

Verna Lee

Mill Creek

an Ozarks heritage

autumn 1990

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★ Remembering Grandma Ann

★ Slates and Sorghum Pails – the saga of Barton School

sit a spell

While education was still in a primitive stage the history of a family was done orally. When few could read or write it was the only way of passing the names on to the next generation. Today, with a more technologically advanced society, the telling of the names is dying. Certainly the information can be typed on paper or entered on a computer disc, but can a person interpret feeling or individuality from those mediums? Will the names simply remain words on paper or blips on a screen, or can they realistically become images of actual people without the voices of those who once knew them? The oral history added a personal touch to the memories of our ancestors. It was a tradition among the hills of southern Miller County, this telling of the names.

As a child I often sat in the lap of Melvina Luttrell Witt. Aunt Mel would draw stick figures in the dirt at our feet and give each one a name. There was me. There was Dorsie. There was Fred and Parthena. There was Bluford and Mary and Tom and Safronia. The figures all looked the same, but each name whispered to me across dark ages. The soft voice of Aunt Mel brought each name to life, fleeting glimpses of unknown faces, barely discernible amidst the blackness of the past. It was her way of passing on the names.

Stationed beneath a second story window in the home of Verdie Witt Shelton was an old trunk. Inside it was a varied collection of keepsakes, fragments of her life. When I would stay overnight with her, Aunt Verdie would go to the trunk and produce a box of photographs. She would sit beside me on the bed as her worn fingers would lovingly trace the images captured there. Uncle George Witt, Aunt Ruthie Topping, Grandpa Jesse. It was her way of passing on the names.

Some of the names spoken by my great-aunts were names that I had never heard before. Though I did not know why, I could sense how important it was that the names be passed on - and how important it was that I learn them. The importance I did not understand is made clear to me today when I look at my child and realize he never knew my Aunt Mel or my Aunt Verdie. I now see why they taught me names I did not know. And though he never knew them, he will know them through me, for they have now taken their places in my heritage and their names are among those spoken when I hold my son and, in my turn, pass to the next generation, the telling of the names.

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**Mill
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This magazine is dedicated to the heritage that is ours and to those who gave it to us. Let them not be forgotten. Published at Rt. #1, Box 282, Brumley, Missouri 65017.

This issue of Millcreek is dedicated to the memory of Alice Dean Witt Plemmons May 30, 1930-October 28, 1990

COVER - Barefoot grand-daughter of a Miller County, Missouri pioneer, Angeline Snelling Wilson with her own grand-daughter, Lucy Evelyn Wilson in 1936. Photo courtesy of Evelyn Wilson Patterson.

school days

LETTERS
FROM
STUDENTS

I was glad to receive your school questionnaire and have filled them out, and have written additional information which I hope will be of help to you. I got started writing and couldn't stop as so many memories came to my mind.

I started to school at **Warren**, but I was small and hated it. I went to school at **Eldon** one winter, but I hated it also. Before that I had attended **Roberts School** in Camden County near Zebra. I attended grades 5, 6, and 7 at **China**. When we moved to **Barnett District**, I entered the 8th grade and completed it. At that time the 7th and 8th grades were taught alternately. A good many students took the 8th grade twice. In my case, I took the 7th grade twice. I would have had to stay in **Brumley** to go to school so my mother and my teacher, Mrs. Bunch, thought



it better for me to stay in grade school another year. I never failed a grade nor even one subject.

My mother, as you will see from reading the history of **China School**, was also a student there as were her brothers and sisters.

My grandfather, **Greenberry Pope**, and his brother, **Sam**, attended school for a time in the kitchen of their parents home on the **Glaize**, 2½ miles S.W. of **Brumley**. You have probably heard of the **Pope place**. My grandfather's first teacher was **Cynthia Spearman**, who was a legend around **Brumley**. You have probably heard of her and how she lost both hands in a sorghum mill. She was a well known teacher. Later Grandpa attended school at **Chauncey** in Camden County. He boarded at the home of my grandmother's parents. Her name was **Nancy Parish**. It was there they fell in love and married at age 18.

My father, **Frank Spearman**, attended **Spearman School**. According to the memoirs of my



school days

LETTERS
FROM
STUDENTS

Uncle Fred Spearman there was no place for school to be held, so my great-grandfather **Thomas W. Spearman** and his two sons along with neighbors cut logs and built a school. One of the sons was **Zebedee Spearman** who taught a subscription school there until the free public school system was established. At that time my great-grandfather deeded the school to the district. **Zebedee Spearman** continued to teach there. That was the beginning of **Spearman School**, but Uncle Fred failed to mention the year it was established. The school was also used for church services as well as for school.

My cousin, **Clara Pope Miller**, who is 88 years old taught at **Walnut Grove School** near Bagnell, and she also taught at **Jeffries School**.

You mentioned in the Autogram about **Lige DeGraffenreid** I knew that family well and



used to play with **Nellie and Carrie. Dorothy Thompson**, my dear friend married **Rollins**.

I shall always consider **Miller County** as "home" even though I have been away nearly 60 years. We moved to **Callaway County** when the dam was built.

Julia Spearman
326 Pioneer Drive
Fulton, MO 65251
China School - 1925, '26, '27
Barnett School - 1928

Be watching for more correspondence from Julia Spearman in future issues of Mill Creek.



The **school days** section is devoted to the portion of our past that we all had in common - school. Some of us endured it while others actually enjoyed it. The contents of the column are supplied by former students who have completed a questionnaire like the one you will find at the center of this magazine. **Mill Creek** needs your help for research! Mail your school memories today. **USE A SEPARATE FORM FOR EACH SCHOOL!**

Remembering Grandma Ann

She was a pioneer child. Dirt floors, shuck mattresses, and hard work was a way of life, though you would never hear a complaint from her. She preferred to go barefoot, disdaining constrictive shoes even in her later years. She had a passion for fishing and a weakness for tobacco, which she chewed for snuff or smoked in her pipe to suit the need of the moment. She loved laughter. She loved children. She loved life.

Her name was **Angeline Snelling**, second eldest child of **Redman** and **Margaret Elizabeth McClain Snelling**. She was born 2 September, 1862 into one of the oldest families of a young Miller County Missouri.¹

Hugh Snelling, Angeline's

grandfather, had moved west from Kentucky (via Illinois) during the great migration of the early 1830's. Hugh, his wife², and six children stopped their travels near the Big Tavern Creek and were well established there when Miller County was formed in 1837. Subsequent census years find the Snelling family in Equality, Auglaize, and Richwoods Townships also.

The early life of Angeline Snelling was greatly influenced by river bluffs, forest hills, and flowing streams; often relating these memories in later years to her grandchildren. She was educated in the public school system of Miller County. Although there are no surviving records to trace her school attendance

¹ The obituary of Angeline Wilson states she was born 3 September, 1864, however, papers that were a part of her personal effects suggest differently. It is this writer's opinion the date in the text is the correct one. The most convincing piece of evidence is an old, yellowing envelope containing the names and birthdates of her family, Angeline's included.

² According to family legend, the first wife of Hugh Snelling was of Native American heritage (possibly Cherokee). Several items support that probability. One was the extraordinary use of medicinal roots and herbs by the family. Another was the names of her sons, Redman and Berryman. Deviations of these names appear in many county records. Redman was replaced by Redmond. Berryman was changed to Berry, Barry, and even Bryan, suggesting the unfamiliarity of these names. Although "Americanized" to some extent by others the correct original names were always retained inside the family, even as recently as 1959. Three generations after she called her son Redman, a namesake was born to remind everyone of her proud bloodline. Bert Redman Hendricks, of rural Iberia, carried the name of his grandfather until his death in that year.



Angeline Snelling Wilson circa 1915. The Native American ancestry inherited from her grandmother appears quite evident in this photograph.

it is almost certain that she attended **Jeffries School** (located near Kaiser) for a short time.³

Early in 1883, at the age of twenty, Angeline caught the eye of a young widower with dark hair and flashing eyes. By the end of the year they were married. As established as the Snelling family was in Miller County, Angeline married into a family that was even moreso. **Owen Calvin Wilson**⁴ was a grandson of the eccentric **John Wilson** who had moved into this area in 1810. Angeline and O.C. began their lives together in a cabin near the cave where John Wilson's family had survived during their first years here.

Life was fairly normal for the newlyweds. Despite losing two children in infancy their family began to grow, while all resources were focused on the day to day chores that were essential to existence. In the early 1890's O.C. heard of the land rush occurring in the west. The stories of new land being made available to a man willing to pluck it from the wilderness ignited dreams of liberation. Suddenly, Miller County began to feel crowded and congested while visions of rich, red earth and open plains filled him with a sense of promise

and unimaginable hope. A new life awaited! He had but to go and find it.

O.C. gathered Angeline and his young family sharing with them his dream of promise and hope. Preparations were made. Possessions that weren't to be taken were sold or given to family. The wagon was carefully loaded with special care given to those items deemed precious. Early one bright morning the team was made ready. Tearful goodbyes were said among farewell hugs and kisses. Little **Mack Kelvev Wilson** was passed from uncle to aunt to cousin as each tried to hold the toddler one final time before he was gone. **Calvin** and **Rector** scrambled in back, ready for any adventure that might come their way. Angeline held the baby, **Jim**, in her arms. O.C. clucked to his team, slapping the reins across their rumps. The long journey had begun.

There is no one now who remembers that journey from Miller County, Missouri to the Oklahoma Territory. No one to tell us how long it took to reach their destination. No one to remind us of the courage it must have taken to leave friends and family for the unknown. Unspoken fears from those who left and those who remained. A young family alone in search of the

³ In January, 1876, Redman Snelling sold 160 acres in Sections 27 and 21, Township 39, Range 15. The location of this property is today within the Lake of the Ozarks State Park, south of Kaiser. The Jeffries School would have been located less than one mile north of this land description.

⁴ Owen Calvin Wilson first married Matilda Ramsey. She died in childbirth 12 December, 1882, at twenty-three years of age, leaving O.C. with a small child (named Calvin after his father). Devastated, O.C. laid her to rest in Ramsey cemetery, building for her an amazing tomb. The coverstone itself is cut from natural rock with dimensions exceeding four feet in width and seven feet in length.

NIKE G. SEVIER, Judge, Jefferson City
GUS LaCOMPTE, Court Reporter, Jefferson City

R. W. STARLING, Pres. Atty., Tuscumbia
LAFK KING, Sheriff, Tuscumbia

COURT CONVENES
Third Monday in January
First Monday in May
Third Monday in September

OFFICE OF
O. O. WYRICK
Clerk of the Circuit Court and Ex-Officio Recorder
MILLER COUNTY
Tuscumbia, Missouri

The Record show that O. C. Wilson and Angeline Snelling were married on the 6th day of December, 1883.

See Book "C" page 147.



(above) Found in Angeline's personal effects was this piece of correspondence from the office of the Miller County Circuit Clerk. At some point Angeline apparently had need for verification of her marriage.

(left) Reproduction of an 1880's tin-type photo of **Owen Calvin Wilson** a few years before the failed homesteading attempt in the Oklahoma Territory.

promised land.

Arrival in the Territory soon found the dream fading. Promise slowly turned to dejection, and hope to bitter disappointment. A cousin that had come to Oklahoma some years earlier couldn't be found. The lawlessness and unruly atmosphere that was a natural part of the pioneering process brought a sense of dismay and concern for the children. O.C. was distrustful of the land companies and suspected fraud. Within a year their wagon was creaking back into the hills of southern Miller County.

Home, again, was the small cabin by the cave as they settled back into the life disrupted by the homesteading attempt. In 1900, they moved into a house located on Pea Ridge (the area north of Wilson's Cave alongside present state highway "A"). The move was attributed to the poor health of Calvin, a condition complicated by the dampness of the valley air that stirred above the big creeks.

Tragedy struck the family in 1915 when O.C. became ill and died. Before his death he made it known that his final wish was to be buried beside his first wife. Upon his passing Angeline made certain that desire was honored.

After the death of her husband Angeline hired out as a housemaid to area neighbors in exchange for a small salary to help make ends meet. One of those families was that of **George and Ida McCommons Hauenstein** of Tuscumbia. After a few years, with advancing age, she left the house on the ridge to live among her children. It was during this period of time

that she became known as Grandma Ann. The profound influence of her life and memory can still be felt in the voices of those who remember her - especially the grandchildren she lived with. It was here they were taught the way of the pioneer, simply by observing Angeline's life.

They recall her bare feet and her love of tobacco, which she planted, cultivated cured, and twisted into plugs herself. They remember her wide smile and warm laugh. Powerful images are still brought to mind of Angeline sitting at her spinning wheel turning wool into the yarn that she would later transform into gloves, caps, socks and other winter clothes for members of the family. (She would send Mack to the **Henry Bailey** farm at St. Anthony to purchase wool for her spinning wheel.) A cotton or gingham dress would be completed within a day's time. Grandma Ann plucked thorns from locust trees to serve as safety pins. She often returned from picking greens with her apron tail pinned to the shoulders of her dress by thorns, forming a pouch that would be bulging from as many greens as she could stuff into it. It seemed as though every effort or deed was accomplished for the betterment of someone else. It was just the way she was.

Not all work was toil to Angeline. Fishing was her favorite "work". During her time many of the streams in Miller County teemed with aquatic life. (Indeed Angeline Snelling Wilson may have been one of the reasons for the decline of fish in the area, she loved it so!) She always



Angeline, great-grandson Dorrell Layne Wilson, and son Mack, circa 1945. Mack rented this log home after the death of his wife, **Ida Belle Casey**, in 1941. It was replaced by the building long used as a garage and market, most recently known as Abbott's, located near Tuscumbia, south of the Osage River Bridge at the junction of Highways 52 and 17.

took her grandchildren though many would protest the distance to the creek. "A little walking won't hurt you!" Grandma Ann would reply. She was forever having to bait the hooks of the little ones and those more squeamish about touching bugs and worms and slimy things. She never owned a pole, however, string and hook were always kept near at hand. The pole would be cut at the fishing hole.

Eula Casey Wilson recalls with a chuckle the most famous fishing expedition of all when Grammy was slowly leading the way down a steep embankment where walking was made treacherous by recent rains. Angeline's feet shot out from under her and she scooted with amazing speed to the bottom, hoots and howls of laughter coming from above. But nothing could keep Grandma Ann from the creek. She went on and fished, muddy backside and all.

Practically any ailment or injury could be treated by Angeline, though the patient may not have always appreciated the remedy. Gargles, poultices, potions, plasters, teas, and ointments of every describable type were readily available, and all collected by Grandma Ann from the wild. Mack Wilson's home had a loft where **Evelyn Wilson Patterson** would retreat to when she wanted to write. The arrival of Grandma Ann would convert her little writing loft into a home-grown pharmacy. Evelyn recalls the loft overflowing with numerous roots and herbs in various stages of drying, awaiting the next medical emergency. Some were hung in bundles, others were spread out on the floor and table.

At times the fragrance was nearly overwhelming. Angeline would occasionally eat a poke berry, explaining its qualities would prevent arthritis. While she went on about her business everyone else would watch and wait for her to drop dead from toxic poisoning. Catnip tea was boiled, mixed with milk and given to babies suffering from cholic and gastric ailments. Drinking mullein tea eased kidney problems, as did yellowroot for ulcers. Scalybark tea relieved symptoms of the common cold. Angeline administered her backwoods medicine religiously. None of her prescriptions were written down, they had been given to her through her heritage. Sadly, little of that knowledge survived Grandma Ann.

In her later years a wheel chair slowed Angeline's activities though hardly diminished her zest for life. All of the old ones now were gone once familiar names all but forgotten, yet she continued to reflect with fondness upon those days of her youth. It had been 35 years since she had buried her husband. Nearly 60 years had passed since the deaths of her two infant children. She talked more and more of Redman Snelling and Margaret Elizabeth McClain. She spoke lovingly of her Indian grandmother.

Shortly after celebrating her 89th birthday, Angeline fell ill. Despite the best efforts of **Dr. William Gould** of Iberia, she would not recover from the effects of a massive stroke. Grandma Ann died 7 October, 1951, at the home of her son, Rector. Though she had once travelled hundreds of miles in a cov-

(right) O. C. Wilson
shortly before his
death in 1915.

(below) The children of
Angeline. (shown l. to r.)

James Blane Wilson

7 July, 1891 - 8 November, 1966

Rector Toby Wilson

12 July, 1885 - 16 May, 1975

Mack Kelvey Wilson

30 January, 1888 - 6 June, 1966

died in childhood

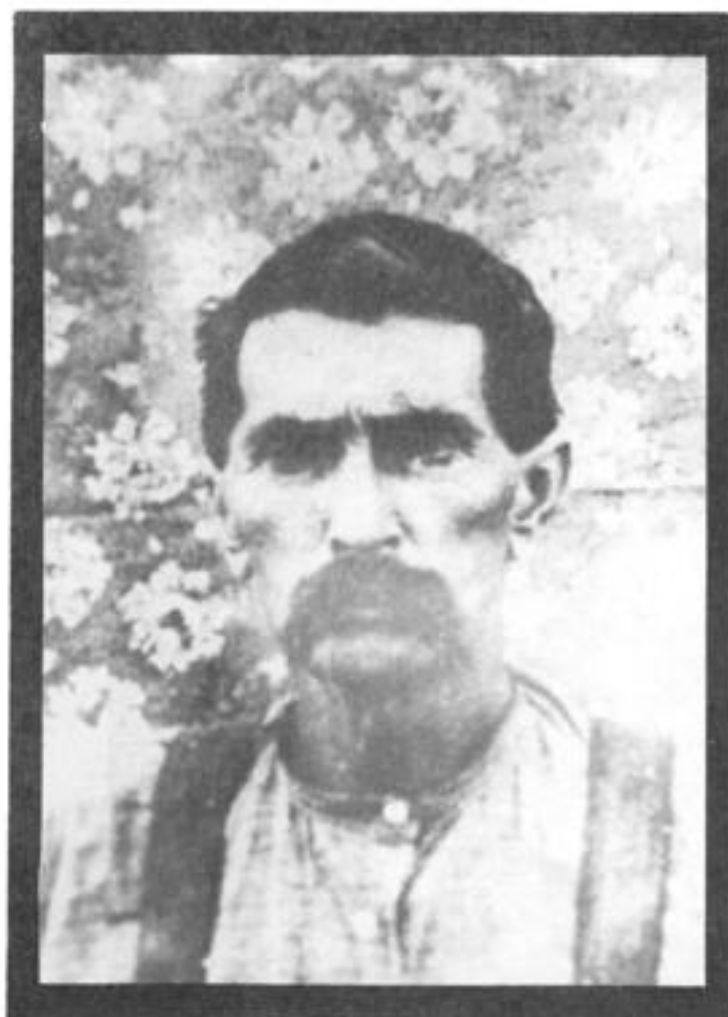
Perry Wilson

(twin of James)

7 July, 1891 - 12 January, 1892

Lilly Wilson

birth and death dates remain unknown
thought to be between 5 and 10 years
of age at the time of her death





(left) With most of her final days restricted to a wheelchair, Angeline now has to watch the world from the porch of her son, Rector. circa 1948.

(below) 1950 photograph of an emaciated Angeline with her great-grandson, Michael Dale Abbott. This is the last known photograph of Grandma Ann.



ered wagon and spent a lifetime walking beside countless teams of horses and mules, Angeline's final journey was made in a modern automobile. On 9 October, she was driven from Mt. Zion Church near Tuscumbia to Maylee Cemetery and placed next to little **Lilly** and **Perry**. Once again they lay at their mother's side.

Today, the Maylee Cemetery (long known as the Wilson Cemetery) sits placidly atop a hill, far from the roar and noise of highway traffic. No markers signify its location.

Surrounded by woods, one can pass nearby and never realize it is there. It is an old cemetery. A place of solace. A place of reflection. Hardly more than a mile to the east is where the Brushy Fork and the Tavern Creeks converge. Just north of that point is Wilson's Cave and the small valley that Angeline Snelling Wilson called home 100 years ago. I touch her simple hand-made gravestone and wonder. When her grandchildren are gone, who will then remember Grandma Ann?



A simple gravestone marks the end of a pioneer's journey. The entire setting of Angeline Snelling Wilson's burial place seems a reflection of her life. An isolated, nearly-forgotten cemetery. A wooded hilltop between two creeks. The last act of love from a son, the hand-made tombstone that Mack made for his mother. She would be pleased.

VERNA KEETH PEMBERTON
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IBERIA, MO. 65486



Jesse M. Witt
Private, Company D
6th Regiment, Missouri Cavalry
USA

Mill Creek recently published an article about Jesse Witt. Thanks to that research the above previously unidentified photograph has surfaced. Do you have any old photos you wish identified? Let us help!

Slates and Sorghum Pails

the saga of Barton School



the log school

Though the autumn sun is soft and warm I shiver at a sight unfamiliar to a modern age. Hidden deep within a Missouri forest I stand and contemplate a relic of the past - a forlorn and forgotten structure, whispering to me of tales and of lives that have come and gone before me. For a moment it seems as if the old building would speak, and I pause to listen to its words. Slowly I come to realize the voices I'm aware of are the lingerings of those who have already passed this way; voices that were here long before I came to this place. Again I shiver.

Squeals of laughter and

shouts of joy remain just beyond my hearing. Nearly audible is the regular cadence of little girls skipping rope to the accompaniment of a rhyme, an energetic game of tag or stinkbase with its inevitable quarrels and arguments, the squeak of the pump handle as someone satisfies a thirst. The clear ringing of a handbell echoes along the ridge and spills into the narrow valley below, announcing to all that hear the start of classes for the day. The peal filters through the trees and across the fields, fading as it travels. A young mother, hanging her morning wash on the clothesline, smiles as

the sound revives memories of her own school years. Her pre-school child ceases play and looks longingly in that direction, a direction where older brothers and sisters had earlier disappeared. Numerous cowpaths that exit into the small glade make it quite easy to complete the scenario as I imagine the children that probably used those same trails as they trekked the hills and hollows to attend this rural school.

County administrators and officials, in an effort to simplify and better control their ever-present paperwork, identified the little school and the area it served as District #85. To the patrons and students it was known as Barton.

Undoubtedly the school derived its name from the individual most instrumental in its creation. Land records show that on 3 July, 1858 the original patent entered for property located in Section 11, Township 38, Range 14 was made (the description where the school would be built). On that day, **Bluford Barton** purchased 80 acres from the United States Government, becoming the first landowner of that property. By 1865 he had sold the land to **John Winfrey**. It was during this period of time while Barton had ownership (1858 - 1865) that the school was established and a building raised.

Located in the southwest corner of Miller County among the last ripples of the Ozark highlands, Barton was surrounded by her sister schools of Warren to the west, Honey Springs to the north, and Curry to the east. South of Barton was the Miller/Camden

County boundary. The Barton schoolhouse was situated atop a wooded knoll near the headwaters of the Brumley Creek whose sparkling stream would journey onward nearly eight more miles before emptying into the Grand Auglaize.

No fewer than three school buildings have carried the name of Barton. The first was a single-room log structure, built to serve the children and grandchildren of the pioneers who had followed the Grand Auglaize up from the Osage River Valley. Although there no longer exists any physical evidence of the original log school, early board meeting records give an excellent account of its general location.

Creature comforts were readily available, but they were hardly the pushbutton conveniences we have today. A metal bucket and dipper was the predecessor of our electrically refrigerated drinking fountains. A nearby spring supplied the schoolhouse with plenty of fresh water, and even though it had to be carried in buckets there seemed to be no shortage of eager volunteers willing to sacrifice a few moments away from their studies for the chore of fetchin' water. There were no thermostats on the wall that could be turned up to provide some instant heat against a winter day. The source of climate control lay outside in the wood pile in the form of oak and hickory logs, split and cut to length for use in the woodstove.

While building and maintaining a nice, warm fire in the schoolhouse was the responsibility of the teacher, the cutting and stacking of

GENERAL WARRANTY DEED

John Anderson, State of *Missouri* on the *7th* day of *July* 1882, of the County of *Stoddard* and State of *Missouri*,
 by and for *Solomon Blankenship and Permelia J. Blankenship his wife*
 of the County of *Stoddard* and State of *Missouri* and *John R. Warren, L. Barriett, and John Thornsbury*
 of the County of *Stoddard* and State of *Missouri* trustees of the School District Number One of the County of *Stoddard*
 do hereby certify that the said parties of the First Part, in consideration of the sum of *One* *Dollar*
 to *them* in *Hand* paid by the said party of the Second Part, the receipt of
 which is hereby acknowledged, do hereby sell, grant, bargain and sell, convey and confirm, unto the said parties of the Second Part, his
 heirs and assigns, the following described Lots, Tracts, or Parcels of Land, lying, being and situate in the County of *Stoddard*
 and State of *Missouri*, to-wit: *All*
Three quarters of one acre more or less bounded as follows
(commencing at a point on the line 1/2 Section road South of the 1/2 corner
of the 1/2 of the 1/2 of Section 11, in Township 38 of Range 14, then west
two rods thence South 9 rods thence East (1/2) rods thence North 12 rods to
place of beginning all being in the S 1/4 of the N 1/4 of Section 11 in
Township 38 of Range 14) together with the Express Contract and undertak-
ing that the same now or said property known as the old log school house
shall be free for religious purposes as well as school purposes;

The earliest document giving specific reference to a Barton schoolhouse is this warranty deed transferring ownership of a described three-quarter acre and the "house now on said property known as the old log schoolhouse". Originally identified as School District Number One, Township 38, Range 14, trustees **John R. Warren, L. Barriett, and John Thornsbury** accept official conveyance from **Solomon and Permelia J. Blankenship** on 7 July, 1882. The deed was notarized at **Brumley, Missouri** by **James Thompson**.

the wood was done by the school district. This was usually a service acquired by bid from the public, evidence showing the competition for that bid to be quite fierce at times. The last full term in which the log schoolhouse was used began in 1910. For that year, **Julius Olander** was hired to deliver seven cords of wood. Olander was paid 90¢ per cord - a grand total of \$6.30; complete cost for the school year's energy consumption.

The log schoolhouse known as Barton served the community for nearly a half-century. Education, for all intent and purpose, had remained much

the same through the generations. Schoolchildren even used the same paths to school that their parents and grandparents had taken; carried water from the same spring. The only change that occurred was probably a cosmetic one. Interviews with former students and teachers seem to indicate the original school, at some point in time, had received a facelift. The exterior had possibly been covered with clapboard and white washed, though no written record has been discovered to date to confirm this.

The area prospered and the population increased as the children of the pioneer fami-

lies reached adulthood, married, and had children of their own. At the turn of the century the little log school house was seen as woefully inadequate to house the influx of students.

The school district and its property was overseen by a local three-member board of directors assisted by a county superintendent of schools with an office in the county courthouse (forerunner to our current boards of education and their district superintendents). Annual school meetings to decide district affairs were heavily attended by the public, issues determined by the votes of those in attendance.

The 1907 board of directors (**Lewis Winfrey** as chairman, **Frank Topping** as secretary, and **John Duncan** as member) called their meeting to order in April of that year. Business was conducted as usual with nearly fifty people at the school. One of the decisions made was to acquire the services of Mrs. **Josie Buster** as teacher for the upcoming school year. The other decision of note was one of vision, and one that would require a commitment from the patrons of the district. It was also a decision (actually a portion thereof) that would cause quite a stir among the residents.

There was no question that something had to be done to alleviate the swelling numbers that the little log schoolhouse could no longer comfortably accommodate. A motion was carried to construct a new school building. By vote, preference was shown that a concrete structure was desired by the people rather

than a frame building. Another motion was made, stating the new schoolhouse to be built in a different location $\frac{1}{4}$ mile north and 75 yards west of the original school. This new proposal was the subject of the controversy to come, beginning in this very meeting as it stood presented before the chair; yet it did pass, by the narrowest of margins. The annual meeting was adjourned, but the issue was far from over as it began an extraordinary series of events.

Within two months a special meeting was called with specific intent to reverse the decision made to move the new schoolhouse to a different site. With that accomplished, the district then had to accept the resignation of its board of directors who had decided to step down in protest. Another special meeting soon followed as proponents of a new school site gathered support in retaliation. The vote reflected their strength in numbers and again the new school was to be built $\frac{1}{4}$ mile north, 75 yards west. Resignations from the new board of directors were offered, and accepted.

Amazingly, this same procedure was repeated over and over for three years as the district seemed split between those who wanted to build a new schoolhouse on a new site and those who wanted to build a new schoolhouse on the old site. One reason for the differences, undoubtedly, was the extra distance the children on the south side would have to walk to school, while the children from the north would have their travel shortened.

In April of 1910 (with **Jim Popplewell** now serving as chairman, **J. L. Winfrey** as secretary, and **S. J. Abbot** as member) the board of directors again were petitioned by patrons to construct a new school on a new site. Records show the vote was 27 in favor and 24 against moving the school. Seizing the moment, and the majority of support it barely offered, the board secured the employment of **Mr. B. Phillips** for the purpose of drilling a well on the new school site. On 28 September, 1910, he was paid \$49.65 for work performed and Barton had a new well from which to draw water, replacing the spring below **George Duncan's** farm house. But they still had a log building for a school. (This well remains somewhat of a mystery and gives reason for a bit of confusion. Interviews indicate the spring was used as a water source as late as the 1920's. Records clearly show that payment was made for the drilling of a well, and at that time the school was scheduled to be moved. Surely the board would not dig a well on a site that was going to be abandoned, so we must assume the well was drilled on the new school site. The answer as to where the well was drilled will probably never be known since those who could have once told us are no longer here.)

Not much is known of the first school called Barton. Written records are scarce and difficult to obtain. Personal eyewitness accounts have to be heavily relied upon and those now are precious few, with hardly anything recalled beyond the last decade of its use.

Teachers in that era (the turn of the century) included **Elsie Cochran, Josie Buster, Gertrude Topping, Mae Allee,** and **Omer McCory**. Former students **Zella Thomas Anderson, Opal Duncan Luttrell,** and **Bill Cochran** seem to remember Mrs. Buster with more clarity than others mentioned, probably because of her longevity as a schoolteacher (she was at Barton as late as 1917, teaching at both the log schoolhouse and the new one that was soon to be built by the well). Noted trademarks of Mrs. Josie Buster were the scripture verses posted around her classroom, as recalled by Zella Anderson; and the black buggy she drove to school pulled by a horse named Deck, from the memory of Bill Cochran.

The school year beginning in 1910 would be the last full school term in which the little log schoolhouse was used. Mr. Olander would deliver his seven cords of wood while Elsie Cochran would ring the handbell in August as schoolteacher.

The winds of change were blowing, though the gentle folk of Brumley Creek were yet to feel the breezes. World War I was brewing eastward across the great waters and the technology developed during the conflict would begin to eventually bring about a difference that would alter forever District #85. The area had survived the horrors of the Civil War with relatively little change and had continued on its way much the same as before. But from the distance approached an unknown that could not be halted or avoided. Progress.



The **Buster** family of Brumley, Missouri around 1910. Pictured above are **Charles Wesley**, **Josie**, and daughter **Clara**. A buggy similar to this one was often seen at both the log school and the school in the woods when **Josie** taught there.

the school in the woods

Considering the previous three years 1910 was proving to be surprisingly normal for District #85. School continued as before at the little log schoolhouse with the woods around it swarming each morning with children on their way to class, lunches

carried in sorghum and lard pails, or even wrapped in a dishcloth and stuffed in a coat pocket. Fall quietly came and departed. The decision made at the board meeting in April to build a new school $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north and 75 yards west of the original

log school still stood.

Snow began to softly fill the hollows of Brumley Creek. White-cloaked cedars bowed in winter slumber, seemingly unaware of the children as they trudged by on the snowy pathways. Parents cut burlap sacks into strips and with sackstring tied these makeshift leggings around shoes and pantlegs in order to preserve these items as long as possible against the moisture and cold. Overshoes were a luxury that few could afford. Upon arrival at school shoes were pulled off and placed by the woodstove to dry. **Eva Davenport Kaiser** remembers the stove encircled by shoes as classes began and continued through the day with students in stocking feet. Winter progressed. The new year came and days grew longer and warmer. There was still no further outcry of defiance from opponents to the new school site. No special board meetings had been demanded.

In March of 1911, Elsie Cochran ushered the last child out the door to begin summer vacation. She stood a moment and watched them go as one by one the forest swallowed them up. She could hear their sing-song voices long after they had disappeared from sight. She smiled to herself at the tireless chatter of children, wishing them all a pleasant summer, yet realizing the end of the school year coincided with the spring planting season. Many would soon be working long hours in the fields. But somehow she knew the children would find time for wading in the streams, or chasing lizards, or playing house. She knew they would discover am-

ple time and opportunity for mischief. Children always do. She gathered her things and left, closing the door behind her.

Three months later, on 11 June, 1911, the door to the little log schoolhouse was again opened as district patrons gathered for the annual meeting. This was the perfect setting for the faction against moving the school to present their argument, but it didn't happen. The meeting records show no indication of the matter even being discussed! Had everyone finally tired of the struggle? No clues have been left to make a determination. What is shown is that the district voted for and approved issuance of bonds in the amount of \$400 to finance the construction of the new concrete schoolhouse they had first approved of in April, 1907, finally giving the board of directors the power necessary to seek the means of accomplishing that task.

The summer of 1911 was a blur of activity. All the years of dormant talk and controversy were suddenly gone, having an effect similar to that of a tightly wound spring being released. Building plans were quickly drawn up and made available to prospective contractors for bidding purposes. The new building would be quite modern for its day, an object of pride for the district. Specifications called for a one room concrete structure measuring 24 x 34 feet. The roof would be sheet-metal while the interior of the classroom would be finished with plaster applied directly onto the concrete wall. The floor

would be wood plank. There would be no electricity, no plumbing, no insulation.

While construction bids were being received, the bonds were granted and a buyer sought. The **Bank of Brumley** purchased the bonds totalling \$400. Although no mention is made in the board meeting records, certainly we should be correct in assuming that **Mr. James Messersmith**, county superintendent, was instrumental in obtaining and selling the bonds. Perhaps even the building plans had to meet his approval. It is unclear through board meeting records as to exactly how much influence the county office held over individual districts.

Construction bids were received and the district was given one of two choices. A bid submitted by **Shepard Boan** was for \$400 but was noted as excluding the plastering of the interior walls. The other bid was from **Bluford Luttrell** with a total cost of \$425, however, this bid included plastering. The contract was given to Luttrell on 10 August, 1911, and he must have began work immediately.

One must keep in mind the fact that there was no concrete plant just a phone call away. There were no concrete trucks available to deliver ready-mix concrete nor dump trucks to haul gravel to the construction site. The materials needed were purchased at Brumley, while the gravel was dug from Brumley Creek by shovel and carted up the hill in a wagon pulled by a team of horses. Every step or procedure required a great deal of manual labor, including mixing the concrete by hand

and carrying it up the scaffolding in buckets to pour inside the forms. A close inspection of the old schoolhouse shows evidence of the painstaking slowness as each day's pour can be seen and easily measured, much like counting the rings of a tree.

The contract was let on 10 August. Two months later the job was nearing completion. A simple message of commemoration was left behind in the north gable as someone scrawled the following memorial in the finish coat of cement. Still visible today, after 80 years, are these words:

S. J. Abbot
Bluford Luttrell
October 17, 1911

On 24 October, 1911, Bluford Luttrell was paid \$425 for completion of the new school building. The little log school had been replaced.

The 1911 school term, with Mae Allee as teacher, started shortly after Luttrell began construction. Though no mention is made and no one now remembers, I believe we can safely assume the year began in the log schoolhouse and then moved to the concrete building at some point in late October or perhaps early November.

The log school, and the generations of children it had served, now passed the mantle of education on to a new building, and to a new generation. Soon it too would become like so many of those who had entered through it's doors - only a memory. So much so that only a handful can now say with confidence where it once stood. But the new school would bear the tradition of it's namesake well, and for nearly as long.

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The Bank of Brumley, organized in 1906, was instrumental to the growth and economic stability of the surrounding communities until 1959 when it sold and was moved, becoming the Bank of Lake of the Ozarks. The move was indicative of the trend away from rural life and occupations to the prosperity offered by the emerging tourism industry at the man-made lake scarcely a dozen miles away.

The concrete structure built in 1911 remained a one room school until 1935. In that year a measure was taken to improve the quality of education for the children of District #85. A room-length partition was added between the entrances, and along with the new wall came another teacher. Barton was now a two room schoolhouse and would continue to operate in that capacity until 1953, when, in it's turn, it would be replaced by yet another school building.

As in all educational systems teachers played a prominent part, with each student having his or her favorites. Each decade seemed to produce a new person that would inevitably endear themselves to the

children. Some were former students that had continued academic pursuits beyond the eight grade levels offered at Barton. This was no small accomplishment in itself, especially since the nearest high schools were located at Brumley, Iberia, or Crocker and usually meant moving away from home to attend these institutions. A high school diploma plus satisfactory completion of a teacher's examination at the county superintendent's office was certification enough to teach for one year. Anything beyond that required accredited college hours. But there were those who braved the challenges, then returned to Barton to teach. These included **Zella Thomas Anderson, Emery**

Allee, Paul Meredith, Cecil Smith, Thelma Wall Meredith.

Zella Thomas returned to Barton in 1914 as a replacement for **Perry Wyrick** when he was unable to commit to the entire school term. Thomas was a sixteen-year old girl at the time, younger than some of her students, which numbered over sixty. Fresh from her studies at **Iberia Academy** (she was housed in "The Cottage" while attending there), Thomas was probably the youngest teacher ever at Barton. Her duties began in October and continued until latter March, 1915, with a monthly wage of \$37.50.

A name long synonymous with Barton is that of **Mary Swofford**. She first came to District #85 in 1924 and would teach there intermittently until the mid-40's. Her career easily spanned two generations of Barton students, and in some instances, three. Notorious as a disciplinarian, it is rumored that Mrs. Swofford had eyes in the back of her head. Former students still marvel at the way she could spin on her heels in the twinkling of an eye, catching many would-be mischief-makers in the act. **Beryl Luttrell**, who spent a considerable amount of his childhood standing in the trash box with his nose stuck in a circle on the chalkboard readily agrees.

Practically all of her students still refer to her as "Mrs. Swofford". The rules and regulations she employed were just and fair though some may have considered them harsh. I suppose the point could be argued but all will agree that "harsh" is an accurate description of what

could be expected if one of Mrs. Swofford's rules were broken. One of those rules regarded the ancient practice of "sparking". To say the least, it was strictly forbidden. One day it was reported to Mrs. Swofford that **Fred Witt** was seen holding hands with **Parthena Luttrell** while walking to school that morning. Mrs. Swofford glowered at Fred, her scowl deepening as the story was repeated. This was a serious breach of order and could not be tolerated. Fred was marched from his seat to the front of the room, and even though he was nearly twenty years old stood quietly as his punishment was soundly administered for all to see, including Parthena. But Mrs. Swofford's switch wasn't nearly as powerful as the magic of Parthena's eyes and the two would eventually marry on the 29 March, 1930.

The year 1929 brought a rural Eldon woman to Barton, and though **Ruth Watt Thomas** was only forty miles from home, considering the day, she may as well been halfway around the world. Known to her students as "Miss Ruth", Thomas boarded locally with the **Degress** family, leaving her with a walk of nearly one mile to school. She recalls her first day on the job with some embarrassment. Wanting to make a good impression she rose early that morning and began her journey to school before the mists of dawn had even dissipated. Her path led her through a field of timothy still damp with dew and, to her dismay, she soon found herself sopping wet from ankle to waist. Thinking she had allowed herself enough

time to dry sufficiently before the arrival of students, Thomas continued on her way to school. Once there, she opened the door - only to discover the entire board of directors waiting inside! "Miss Ruth" also taught intermittently at Barton until the early 1940's. She married locally and lived for many years less than one mile from the school building where she had made her unforgettable impression.

A young man of nineteen years began teaching at Barton in 1941. Paul Meredith would teach at District #85 for two years before being called upon to help defeat the enemy Axis forces of World War II.

Logan Stone came to Barton in 1946, bringing with him his passion for sports, especially basketball. Stone gave the rural children a new perspective of education with the concept of athletic competition against neighboring schools, travelling with his team to other districts, including the indoor gymnasium at Brumley. He would teach at Barton for seven consecutive years, driving the ten miles from his home in Ulman in a 1946 Chevrolet pick-up truck.

District #85 had seen many changes since the concrete schoolhouse was raised in 1911. Electricity and plumbing were beginning to have an impact on the quality of life. The mechanized age was in full swing, as evidenced by the growing number of automobiles on the roads and tractors on the farms. But the transformation of the area had no effect on the little school in the woods. Electricity was never routed to

the building, no plumbing was ever installed, a road was never developed. The only access to the Barton School was the old carriage lane that Josie Buster had used at the turn of the century, traversible by auto only in the best of weather conditions. The nearest approach by automobile still left one over a quarter of a mile from the school. No one was spared the final walk through the woods; students, teachers, school district directors, county health nurse, even the county school superintendent. There simply was no road.

The obvious was quite evident. Progress was making the concrete school obsolete. The children of District #85 attended a school that was basically unchanged for a hundred years. It was time to modernize. A new building was the only answer. A public auction on 18 April, 1953 disposed of the old building and its fixtures. The auctioneer's gavel banged one last time and echoed through the same trees that had so often heard the ring of a teacher's handbell. The concrete school was abandoned.

She sits quietly among the oaks now, waiting. Her only visitors are the stars at night, and an occasional person in search of a memory. The laughs and shouts of children are replaced by the haunting cry of a whippoorwill. Faces no longer peer through her empty windows. The pump is silent and still. Patiently, she waits. Waits for the children that left so long ago. Hoping, someday, they may return. But they are gone. Forever.

(continued next issue)

Preachin' In The Woods

Brumley Brush Arbor Revival

"Back then, revival meetins' was revival meetins'!" **Charlotte Huddleston Beard** told me some years ago. Well, Lottie, you certainly would have enjoyed this one.

They once were a common sight, but our addiction to air-conditioned auditoriums and our preference for plush cushioned pews have made them events of the past. The old brush arbor meetings would bring folks from miles around. They came by foot, rode mules and horses, or drove buggies to attend. They gathered on summer evenings when all the work was done to sing their hymns, clap their hands, and listen to the words of the preacher. When darkness fell they lit coal-oil lamps and hung them in the branches of surrounding trees, continuing into the night. With services over they scattered for home, lights winking across the dark countryside like so many earth-bound stars. The revival meetings varied in length. Two weeks was the normal duration, though many often exceeded that. The brush arbors were community affairs, reaching beyond denominational barriers and social standings.

Thanks to an idea pursued by **Brian Duncan** of rural Brumley, that area witnessed its first brush arbor revival in scores of years. Originally sponsored by local Baptist churches the event blossomed into community-wide involvement, and suddenly everyone understood the significance of the old outdoor meetings. There was no sign depicting Baptist services, or Pentecostal services, or Church of Christ services. Just an invitation to come to an old-fashioned brush arbor. And come they did. By the hundreds from Miller, Camden, Pulaski, and Cole counties.

Many came for the nostalgia of things past. Some for the novelty of a past thing made new. But whatever their interest may have been most of them returned again and again throughout the week-long services.

In the summer of 1990 there were no horses or mules or buggies hitched around the brush arbor. Those who attended came in automobiles, vehicles of the present. Although the method of travel had differed from the past, everyone found the reasons for coming to be unchanged. Like days of old the community gathered - relatives, neighbors, friends, strangers - to share a common bond. The bond of a spiritual family.

Among those churches represented at the brush arbor held near Brumley on August 13 - 18, 1990 were Brumley Baptist, Honey Springs Baptist, Brumley Christian, Ulman Baptist, Curry Church, Faith Tabernacle Church, Bible Way Church, First Baptist of Iberia, Concord Christian, New Hope Freewill Baptist, Spring Garden Baptist, Spring Valley Baptist, Rodden Church of Christ, and Mt. Union Church of Christ. In true community spirit, after all expenses were met, these churches donated the remainder of monies received during the meeting to the Miller County Nursing Home at Tuscumbia (\$313.90).



Little had changed in the preparation of a brush arbor through the years. Chainsaws and weed eaters of today replaced yesterday's axes, bucksaws, sickles and scythes. As the site was cleared the brush was placed atop a frame to create the arbor, providing shade for those sitting in this country open-air theatre.

Such large crowds attended the week long meeting that the brush arbor could not begin to contain them. The evangelist was Rev. E. P. Baldwin of Corinth, Mississippi.



Children Of Yesterday

Dog Creek School Reunion

They once gathered here five days a week, heads bobbing along the creekbank on the way to school. Sunshine filtered through flaxen hair the color of straw and glinted in dull reflection from curls black as coal. The creek valley rang of life each day as they came, screeching and howling in their play. There were trees to be climbed, streams to be waded, pigtails to be pulled. The moment of youth was theirs.

Now they come only once a year. The flaxen hair and curls of black have changed to various shades of silver. The creek valley lies quiet and still since they no longer traverse its length and breadth. The little school stands alone. There is no more time for play. The streams have all been waded. The trees have all been climbed. The pigtails have long since gone. The moment of youth is no longer.

Yet once each year they come to remember. They laugh as they laughed all those long days ago, sharing again the time of children and the little building of stone that brought them together. It is as much a part of them as they are a part of it. Just as it beckoned to them in years past, it calls them back today.

But amidst the laughter and happiness lies a subtle sadness. Sorrow for the days now lost. Sorrow for the children of yesterday. For the list of students will never be longer for Dog Creek School. The list of names only grows shorter. Absent this year was **Selby Graham**. Now when roll is called there can only be silence after his name. The class of 1915 has lost its final spokesman.

The children of yesterday. Each year they are fewer and fewer. With the passage of the seasons, more and more memories are stilled. So they come back now to remember - the little school, glories of the past, those who have gone. And they shall continue to do so - laughing, visiting, remembering. Until the children of yesterday are no more.

On September 8, 1990, I received a special invitation to attend the Dog Creek School Reunion. A late summer rain sent all of us scrambling for protection just as the dinner hour began. Somehow we all squeezed inside the tiny structure. Someone commented that they didn't remember the place being so small. My personal observation was that of an optical illusion. The school building hadn't actually shrunk. Most of us simply occupy more space than we used to. (Just ask June Ahart!) And some of us occupy space more simply. (Just ask Imogene Horton!) The crowded conditions only served to hasten back memories of school days at Dog Creek and some even managed to use it to their advantage. Why, Logan Stone went around the table of food three times, claiming he couldn't get out of line! (He was there unchaperoned since his wife, Eula, wasn't feeling well enough to attend. If she doesn't make it next year someone is gonna have to watch that rascal!) With perfect timing the rain stopped just as the meal was finished and the sun came out from behind the clouds. Photos then were taken and many found time to lounge in the shade and visit. I hope they invite me back next year - but I'm sure getting in line ahead of Logan Stone! Thank you, Dog Creek students!



(back row - l. to r.) **Martin Neel** (1919), **Lonnie Ahart** (1941), **Mrs. Martin Neel**, **Faye (Murray) Tomson** (1941), **Logan Stone** (former teacher), **Gene Crane** (1942), **Babe Patterson** (1936), **Carolyn (Patterson) Pryor** (1951), **Norma Jean (Graham) Ahart** (1945), **Patricia (Beard) Ash** (1951), **Pauline (Beard) Hensley** (1951), **Marvin Patterson** (1951), **Donald Patterson** (1951), **Linda (Carico) Kelsey** (1951), **Wendell Patterson** (1946); (front row - l. to r.) **Fred Crane** (1938), **Albert Ray Graham** (1951), **Harold Patterson** (1951), **Raymond Beard** (1951), **Elsie (Patterson) Yates** (1937), **Imogene (Beard) Horton** (1946), **June (Beard) Ahart** (1947)



Adventure!

The very word suggests exotic and distant lands: conjuring images of an African safari with endless plains of strange and savage beasts; racing with the wind across a wild sea as billowing canvas snaps overhead and saltwater sprays against your face; cutting a trail through dense jungle searching for the remains of long-forgotten civilizations.

But alas! Brumley has no dense jungle, or wild sea, or strange and savage beasts. Not unless you count blackberry thickets, Mill Creek in springtime, and chiggers (although I don't know of anyone who has actually seen one of the latter). Of course, adventure is where you find it and though the setting was neither fascinating or intriguing the family farm offered much in the way of excitement to a young boy.

As thrilling as an adventure may be, it is always more memorable when there is one to share the adventure with. My partner was my lit-

tle brother, Dave.

Dave was an invaluable asset to my survival of childhood. He became an unwitting assistant to many of my experiments - such as the effects of electricity on the human body.

One day he found me in the living room with my finger in an empty lamp socket, intently probing for something that I, apparently, couldn't reach I would withdraw my finger and look down in the socket, then repeat the process.

"Wha'cha doin'?"

"There's a frog in here and I can't get it out."

"Let me see! -- Aw I don't see nothin'."

"It's in there. See if you can feel it." I jumped from the couch and quickly plugged the lamp back in while Dave inserted his finger. CONTACT! I noted the reaction was very similar to the one my cousin, Whitehead, had when he caught his toes in a mousetrap while trying to sneak biscuits off the top of my great-aunt Verdie's refrigerator.

Examining his fingers in

dismay, Dave proclaimed the only logical explanation.

"That frog bit me!" Dave is now over thirty years old and still believes that frogs have teeth.

Little brothers can serve many purposes, if you know how to use them correctly. Mine came with many useful functions, and I delighted in expanding the limits of those qualities; especially to suit the need of the moment. For example, little brothers are good for tasting the ripeness of persimmons (if his tongue sticks to the roof of his mouth the persimmons aren't ready); little brothers are good for testing the strength of suspect branches while climbing trees (you can always say he fell out - which is true); little brothers make good bed-warmers in winter (put him in bed first, then make him scoot over when you get in); and, of course, their most useful purpose of all - "Dave did it, Mom!"

That particular phrase was heard frequently around our house and though undoubtedly at times legitimate, just as often it was not. My first experience with Crayola crayons was a classic case to illustrate this point. Now I know what you're thinking, and even I had enough sense to refrain from marking on the walls. No, I didn't write on the wall with my crayons. I wrote on my sister.

At the time of the incident Susan was still a baby, for all intent and purpose. She was old enough to crawl but hadn't yet learned to walk. Mom had just finished giving her a bath and had placed her in the living room under my watchful and responsible eye.

I was busy with an examination of supplies that Mom had purchased for the coming school year as Susie played in the floor, dressed only in her diaper. In the sack that was designated for Dave I found something that I had never seen before. Crayola crayons. I opened the box and was immediately enthralled by the attraction of the various colors before me. I pulled out the black crayon, marveling at the waxy texture. I had to try this thing out!

I carefully pushed the tip of the crayon across the outside of the sack and watched as a thick dark line appeared behind it. I continued and it wasn't long until there was no more space for writing on Dave's sack. I picked up my sack but decided that I liked a nice clean sack rather than one with smudgy smears all over it, like Dave's.

I searched for something else to write on but found nothing other than furniture and some official-looking papers. I knew better than to write on these (grown-ups can be pretty fussy about what you accidentally rip, tear, crumple or drip ice cream on) I looked, but there wasn't anything available. Then Susie crawled by. Hmm.

I gave her a toy to keep her in one place and sat down behind her. Letting all my artistic talents flow I began tracing lines across her back and shoulders. Susie soon had an impressive series of tiger stripes that any person would be proud to display. Any person that is except maybe Mom. I thought it best to probably get rid of those stripes before she found out. But, to my horror, I discovered an important fact about crayons.

They don't have an eraser on the other end. Now what was I going to do?

My salvation appeared at that moment in the form of Dave, munching on a jelly sandwich. I returned to my project with a very evident zeal, luring Dave over to where we were. The stripes were being applied now with a flourish and a flair as Dave watched. Somehow I had to get him involved.

"Bring me an orange color, Dave." He took another bite of his sandwich and picked through the crayons until he found it. He brought it over and sat down beside me. He was getting interested.

I took the crayon from him and began filling in between the stripes. Dave took a bite and mumbled around the food in his mouth.

"Looks like a tiger to me"

"Yep. Susie's gonna be a tiger."

He leaned around to look at her face. "Needs whiskers"

"I ain't got that far yet"

"Can I do it for awhile?"

I refused, explaining the need for doing it perfectly. After all, he was only five. There was simply no substitute for the vast experience and knowledge of my own six years. Dave pleaded and I dutifully considered my difficult decision before giving in. I handed him the crayons and he gave me his jelly

sandwich. I chewed on the sandwich while instructing him on the color scheme we were trying to attain.

Dave was doing great by himself so I thought it a good time to leave him to his doom. I got up and happened to wander into the kitchen where Mom was preparing supper. I also happened to mention Dave's activity, reporting in some detail as to what he was doing. After all, it was my job.

Mom gasped and reached for her switch. She flicked it menacingly, and with unmistakable intent hurried into the living room. Her entrance was marked by howls from Dave (the sight of Mom's switch did tend to have that effect) The interrogation was short and I noticed a pronounced increase in the volume of Dave's wails as punishment was administered. I calmly ate the rest of Dave's jelly sandwich as he accepted sole responsibility for the switchin' that, in all fairness, should have been mine, too, in whole or part. Thank God for little brothers!



M. Baysinger Aug. 1990

Mill Creek artist and illustrator, **MARK BAYSINGER**, has recreated *Banton "the school in the woods"* as it will never be seen again. Prints of this 11" x 14" pen-and-ink drawing are available by mail only through Mill Creek. Suitable for framing, with or without matting. Signed by artist.



(Special orders in watercolor or oils can also be obtained at artist's discretion.)

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- ▶ Jesse Whit - Miller County Civil War Veteran
- ▶ School Districts Of The Past
- ▶ The 1899 Home Of Jacob Catron

IMAGES FROM HOME



"Guardians Of The Past"

East Lawn Entrance to Iberia Academy

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