

The Clay County MOsaic

"Fitting the Pieces Together"

Quarterly Newsletter of the Clay County Archives & Historical Library, Inc.

October-November-December 2008

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Linda Smith
Shirley Fansher

Mosaic by Internet

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Please send it to:

info@claycountyarchives.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's winter again. Time for hunkering down and hibernating. Time to sit by the fire and reflect on the year just spent. It's been a busy year for most of us in most respects and at the Archives, we've been plenty busy, too.

The year started with rumors of building improvements. I am happy to report that they are all completed and we are much the better for it. Roof repairs, a spruced-up front entrance (paint, new lights, etc.), a new air conditioner and furnace, two sump pumps (that should help mitigate, if not eliminate, flooding in the basement), new windows along the west side of the building and other things I'm sure I've forgotten to mention. We want to thank the cities of Liberty and North Kansas City and we will plan an open house to formally thank the Mayors and others who participated.

The Archives was honored by the City of Liberty and the Historic Downtown Liberty organization in May with a Stewardship Award for our care and concern for the Hughes Library building, our home for the last 20 years. There was a very nice ceremony and the plaque is prominently displayed in our lobby.

One of our long-time volunteers, Jane Milner, "retired" from the Archives this year. She headed up the Use and Preservation committee ever since I can remember and had been a very important volunteer over the years. She moved to the St. Louis area this summer to be with her family and she will be greatly missed.

In July one of our esteemed board members, Ray Brock, received the coveted Alexander Doniphan Community Service Award presented by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and The Clay County Millennium Historical Board. The ceremony was held at William Jewell College in conjunction with the 200th birthday of General Doniphan. A bronze bust of Doniphan was unveiled to be placed in the Hall of Famous Missourians in the State Capitol. The Hon. Rod Jettson, Speaker, Missouri House of Representatives, was in attendance to receive the bust. As those of us at the

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GENERAL INFORMATION

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday through Wednesday -- 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
First Wednesday of Month -- 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Closed on National Holidays

MEMBERSHIP FOR CALENDAR YEAR

Individual & Family (one address) -- \$15.00
(Memberships paid after October 1 will apply to next calendar year.)

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Unlimited *On-Site* Research
Subscription to *The Clay County MOsaic*, our quarterly newsletter.

RESEARCH POLICY & FEES

Non-members pay \$5.00 per day for on-site research. Member and non-member research requests by mail are accepted. Each request must be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope and an initial research fee of \$10.00 per surname for one hour of research. Additional hours are \$10.00 per hour.

COPY PRICES

Original records (such as probate material)	\$1/page
Other published material	15 cents per page
Microfilm printouts	25 cents per page
Computer printouts	5 cents per page
Outsize copies	50 cents per page
Photographs	
Standard Quality	50 cents
Archival Quality	\$5.00

Personal imaging will be charged at the above rates.

SPECIAL GIFTS PROGRAM

Benefactors -- \$1,000 & up (cumulative)

Patrons -- \$500-\$999 (cumulative)

Contributors -- \$100-\$499

Friends -- \$25-\$99

BENEFACTORS

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BENEFACTORS

(Continued)

Hallmark Cards
Jerry & Pat Henderson
Jane Milner
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PATRONS

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Millicent Daugherty
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Carol and Steve Olson
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2008 PROGRAM

CONTRIBUTORS

Thomas Capps
Kathryn Duncan
Nancy A. George
Ronald and Cerise Harris
Dail and Sallie Hobbs
Kermit B. Karns
David and Linda Smith

FRIENDS

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Rean Robbins-Duncan
Sally Swaney

ARCHIVES GIFT SHOP

CLAY CO., MISSOURI MARRIAGES 1821-1881
CLAY CO., MISSOURI MARRIAGES 1881-1904
Each Book, Softbound \$24.50 ppd
(MO residents add \$1.80)
Each book, Hardbound \$29.75 ppd
(MO residents add \$2.19)

THE STORY OF LIBERTY...from settlement to suburb, a movie available in two formats:

DVD -- \$15 each
S-VHS -- \$10 each
(add \$2 for shipping and handling)

The VHS version is available in two formats, for older model players & for the current model players. Specify which of the formats you desire.

GREETING CARDS

Christmas cards – 12 for \$10
Note cards 10 for \$5

DOCTOR ON THE WESTERN FRONTIER

The Diaries of Dr. William Wallace Dougherty, 1854-1880
\$22.50 at the Archives
\$27.50 if mailed

I KNEW FRANK...I WISH I HAD KNOWN JESSE Family, Friends and Neighbors in the Life and Times of the James Boys

Hardback: \$55.00 members
\$60.00 non-members
Soft cover: \$17.00 members
\$22.00 non-members

GUERRILLAS AND OTHER CURIOSITIES

Bud, Donnie and Me
Soft cover: \$15 members
\$17 non-members

MISCELLANEOUS BOOKS (all postpaid):

1877 Historical Atlas of Clay County	13.00
Every-Name Index to 1877 Atlas	13.00
Clay County Births, 1883-84	7.00
Clay County Deaths, 1883-84	7.00
DAR Sesquicentennial Book	18.00
Every-name Index to DAR Book	11.00

Please make your check payable to:
Clay County Archives

And mail to:
P. O. Box 99
Liberty MO 64069

OF INTEREST TO GENEALOGISTS

The Western Historical Manuscripts Collection – Rolla has preserved the records of over forty-five IOOF (Odd Fellows) organizations in southern Missouri. The Collection includes some records of the Rebekahs, the IOOF's auxiliary organization for women. Coverage is very good for Jasper, Phelps and Crawford counties, with some coverage of other southern Missouri counties.

The collection includes minute books; treasurers' ledgers; membership rosters and occasional correspondence.

Go to <http://web.mst.edu/~whmcinfo/topics/Odd>

From "Show Me" State Genealogical News, the newsletter of the Mo. State Genealogical Assn., Summer 2008

A Manchester History Festival will be held in Manchester, England on March 20th and 21st, 2009. For information contact Trish Whitmore at tysh9@yahoo.co.uk.

From "Show Me" State Genealogical News, the newsletter of the Mo. State Genealogical Assn., Fall 2008

"The Preserver" 16:1 (August 2008) asks, "What Happened to the 1890 Census?" That year 47,000 enumerators collected information on 62 million Americans. On the afternoon of January 10, 1921, smoke was seen wafting from the Commerce Building, where the 1890 schedules were stored. The fire was confined to the basement, but the basement was flooded in the effort to put out the fire.

Some census schedules stored on the fifth floor of the building were not damaged. Other schedules stored in a supposedly waterproof vault in the basement received minor damage. The 1890 schedules, while in the basement, were not in the vault. They were thoroughly soaked. To add insult to injury, the decision was made to allow the soggy schedules to remain in the flooded basement until a damage assessment could be done the next day!

A small part of the 1890 schedules in fact survived, but these fragments cover very small sections of 10 states and the District of Columbia.

The cause of the fire was never officially ascertained. It was suggested by the government that some papers had spontaneously combusted, but a second, more widely believed theory held that a worker smoking in the basement set off the blaze accidentally.

From "Show Me" State Genealogical News, the newsletter of the Mo. State Genealogical Assn., Fall 2008

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**EXCERPTS FROM OUR LATEST
PUBLICATION, “DOCTOR ON THE
WESTERN FRONTIER: THE DIARIES
OF DR. WILLIAM WALLACE
DOUGHERTY,
1854 – 1880”**

The first part of Dr. Dougherty's diary ended on February 21, 1860. It resumed on January 1, 1869. The diary for the years in between remains lost to us, except for excerpts that were published in the Liberty Tribune in 1909. At that time the missing diary was in the possession of the doctor's son Charles. The following text comes from those excerpts.

Friday, May 22, 1863

The papers intimate that Vicksburg is doomed as Grant is close to it with overwhelming numbers.

Monday, May 25, 1863

I heard today of the shooting of a man named O'Neal by the Arsenal Troops at Richfield (*Note: now Missouri City*) on Saturday evening and also that Mr. Carpenter of Carpenter's Store (*Note: in what is now Trimble, Clinton Co.*) has been killed by bushwhackers.

Sunday, June 21, 1863

I went this morning to see the noted guerilla Arnold. The militia captured him last night. He is badly wounded in the chest, legs and arms. He has a daring, rather ferocious appearance. I think that he will die from his wounds. Great curiosity prevails to see him. He is at the Thompson House.

Monday, August 24, 1863

The news is that Quantrell burnt Lawrence last Friday morning and Lane and Jennison are threatening Missouri with vengeance.

Saturday, August 29, 1863

The company of soldiers from St. Joe, and above there behaved most desperately. Some 10 or 20 got drunk and took the town. They drove everyone from the streets and cursed and swore in an awful manner, using the most indecent language until every woman in town was afraid to show herself. After they got tired they left for their camp at the fair grounds. All the officers commanding them seem to have been absent and the men had their own way. The same men went to the cemetery and broke and defaced some of the Gravestones.

Thursday, September 3, 1863

Col. J. H. Moss returned home last night and is said he has been authorized to arm the citizens of Clay county for self-defense.

Sunday, September 6, 1863

I heard that the militia killed a man named Donovan last night near Jno. Keller's place. He and two or three others were riding along the road and were ordered to halt when they fired and threw themselves down on their horses and rode away. The militia fired and Mr. Donovan fell. Such is the report.

Tuesday, September 8, 1863

The emigrants from Jackson county leaving their homes are crowding thickly upon this side of the river without shelter or much to eat. "When this Cruel war is over what a happy time there'll be," as the song says.

Thursday, September 10, 1863

There seems to be considerable excitement in regard to organizing the citizens into companies for the purpose of repelling Kansas "Red Legs" and "Bushwhackers" should they invade this region.

Friday, September 11, 1863

The "Red Legs" from Kansas are taking all the negroes, horses, etc., from the upper part of the county, with no one to oppose them. The times are truly distressing and seem to be getting worse.

Monday, October 26, 1863

A great many people were in town today. There is an immense amount of property to be sold during this term of court, land, negroes, stock, town property and everything that can be sold. Such distress has never been known in Clay county. The candidates for circuit judge spoke today. Col. Doniphan made a flaming speech. He said the people could obtain for themselves security and safety by going to the ballot and voting to sustain the provisional government and putting down the radicals who were destructionists. Col. Moss also spoke in corroboration of Col. Doniphan.

Saturday, November 14, 1863

It is reported that John Cooke has been killed somewhere in Virginia.

(Note: John Cooke was a brother-in-law of Gen. J.E.B. Stuart and a maternal cousin of Capt. L.B. Dougherty.)

**MISCELLANEOUS GLEANINGS
FROM MICROFILM
OF EARLY CLAY COUNTY
NEWSPAPERS**

Articles from the *Liberty Tribune*

January 18, 1918

DISTILLERY REMOVED: The Jones distillery in the southwest suburbs of town has been dismantled and stills and machinery moved away, the proprietor no doubt realizing that the day of whisky making in Missouri is rapidly drawing to a close. The distillery was established in May 1881, by the late Judge J. M. Jones.

July 23, 1936

LANDMARK FALLS VICTIM IN STORM, Old Coffee Tree at James Farms Said To Have Stood One Hundred Fifty Years: The strong wind Sunday evening took a heavy toll in wreckage of shade and fruit trees throughout the county as well as out buildings. Among the trees felled by the storm was the old coffee bean tree on the James farm. This tree is said to be about one hundred and fifty years old. It stood ninety feet high and was more than 16½ feet in circumference. Today only one-third of it is left, the south side of the tree fell, and had it fallen to the north it would have demolished the house. It was in the friendly shade of this old coffee bean tree that Frank and Jesse James played with the little negro children and together they enjoyed many a romp beneath its spreading branches.

It was beneath this tree that Mrs. Zandler (sic) Samuels had her son Jesse James buried, and beneath it he rested for a number of years before the body was moved to Mt. Olive cemetery in Kearney... The coffee tree will make many an armful of wood and also carved souvenirs will be made from its wood.

Article from the *Liberty Advance*

June 29, 1936

TO DIG SPUDS BY ELECTRIC LIGHTS, Victor N. Remley Plans to Evade Heat By Harvesting Potatoes After Dark: A part of the potato crops this year will be dug in the night time if the intense heat continues. Victor N. Remley, extensive potato grower of the Orrick district, plans to harvest his crop at night to escape the daytime sun and heat. His fields are near Excelsior Springs junction, two miles east of Missouri City, enabling him to secure the

electrical current. Power lines will be placed through the field for high-powered bulbs. Prospects for a yield above the average in this field are favorable.

RECENT ACCESSIONS

Two pictures: Nebo School and Interurban or railroad, and Letters Written by Bertha Roberts Isenhour, Volumes 1 and 2, donated by Shirley Lusher.

Four photographs of Missouri Company H, Third Infantry, donated by Cindy Henderson.

Photographs and clippings showing all sides of Multnomah plantation from the collection of Elizabeth Angel, donated by Jennifer Rogers.

Account of ghost sighting at 316 E. Franklin, Liberty, donated by Willard Allen Yoakum.

Funeral books from Mrs. Ruth Hoy, Charles Summers and Mrs. Virdie S. Withers; Clay Co. Sesquicentennial book and Heritage of Liberty book, donated by Roy Hornbuckle.

Book "The Sandusky Family in the United States," by Judge James M. Sandusky, donated by Ellis Rudy.

Items from the Alexander Doniphan Bicentennial celebration, including a DVD of July 9, 2008 event highlights; a program from the ceremony; a copy of Church News newsletter of July 19, 2008, published by Deseret News, Salt Lake City and the U.S. flag flown over the United States Capitol on August 30, 2008 in honor of Alexander W. Doniphan's 200th birthday on July 9, 2008, all donated by the Millennium Committee of Clay Co.

These materials are available for our patrons to use in their research. Thank you to these generous donors.

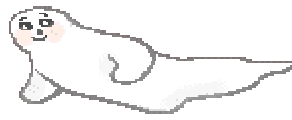
A QUOTE FOR TODAY

"I believe that banking institutions are more dangerous to our liberties than standing armies. If the American people ever allow private banks to control the issue of their currency, first by inflation, then by deflation, the banks and corporations that will grow up around the banks will deprive the people of all property until their children wake up homeless on the continent their fathers conquered."

*Thomas Jefferson 1802,
submitted by Steve Olson*

We extend our sympathy to the family of member Tim Hagerbaumer, who passed away on Wednesday, December 10, 2008. Tim and his mother Alene were frequent visitors to the Archives and we will miss seeing him here and talking "history" with him.

Ghost Towns of Clay County



Third in a series of stories about Clay County communities that are no longer with us.

ACME SPRINGS

(Part 2)

By Stuart Elliott

There were numerous articles about the social life in Acme. So, at one time, it was a thriving town but what happened to it? It is shown still platted in the 1914 atlas but the newspaper articles dried up well before then.

At this point, I'm not sure we really know what happened to it; what caused its demise. John Bender died intestate on January 5th, 1916; this may have been the beginning of the end of Acme Springs.

To find the area now, you'd need to travel Antioch Road to 76th Street and turn east. Drive until you reach a "T" in the road. You're now looking right at it: at the corner of what were Line and Mulberry Streets. (Mulberry, it seems, is now Kensington Avenue.) The only street that is currently platted in old "Acme" is North Cypress. I'm not sure where the mineral spring is; it must be on lot #1.

We have only one known photograph of Acme Springs and it is of residents assembled outside the general store.



Oh, one more thing. A contemporary and neighbor of Michael Dresslar and William Carpenter named David Ashbay, in September of 1838, bought forty acres from the United States Government (the NW quarter5 of the SW quarter of Township 51, Range 32, Section 17), which would later become the farm where my father grew up. And, even later, Happy Rock Park.

Our thanks to Stuart for writing the story of Acme Springs. We would appreciate any corrections or further information. If you are familiar with any of Clay County's "Ghost Towns" and would like to submit an article, we would welcome it.

GUARDING OUR FUTURE BY PRESERVING OUR PAST

By Nancy George

I don't know about you, but I don't get many "good" surprises these days. Not with the economy in its current state, the news of terror attacks and job losses. Did I mention retirement accounts in the toilet? Imagine my delight when I was given a simple assignment to index an old scrapbook and found I had stumbled onto a hundred-year-old treasure.

At first glance it appears to be a very old, overstuffed and fragile book held together by what looks like a shoestring. The newspaper clippings, booklets and keepsakes may have been "yellowed" 50 years ago; today they are browned and brittle. On further observation, I found that the scrapbook chronicles the activities of the Alexander Doniphan DAR chapter from 1910 through 1920. The historical preservation projects the chapter performed provide a window into Clay County history through the eyes of Ethel Massie Withers who meticulously and lovingly maintained the scrapbook.

I was surprised to find that a flag had not flown over the courthouse since the Civil War until the DAR asked the county to fly one. General John Will Hall, State Commander of the Confederate Veterans of Missouri, raised the flag at the courthouse November 4th 1912. General Hall was the young man who in 1861 assisted in raising a Confederate flag nearby.

Flag Day was observed in Liberty for the first time on June 14, 1913. At the urging of the DAR chapter, merchants decorated their buildings with "national colors and in the evening played patriotic airs."

The DAR chapter held "evening parties," one of which was in honor of George Washington and was held at the Liberty Ladies College on February 22, 1913. Mrs. Withers writes, "the affair was a brilliant social success and will never be forgotten by those present, since on the following evening the scene of so much beauty was wrecked by fire – now the ruins of Liberty Ladies College mark the spot."

The proceeds of the evening parties were used to fund projects. They donated a flag and oak case to the Liberty School District and "gently nudged" the school district to install a flagpole. They also donated mosaic tablets containing the Ten Commandments to the Liberty School District.

The chapter began collecting county historical artifacts. In 1913 Mrs. Withers began compiling historical information by interviewing 87-year-old Dan Carpenter and his 81-year-old wife, as well as D. C. Allen. Their memories and accounts of

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**EXTRACTS FROM THE
LIBERTY TRIBUNE**

Archives volunteers have been abstracting genealogical and historical information from the Liberty Tribune, a continuation of the Genealogical Notes by Hodges and Woodruff that ran prior to 1900.

October 2, 1908

John **Creason**, who was shot by Constable John **Burnett** while trying to evade arrest at the **Stone** place east of town Wednesday afternoon of last week, died in the Post-Graduate hospital in Kansas City Friday morning and the body was brought here to the **Hill** undertaking establishment that evening by Mr. Hill. The inquest over the body last Saturday, resulted in the returning of a verdict without any recommendation being made, and the filing immediately after by County Attorney **Craven** of an affidavit charging Constable Burnett with murder in the first degree. A warrant for his arrest was at once issued and his preliminary trial set for Thursday, October 1. Much detail follows. Willis Creason, the brother of John Creason, who delivers fruit here, and Jim Creason, the twin brother of John, went with the body to Maysville, where the aged father and mother and the young son of the deceased, joined them in a sorrowful procession to a newly made grave. The funeral was attended by a large number of old friends of the deceased, he having been born in that city thirty-five years ago.

October 16, 1908

The colored folks had a big wedding Monday night at their Baptist church. Lewis **Stewart** and Georgia **Shepherd** were the couple. The ceremony was performed by the pastor, Rev. **Brown**. The church was nicely decorated and organ, banjo and guitar music was given on the occasion. A number of white people were present, seats being reserved for them. Lewis is employed at the home of Senator **Wornall** and he and his wife have worked in other homes in Liberty, always being good and faithful in performing their duties.

October 30, 1908

Wood W. **Arnold**, the road overseer who shot and almost instantly killed Jean **Martin**, a saloon keeper, over a hat dispute last Friday, went to Gower the next day and surrendered to authorities. A coroner's jury held him over for the killing and he was bound over to the grand jury without bail. He says he shot Martin in self-defense.

The friends of Dr. R. E. **Sevier** of Liberty and Mrs. Lena **Ray** of Excelsior Springs were treated to a surprise by the couple getting married Wednesday. It was known that the doctor had been making frequent visits to the Springs but they were supposed to be on "professional business." The ceremony was performed Wednesday afternoon by Rev. T.H.B. **Anderson**, pastor of the Methodist church, at the home of Mrs. Ray. The couple came here and will reside on East Mill street. The doctor is one of Clay county's most prominent physicians and a thorough gentleman. The bride is truly a most estimable lady. She was the widow of James C. Ray and a daughter of the late W.T. **Onan** of Kearney. Dr. Sevier and his bride were schoolmates and sweethearts in their younger days. Both had married before but death had removed their companions.

November 6, 1908

Missouri City: Mrs. Harriet **Chaney** died Saturday evening. She had been in poor health for several years and was a great sufferer. The funeral was preached Sunday afternoon.

November 13, 1908

Early last Friday morning the body of a Chinaman was found by the railroad track near Birmingham. The body was brought to **Sharp's** undertaking establishment in Liberty and an inquest was held by Coroner **Isley** last Saturday. From all the evidence obtained it is believed that the Chinaman met with foul play en route to Chicago. The fact that no bones were broken lends credence to the belief that he may have been thrown from a passing train, although there are no marks of violence on his body. From all appearances the man had been dead two or three days. When the body was searched, letters were found in his pocket which indicate his name, also his destination, and the point from which he traveled. Wong Chee **Tock** is the name. The address of the Quong On Lung Company, 317 South Clark street, Chicago, is given on a letter head which was found in his pocket, also the address of a farm or Company in Juarez, Mexico... Dr. Ho Ly **Yuen** of Kansas City and Harry S. **Reardon** of New York, a Chinese detective who happened to be in Kansas City, came to Liberty to investigate the death... The body was buried here by Undertaker Sharp Monday afternoon. A Chinaman attending William Jewell had the arrangements made for the burial of his fellow countryman.

Relatives here received word Wednesday

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**EXTRACTS FROM THE
LIBERTY TRIBUNE**

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of the death that morning of Rear Admiral James M. **Miller**, at Philadelphia, Pa., where he was governor of the naval home. Admiral Miller had not been well for some time but he was critically ill only a short time. His brother, Dr. E.H. Miller, was with him part of the time on his recent trip to the East, and left for Philadelphia the night before Admiral Miller died. The burial will be in Philadelphia. Mrs. Ann Miller of Liberty is his mother and Mrs. John M. **Newlee** of Liberty and Mrs. Mattie **Pearce** of Kansas City are sisters. Admiral Miller leaves two daughters, one of whom lives in Europe, but she was present when her father died.

A Mr. **Happy** and a young lady were married here not long ago, and comment was made that they were both Happy, but a Kansas City paper said she was unhappy and brought suit for divorce.

There was a new turn of affairs in the investigation as to the cause of the death of Wong Chee **Tock**, the Chinaman whose body was found in Birmingham, in the arrest of "Harry S. **Rearden**," the man who claimed to be a Chinese interpreter and detective from New York. His real name is **Spencer** and he is said to be Portuguese and not Chinese. It is alleged that he has been in prison, that he had been with Wong Chee Tock before the latter's body was found. The federal grand jury at Kansas City has indicted him and he is in jail. Spencer came here to help try to "solve the mystery." It was decided to have the body exhumed and Undertaker **Sharp** took it up from the grave in the Liberty cemetery Wednesday night. Coroner **Isley**, assisted by other physicians, held an autopsy Thursday morning.

December 18, 1908

Gashland: Married, Mr. Robert **Peters** of Gashland to Miss Maggie **McDonnell** of 4820 Locust street, Kansas City, by Rev. James **Foreman**. Mrs. Peters is of Scotch-Irish descent. She was born in Edinburg, Scotland. Her mother died leaving three little girls and their father to mourn her death. Her father then came to this country with the children, shortly after died, leaving Miss Maggie and two little sisters to battle as best as they could, in a strange land among strange people. When Mr. Peters returned home after his marriage in Kansas City, his neighbors of all ages serenaded him.

Gashland: Edwin **Sprague** of Akron, Ohio is supposed to have died in Clay county about twenty-five years ago. Any one knowing the facts will please inform J.B. **Johnson** of Gashland, as the widow will be greatly benefited.

**GUARDING OUR FUTURE BY
PRESERVING OUR PAST**

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the county were published in the *Liberty Tribune* and the *Liberty Advance*. The documentation is stored with the Missouri Historical Society.

The chapter marked the graves of Revolutionary War soldiers Richard Simms and John Majors in 1912.

There are no pictures, .jpps or Polaroid photographs in the scrapbook. However, the images evoked by the handwritten correspondence create pictures of Clay County life during World War I that only words can create. The chapter meetings moved from the members' homes to Red Cross work rooms. There is no mention of "evening parties" but of keeping memorial tablets documenting soldiers who died.

Every time I go to the archives I leave with such an appreciation of the history stored in that building and the care the volunteers take in preserving it. Had they not kept this treasure safe we would have missed a little piece of our local history and wonderful examples of love of country and community involvement. I think Mrs. Withers said it best: "Let us guard our future by preserving our past."

Our thanks to Nancy for the work she has done and for writing the above article. We have lots of volunteer opportunities available. See Page 9 for a partial list. If you enjoy history, you will love working here.

THE ATKINS-JOHNSON FARM

The City of Gladstone purchased the Atkins-Johnson Farm in 2005 to save the land from being developed. They plan to historically restore the home, which at that time was the oldest continually-occupied home in Clay County. The house was built around a log cabin, which dates back to the 1820's. The old logs are visible where a section of the home's wall has been removed to expose them.

If you have traveled along Pleasant Valley Road between Gladstone and North Brighton Avenue, you have driven by it and by the historic Big Shoal Cemetery, which is on land donated by the Atkins family.

Gladstone has formed an organization called the Friends of the Atkins-Johnson Farm, to create awareness of the farm, conceive and plan events to be held there and assist in fund raising to ensure the property's future.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Friends of the Atkins-Johnson Farm, you may contact Gladstone for more information. Their phone

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As you plan your charitable giving, please remember that the Archives is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your donations are tax deductible and a great way to help ensure that we will be able to continue to provide quality service to genealogists and historians.

VOLUNTEER CORNER

We are always looking for good volunteers. At this time, we have the following opportunities:

- Abstracting information from Criminal Court files. Some of these files contain interesting stories about the early history of the county. Volunteers search these documents for names of people and places and record them on the outside of a folder.
- Abstracting genealogical and historical information from old newspapers on microfilm. (The column "Extracts from the Liberty Tribune" on Page 7 of the newsletter comes from this source.)
- Data entry and extracting information from abstracts and marriage indexes.
- Scanning photographs
- Assisting researchers.

If you are interested in volunteering, please call us at (816) 781-3611.

THE ATKINS-JOHNSON FARM

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number is 816-423-4108 and their email address is friends@gladstone.mo.us.

Membership levels are:

Student or Senior (age 60)	\$10
Individual	\$20
Family	\$30
Supporter	\$100
Benefactor	\$500
Corporation	\$1000

This is your chance to become a part of this exciting project from its beginning.

OF INTEREST TO GENEALOGISTS

(Continued from Page 3)

"The Illinois State Genealogical Society Quarterly" 40:2 (Summer 2008) includes an interesting article called "Mining for Ancestors—A Challenge to Our Readers". The crux of the article is this: in documents you possess relating to your family lines, mention is probably made of hundreds, possibly thousands, of persons not part of your lines. Those persons were not of special interest to you, so their names are probably not noted in transcriptions, indexes or other finding aids you've created for those documents. As the article says, "Our challenge to you is to start mining for other genealogists' ancestors in your files. Think of it as one of those random acts of genealogical kindness." The Editorial Committee of the ISGS Quarterly goes on to invite readers to send in their notes about non-family members encountered in documents in their personal collections.

*From "Show Me" State Genealogical News,
the newsletter of the Mo. State Genealogical Assn.,
Fall 2008*

A new publication available from the Ray County Genealogical Association is "Index of Surnames Beginning with the Letter 'A' Land Records". The index is 10 pages and costs \$5.00. For information contact them at 901 W. Royle St., Richmond MO 64085, 816-776-2305 <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~morcga/> or morcga@yahoo.com

*From Ray County Reflections, publication of
the Ray County (MO) Genealogical Assn. Fall 2008*

The Missouri State Genealogical Association will hold its 2009 Annual Conference on August 7th and 8th, 2009 at the Capitol Plaza Hotel, Jefferson City, Missouri. Featured speaker will be Julie Miller, a Certified Genealogist with more than 30 years of genealogy experience. Ms. Miller is the President of the Colorado Chapter of the Association of Professional Genealogists and Past President of the Colorado Genealogical Society.

For more information visit:
<http://www.mosga.org/conference2009.html>

*From "Show Me" State Genealogical News,
publication of the Newsletter of the Missouri State
Genealogical Association, Winter 2008*

CRAWLING THROUGH THE CEMETERIES WITH KEN

By Ken Neth (Known around the Archives as Mr. Cemetery.)

Currently we number approximately 320 cemeteries that have been located in Clay County. We also have about 24 in the works. A firm was to have been in town on December 11 to locate the Adkins slave graveyard, but apparently they didn't make it, as I went by the general location just off Liberty Drive and no one showed up.

We continuously add burial names to our current graveyards.

INK

By Steve Olson

Our Clay County documents from the early 1800's are beautiful to look at and most are in amazingly good condition. The handwriting is far better than what most of us modern keyboard slaves can do when we are forced to write a check. Even barely literate folks who had only a few years of elementary schooling and who spelled words the way they thought they sounded could form the letters uniformly and with delicate loops and curves. That doesn't mean that they are easily read today, just that they are gorgeous when taken as works of art.

Another problem with reading these old documents is that the paper has yellowed and often the ink has faded to a light brown shade. There is no longer enough contrast between the color of the ink and the color of the paper. But why did some ink fade away while some still looks fine today? Some quick online research on the history of ink explains the problem.

Ink seems to have been invented at least 5000 years ago by the Chinese. And the basic ingredients haven't changed all that much. There is the color, the solvent that carries the color and evaporates, and a binder that makes the color flow and stick to the paper. Different components have been tried in the search for perfect ink. The color has come from various berries but is most often made from either soot created by burning various woods or oils, or ferrous sulfide made by treating iron with sulfuric acid. Numerous fats and oils have been used as the binder or surfactant. The solvent is most often tannin made from some type of tree bark or sap. This is an over-simplification but it serves to answer the question of why some of our documents have faded and some have not.

In the 19th and 20th centuries the two most common inks in use were carbon/gum Arabic or iron/gall. The first is made with lamp black carbon and a natural gum of hardened sap from certain acacia trees. It never fades but was not as popular

since it can be easily smudged if dampened. The second is made from iron treated with sulfuric acid and the tannin from various tree barks. It dried quickly and won't smudge even when soaked in water. But it is corrosive and will eventually destroy the paper. And worst of all, it fades from the brilliant blue black it was when new, to a dull brown. And if the writer used a very fine pen point and left only a tiny amount of ink on the paper, it fades almost completely after a couple hundred years.

So that is why some of our old documents are hard to read.

Thanks to Steve for submitting this interesting article. From my work here, I am very familiar with faded old court records. If you would like to submit an article for possible publication in the MOsaic, we would welcome it.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(Continued from Page 1)

Archives can attest, it could not have been given to a better candidate.

We started a new committee this year, Public Relations, and have decided to concentrate on the Volunteer committee by holding monthly meetings for these two. They go hand-in-hand in that we hope increased PR will increase our volunteer base. Volunteer Coordinator Carol Olson and the committee members have instituted some new policies to provide better communication between volunteer "shifts" and to help them be more productive.

We have started submitting historical articles to appear in the *Liberty Tribune* newspaper. Our goal is to share information about our common heritage with the community and to encourage the readers to come visit us, and even volunteer. In a related effort, we are submitting our quarterly accessions to the newspaper with the same purpose in mind.

We held many training sessions this year to teach our volunteers about the finer points of using our computer system. From indexing, to internet, to scanning, to, well, you name it.

Well, this certainly isn't the complete list but the fire is dying down now, so I need to go out and bring in a few more logs and stoke the fire. Stay warm and we'll talk in a few months.

Stuart E. Elliott

A thought to remember: People do not live by bread alone...they need buttering up once in a while.

GOLDENROD

Goldenrod has been used as a healing herb since ancient times and grows throughout Europe, but the goldenrod market perked up when it was discovered that the colonies had it in great plenty. The plant was baled, loaded onto ships and taken to England to be sold in the apothecary shops, where two ounces might fetch a gold crown.

For Native Americans, goldenrod was a staple medicine, and since there were some two dozen species growing across the continent, nearly every tribe was in reach of at least one. It was used as a wound healer, but also employed in the treatment of headaches, fevers, diarrhea, coughs, stomach cramps and kidney ailments, as well as rheumatism and toothache. They chewed the tea, made a decoction of the roots and made poultices of the leaves. Calling it “sun medicine,” some tribes used it in their steam baths, but it was also made into a charm, smoked with other tobaccos, woven into baskets, burned as incense and made into a dye.

And if that’s not enough to convince you of the value of this golden plant, consider this: Discovering that its sap contained a natural latex, Thomas Edison bred the plant to increase the rubber yield and produced a resilient, long-lasting rubber that Henry Ford made into a set of tires. Edison was still experimenting with rubber when he died in 1931.

*From “All About Thyme” (abouthyme.com),
October 20, 2008*

THE SKIRMISH AT ISLAND MOUND

On October 29, 1862, atop a gentle knoll some eight miles southwest of Butler in Bates Co., Mo., an untested, poorly equipped regiment of Union infantry troops endured an attack from a superior force of mounted Confederate guerrillas.

The engagement didn’t last long. Casualties were relatively few. No territory changed hands. The fight’s impact on the region was negligible. But for the Union soldiers, the Skirmish at Island Mound would mark a milestone in U. S. history.

More than two months before the Emancipation Proclamation was enacted, the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry, consisting primarily of former Missouri slaves, would become the first black regiment to engage the enemy in combat during the Civil War. The victory would occur more than eight months before the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry’s attack on Fort Wagner, which destined that unit for “Glory” and inspired a movie of the same name.

“It’s an important first,” says Jim Denny, a historian with the Missouri Division of State Parks. “Some doubted that black men even had the courage to fight. It lay to rest any questions about the courage

and willingness of black people to take up arms and fight for the Union cause and for the cause of their own freedom.”

In the summer of 1862, the Border War between Kansas Jayhawkers and Missouri Bushwhackers unnerved the entire Kansas-Missouri region. Without the blessing of the Lincoln administration, the recruiting of black men for military service began in earnest in Kansas. By the end of August, more than 500 black soldiers enlisted in the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteers.

Fearful of more raids by Bushwhackers across the border – and with Union forces stretched thin – the 1st Kansas was ordered to proceed into Missouri on Oct. 26, 1862, to “clear out a gang of Bushwhackers.”

The 1st Kansas commandeered the (Enoch) Toothman home, and the farm’s fences were torn down to erect hasty barricades. Soon an American flag, sewn by the former slaves’ wives and daughters, flew above the home, which the black soldiers dubbed Fort Africa.

On Oct. 28, the Bushwhackers had taken up positions on the hills, or mounds, to the south and southeast of Fort Africa. Skirmishing ensued, but the 1st Kansas remained close to its makeshift fort awaiting assistance.

Outnumbered by the rebels five to one, the black troops stood fast. When help arrived, they could see hand-to-hand battle. The combatants were so closely knotted that their rescuers had no choice but to fire on friend and foe alike. The rebels retreated and the Skirmish at Island Mound was over. Eight men of the 1st Kansas lay dead, and another 11 were wounded.

Word of the former slaves’ success quickly spread. Accounts of the battle praising the black soldier’s abilities were published in newspapers across the country. While striking a blow for their own freedom, the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteers also silenced all critics.

Sadly, because the Skirmish at Island Mound occurred before the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteers were mustered into federal service, the men who died that day are not recognized on the African American Civil War Memorial in Washington, D. C., which used names from muster records.

Soon, however, the 1st Kansas’ story will be told from a new, permanent home. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources has acquired 40 acres of the Toothman farm, including the site of Fort Africa, and intends to create a state historic site by 2011.

*From “Rural Missouri” the publication of the
Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives,
October 2008*

ARCHIVES TO BE CLOSED

The Archives will be closed from Thursday, December 18th through Friday, January 2nd. We will be open for the "Explore Liberty's Heritage" event on Saturday morning, January 3rd (see next column) and resume normal operations beginning Monday, January 5th.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Archives dues expire with the end of the calendar year. Dues are still just \$15 a year and entitle you to free onsite research and this swell newsletter. What a deal!

"An optimist stays up until midnight to see the new year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves." Bill Vaughn (1915 – 1977), American humorist and columnist for the *Kansas City Star*.

The Clay County MOsaic

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We love our volunteers! During the months of October and November they worked 651½ hours. But we can always use more. If you are interested, please give us a call at 816-781-3611. (See "Volunteer Corner" on Page 9.)

"WELCOME TO THE CLAY COUNTY ARCHIVES"

Don't forget that the January program in the "Explore Liberty's Heritage" seminar series will be held at the Archives at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 3. The program, billed as "an introduction to the vast resources pertaining to local history and genealogy," is free and open to the public and refreshments will be served.

Happy holidays and best wishes for 2009 from the Archives officers, board members and volunteers.