottomed trays or on sheets which were spread on a flat roof. The fruit was covered with mosquito netting to keep flies and insects away. Corn holds its useable stage for a short time only, so when corn drying time came, it was hurry, hurry for everyone. A fire was built around the iron pot outdoors. The ears of corn were boiled in the water, then the corn was cut off the cob and dried in the sun. What busy days those were!

The time for molasses making was a time when the whole family worked — papa, mama, all the children, and sometimes the neighbors. The cane was stripped of its leaves, the seeds cut from the tops, then the cane was cut and hauled to the molasses mill, where the process of pressing the juice from the cane stocks began. The juice would then be boiled down into molasses.

Phelps County still boasts a few working molasses mills.

Wash day came once a week. Iron or copper boilers were put on the stove and filled with water to heat, or the water could be heated outside in an iron kettle. All clothes, sheets, blankets, and quilts, were washed on a wash board and wrung by hand.

Threshing was one of the joyous times. One could hear the threshing machine coming down the road blowing its whistle. All the neighbors helped with the threshing. The men did the work, while their wives and older daughters prepared the meal.

Most always there was music — violin, guitar, and everyone singing. Singing then was enjoyed as much as radio and television is enjoyed today.

Those who can recall washing their hands with homemade soap at grandomther's house before sitting down at her table when she served home cured ham, creamed dried corn, fried dried apples, homemade bread, and molasses cake are indeed fortunate as these are memories the younger generation will never know.

Bold Attempt To Rob The National Bank of Rolla

Rolla Express

March 24, 1881

Information Gathered and Compiled By Jessie Rucker

"The most daring attempt at bank robbery in the history of Missouri was suddenly brought to an end Wednesday morning, in this city, by the killing of as desperate a robber as ever picked a lock or slept behind prison bars. As to whether the burglar was a professional at the bank robbing business it is hard to tell but as for desperation, the attempt to break into the National Bank of Rolla yesterday morning equals any attempt of the same character on record. That one man would undertake to pick through a stone and brick wall three feet thick with nothing to aid him but a drill and chisel, and without an accomplice to keep guard while at the desperate deed proves our assertion. This is what Pat Ebert did and for which he gave up his life.

"About a week ago D. W. Malcolm, the cashier of the bank, had his attention called to a suspicious looking stranger who was daily seen walking up and down the street in front of the bank. As strangers in our city have been quite numerous of late, this stranger did not get the vigilant watch he required,

but on Monday Marshal Devine was told to keep an eye on his every moment as far as practical and more particularly to make careful survey of everything surrounding the bank during the night. This was done, and in such a manner that no suspicions were aroused.

"Ebert was stopping at Isaac Williams boarding house on 8th Street, having been in Rolla nearly a month. Mr. Williams tells us that he had not paid anything for his board up to his death, but claimed that he expected money through the mail in a few days and would settle up. On last Saturday he was seen standing on the southwest corner of 8th and Pine Streets, looking intently at the bank building and at the vacant storehouse west of it. After taking in all the surroundings he crossed over to the corner, walked passed the bank, then back again, and then slowly wended his way around the corner to the alley in the rear of the storehouse and around to his boarding house. This was in the afternoon. No trace could be found of Ebert after 10 o'clock on that night, and did not return to his

boarding house until 4 in the morning. On Monday Mr. Malcolm and Marshal Devine inspected the cellar of the store room, discovering footsteps on the damp ground and signs around one of the cellar windows showed that but recently some person had entered the cellar through the grating. To be positive Mr. Malcolm left the back door of the warehouse, in the rear of the storeroom unbarred. The same evening it was found closed and fastened from the inside. This proved that some person had been in the building since he and Marshal Devine had looked through it. It is now the general supposition that the first two nights were devoted by the burglar to surveying the building throughout and to locating the exact spot to commence drilling for the vault. He first commenced work on the wall in the storeroom between the lower shelving and about one foot from the floor. This did not suit him, no doubt from the fact that he could not use a light and to work in the dark was too slow; and to use a light would attract the attention of the night watchman, or the frequent passersby from the trains which arrived at 1:30 in the morning.

On Monday night he was not to be found anywhere, although he had been seen late in the afternoon on the streets.

"On Tuesday morning Devine secretly slipped into the cellar and discovered the burglar's handiwork. Leaning up against the wall were a large crow bar and a drill about 3 feet in length and on the ground a chisel and a

small miner's lamp. Nothing was touched. He had made good headway, removing the stone and brick sufficiently to allow a very large man to crawl through, up to the last layer of brick.

"On Tuesday the gentlemen above referred to, arranged their plans to make the capture the coming night. Now all this time Ebert was only seen in conversation with one stranger, and he a young man about 21 years of age. This was on Monday afternoon, but he suddenly disappeared and was not seen any more.

"Upon inquiring at the boarding house it was learned that Ebert was in bed during the morning of Tuesday. After dark while a large number of people were wending their way to the Crandell House to attend Dr. Arnold's entertainment he made his appearance. Devine sent Constable Tatsch and Deputy Marshal Mell to the vacant building directly opposite the bank to keep watch while he, himself, passed about from place to place as if nothing unusual was going on. As the concert did not disperse until about 10:30 Ebert could not get to work in the cellar, although he had made several attempts. Each attempt was frustrated by some person suddenly appearing on the street. At one attempt he came very near being caught by a man who suddenly appeared around the corner with a lantern. He was halfway through the grating, but got out with such dexterity that he was not noticed."

After this he was more careful. A close inspection was made of Bowles & Shinneman's saloon, the bank and a careful peep up and down Pine Street, and discovering no one in sight walked slowly to the grating and disappeared. Messrs. Malcolm and Flint were in the bank during the entire evening, and as soon as he got down to his work were to give a signal to the officers in the opposite building. Ebert was rather slow to resume but along about 2 o'clock in the morning the sound of his drill was heard. The signal was given. The officers quickly surrounded the building all heavily armed, as they knew from Eberts cool and deliberate movements that he was a desperado of the blackest dye. After the building was well guarded Marshal Devine called into service Frank J. Deegan and Slim Frost who were at the Grant House — making eight in all. Flint and McMasters guarded the building on 8th Street, Tatsch and Malcolm the Pine Street side, and Deegan and Frost the door way leading to the yard behind the bank. After every man was instructed as to what he should do Devine and Mel quietly entered the front door, tiptoed to the head of the stairway leading from the ware house into the cellar. There is another stairway which leads from the cellar to the storeroom to the left as you enter by the one taken by the officers, and near the foot a large post. Lying on the center

of the stairs taken by Devine and Mell was a large plank, which they accidentally touched, giving the alarm. Ebert made a spring for the stairs and reached it before the officers could stop him. The order to "Stop, throw up your hands" was given and heeded for an instant for an instant only, for as quick as a flash he threw open the door at the head of the stairs and dashed into darkness. As he passed Deegan and Frost he brandished his knife and defied arrest. Frost shot but failed to hit him. Devine and Mell dashed after Ebert, who struck across Pine Street toward Thompsons scales. He was there ordered to halt, but he didn't when Devine shot him, the ball striking near the small of the back. He turned the corner toward the livery stables, and when nearly opposite the stables the marshal shot again. But still he kept running. At this Mell took aim and let him have a charge of buckshot, bringing him to the ground. Ebert held on to his knife and when Devine came near snough struck at him viciously with it. He was taken to the boarding house and Dr. Huyette sent for, but his wounds were too severe. He lived about an hour and a quarter.

"The only persons who knew anything about the attempted robbery until after the robber's death were those who aided in his capture and when morning dawned and the news circulated the wildest excitement prevailed.

"The only thing known of Pat

Ebert is that he arrived in Rolla about a month ago, claiming to come from Kansas. He was about 30 years of age, of dark complexion, jet black hair and beard, about 5 feet, 9 inches high, and would weigh about 175 pounds. Of rather intelligent face, wore a grey suit and a narrow brim stiff hat. . . . An inquest was held

upon the body by acting coroner Stiff yesterday afternoon and a verdict of justifiable homicide rendered.

"Pat Ebert was not an Irishman although his name led many to that belief. It was proven before the coroner that he spoke German fluently and that his English was badly broken."



Typical Log House — Texas County



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