

# The Clay County MOsaic

*"Fitting the Pieces Together"*

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

October – November - December 2005

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If you would like to receive your future newsletters by internet, we will need to have your e-mail address. Please send it to:

[info@claycountyarchives.org](mailto:info@claycountyarchives.org)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

To my fellow members of the Clay County Archives: I want to tell you all how much I've enjoyed serving as your president these last four years. Everyone has been very supportive when I have asked for help. I'll still be around every day to help however I can. Stuart Elliott has been elected our new president and Ann Henning our vice president. Stuart has been our information technology person since we got our first computer in the late 1980's. He has continually updated our programs and hardware and we have become increasingly dependent on our computerized files. Stuart knows the Archives and its needs and will be an excellent president.

On my first visit to the Clay County Archives in 1989 I was looking for information on the early French trappers and traders who came to this area many years before the Americans. On that day a lady by the name of Evelyn Petty was sitting at a table in the west room writing notes from a document. She overheard my conversation and told me there were several references to the early French and where I could find them. Soon afterwards I became a volunteer at the Archives and Evelyn and I became good friends. By talking with her I got to know more about her history and Clay County's history.

She was very proud of her Southern heritage and said she once saw a bumper sticker that read "American by Birth, Southern by the Grace of God." She laughed, but I knew that was exactly how she felt. Evelyn had all the charm and dignity of her southern ancestors.

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

### HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday thru Wednesday – 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
First Wednesday of Month . 6:30 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 print-outs —15 cents per page  
Outsize copies – 50 cents per page  
Photographs  
    Standard Quality – 50 cents  
    Archival Quality - \$5.00  
Any personal imaging will be charged at the above rates.

### ARCHIVES PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

(All prices, postage paid)

1877 Historical Atlas of Clay County.....13.00  
Every-Name Index to 1877 Atlas.....13.00  
Clay County Births, 1883-84.....7.00  
County Deaths, 1883-84.....7.00  
DAR Sesquicentennial Book.....18.00  
Every-name Index to DAR Book.....11.00  
"The Story of Liberty, Missouri" (Film)  
    DVD (including handling fee).....17.00  
    Cassette (including handling fee).....12.00  
    [See Page 3 for ordering info.]  
"Doctor on the Western Frontier" .....27.50  
    [See Page 3 for ordering info.]  
Clay County Marriage Indexes  
    [See Page 3 for ordering info.]

## SPECIAL GIFTS PROGRAM

*Benefactors -- \$1,000 & up (cumulative)*  
*Patrons -- \$500-\$999 (cumulative)*  
*Contributors -- \$100-\$499*  
*Friends -- \$25-\$99*

### BENEFACTORS

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## 2005 PROGRAM

### CONTRIBUTORS

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## MARRIAGE BOOKS AVAILABLE

CLAY COUNTY, MISSOURI, MARRIAGES 1821-1881  
Register of Marriages, Recorder's Office  
Clay County Courthouse, Liberty  
Books A thru E, Colored (1865 -1891) and Unrecorded  
Compiled by Rudena Kramer Mallory

CLAY COUNTY, MISSOURI, MARRIAGES, 1881-1904  
Register of Marriages, Recorder's Office  
Clay County Courthouse, Liberty  
Books F to I  
Compiled by Rudena Kramer Mallory

Each Book, Softbound (\$24.50 ppd, MO residents add \$1.80)  
Each book, Hardbound (\$29.75 ppd, MO residents add \$2.19)  
Make your check payable to Rudena Kramer Mallory and mail to:  
Rudena Kramer Mallory  
c/o Clay County Archives  
P.O. Box 99  
Liberty, MO 64069

## The Story of Liberty

...from settlement to suburb

Footprints in Clay, a video history project of the Clay County Archives, announce the availability of the DVD of our production, "The Story of Liberty...from settlement to suburb."

This one-hour documentary of Liberty's history spans the years from pre-settlement to present. It premiered on Mau 27<sup>th</sup>, 2004, at Liberty Cinema 12 to two full houses with a reception at the intermission.

The movie is 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.

To order your copy, submit your request in writing, indicating quantity and format.

Make your check payable to:

Clay County Archives

and mail to P.O. Box 99, Liberty, MO 64069.

## DOCTOR ON THE WESTERN FRONTIER

The Diaries of Dr. William Wallace  
Dougherty, 1854-1880

(See Excerpts on Page 3)

You can own your own copy of Dr. Dougherty's diary!

Publication Price

\$22.50 at the Archives

\$27.50 if mailed

Make your check payable to the Clay County

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(Cont'd from Page 1)

And, even though she was more than 25 years my elder, she called me Mr. Fisher. She addressed everyone as either Mr. or Mrs. She grew up sitting on her grandpa's knee listening to stories he had heard from his grandparents. I think she must have remembered every story she was told. She once told me very seriously that she did not know the South had lost the war until she was in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Evelyn was our "go-to" person when we couldn't find an answer anywhere else. She had more knowledge of Clay County history than any living person. The great thing about her knowledge was that it was so much more than just facts and dates. She always put her answers in the perspective of family relationship or the political or religious atmosphere of the time. She really made history come alive. She inspired and encouraged me and caused me to want to know more.

Evelyn passed away on November 29, 2005. She will be missed by us all.

*Kevin M. Fisher*

## COUNTY AND PROBATE COURT ORDER BOOKS

BY EVELYN PETTY

*THIS COLUMN HAS APPEARED IN THE MOSAIC FOR SEVERAL YEARS. STRANGELY, THE MATERIAL EXCERPTED FROM THE COURT ORDER BOOKS BY EVELYN PETTY WAS "USED UP" IN THE 3<sup>RD</sup> QUARTER OF THE MOSAIC, JUST AS EVELYN TOOK HER DEPARTURE.*

*YOU WILL MISS THIS COLUMN FOR A WHILE, BUT WE HOPE TO ENTICE ONE OF OUR CURRENT VOLUNTEERS TO CONTINUE THE COLUMN IN THE FUTURE.*

**MISS EVELYN PETTY  
MEMORIAL  
By Chad C. Means**

My most vivid boyhood memory of Miss Evelyn Petty is of watching her visit her family cemetery with her sister Miss Marjorie Jean Petty. The Munkirs cemetery was across the road from my grandmother's rural Liberty home. I remember being intrigued by them carrying spiral notebooks and ballpoint pens to a cemetery; my own family carried only peonies in aluminum foil covered coffee cans to such places. Years later, as a freshman at William Jewell College, I learned that recording historical details in spiral notebooks came to Evelyn as naturally as breathing.

In that particular year, I learned much about Evelyn. Our ancestors lived in the same Clay County neighborhood for generations, so we established rapport while serving on the Clay County Cemetery Committee and volunteering at the Clay County Archives. I am not exaggerating when I assert that Evelyn Petty knew the family history of every surname in Liberty Township and Fishing River Township between 1822 and 1945. As a Means, that meant Evelyn innately knew more about me than my physician, attorney, and accountant combined.

It was meaningful to Evelyn to be descended from old county families and she appreciated the trait in others amidst a rapidly changing community. She and I went together like a cream pitcher and sugar bowl from a handed-down tea set; we were vastly different in appearance and manner, but shared a bond of joint history and purpose.

I came to learn of Evelyn's lifelong devotion to history, particularly local history. While attending Liberty High School she won an essay contest for which she wrote about her ancestry. Following her graduation from Jewell in 1945, she

launched a decades-long career teaching history in Wyoming while returning to Liberty each summer to conduct her research. During these summers, she filled countless spiral notebooks with notations and facts gleaned from county records and historical newspaper files. Culminating with "Old Clay is Some Punkins" Evelyn established herself as the unofficial, but unparalleled, historian of Clay County, Missouri.

It became common for Archives patrons to use Evelyn as their primary resource when hunting for genealogical and historical information. Fortunately, Evelyn had a strong interest in colorful tales of local citizens and their antics in our community's early years. Due to her strong language skills she could weave stories together in a uniquely humorous and articulate way. Her stories brought to life pioneers who had been dead and buried for over a century.

Professionally and personally, Evelyn was a teacher but I suspect her best lessons were taught outside the classroom. She taught us why historical research and archival work are important. To Evelyn, it was not about the preservation of crumbling documents and musty ledger books. It was about people. It was about lives. It was about connections. It was about strengthening our community by remembering its origins. It was about being part of something that preceded her and survives her.

Evelyn, along with D.C. Allen and Ethel Massie Withers, will long be remembered as the great historians of our county. But to those of us who called her friend, she will also be remembered for her modest smile, her easy laugh, and the gentle manner in which she made us feel important. Evelyn Petty was a rare and gifted lady, a true Clay Countian. We shall not see her likes gain.

**Miscellaneous Gleanings from Microfilm  
of Early Clay County Newspapers**

by Jane Milner

From the *Liberty Advance* of May 28, 1923:

Henry Ford, who was interested in the machinery at the old Watkins woolen mill in Washington Township, and instructing his agents to locate other old machinery of various kinds, now wants an old-time sawmill.

From the *Liberty Advance* of June 11, 1923

**White Mule Kicked Him**

Vester Turner, arrested in Smithville Friday night on a charge of breaking into the Smithville Motor company's garage, and taking a motor meter, was given 90 days in jail by Justice Swanner in court here Saturday. When asked how he came to be in the garage he said "a white mule kicked him through the door."

From the *Liberty Advance* of Oct. 30 1922:

George G. Hall brought home with him from New Orleans two young alligators as pets for his children.

From the *Liberty Advance* of Feb. 4, 1916:

**Helen Keller to Lecture Here**

Miss Helen Keller and her teacher, Miss Sullivan, now Mrs. John Macy, will lecture at the Baptist church on Saturday evening, February 5, at 8 o'clock.

From the *Liberty Advance* of 18 Aug. 1917:

Many ladies in Missouri are working diligently for the boys in the trenches. One hesitated before sending the result of her work to the distributing bureau in London, but thought her efforts in wool, though bearing many marks of inexperience in knitting might be of some use, so the consignment was made. She has just received the following letter:

"Dear Lady:

They were some fit;

I wear one for a helmit

And one for a mit.

Thank you for the sox

I would like to meet you

When I've done my bit,

But where in the hell

Did you learn to knit?"

From the *Liberty Advance* of July 13, 1917:

According to a report just recently issued by Secretary of State Sullivan, there are 900 automobiles in Clay county, an increase of 215 or nearly 33 1-3 percent over the showing for last year.

From the *Liberty Advance* of Aug. 27, 1923:

Word from the Pyles, who are at Corpus Christi, stated they traveled 1,150 miles from Liberty to their destination, and that their gas and oil bill was just \$11.50, in traveling in their Star car.;

From the *Liberty Advance* of Aug. 6, 1922:

A Kansas City doctor declares that chiggers bite only people with sweet dispositions because their blood is sweet. But chiggers are liable to ruin the best dispositions.

From the *Liberty Advance* of Oct. 29, 1923:

Liberty's invincible negro football team won over the Kansas Industrial school for negroes on William Jewell's gridiron Friday afternoon, 21 to 0. The Kansas school is at Topeka and the team is under Coach Art Willis of Liberty. The Liberty players are in high glee over Art's failure to bring a team here that could beat them. If there is a negro team in the world that can beat Liberty's eleven, we haven't heard of it. Year after year they play their same old smashing game that crushes all opposition.

From the *Liberty Advance* of Oct. 22, 1923:

A whisky still was discovered Saturday near the west end of the old Wabash tunnel at Liberty Landing by Claude Swanner and Robert Welch, two boys of Liberty, who were duck hunting.

They came home and reported the discovery and Judge M. L. Swanner, Prosecutor Cummins, Officers Kennedy and Hards of the Gypsy court went down and made an investigation, the boys going back with them and pointing out the location.

It was hoped that moonshiners could be found in the locality, but they were not to be seen.

It was one of the most complete booze outfits that has been found in the county. The boilers of the equipment were brought to Liberty.

## EXTRACTS FROM THE *LIBERTY TRIBUNE*

Archives volunteers Jane Milner and Beverly Whitaker are abstracting genealogical and historical information from the Liberty Tribune, a continuation of the Genealogical Notes by Hodges and Woodruff which ran prior to 1900.

### 100 Years Ago This Quarter

October 13, 1905

Uncle Henry Williams of Kearney is a very active man for his age. He will be 94 years of age the 11<sup>th</sup> of next January, having been born in 1912. He voted for Jackson and all Democrat nominees on down. Mr. Williams is the father of Mrs. Dillard Mitchell, and is a fine old gentleman.

Paradise: Wedding bells will soon ring on a little hill below town as the marriage of Miss Mollie Taul and Mr. Nute Mitchel will take place soon. [See also – the Paradise column of October 20, 1905: “Thee was no truth in the item published....!”]

October 27, 1905

Mr. Ralph B. Grubbs and Miss Nellie Alcorn were married in a home wedding in Missouri City, Wednesday evening. Thursday, a reception was given at the home of the groom’s parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Grubbs who live east of Missouri City. The bride is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew R. Alcorn.

November 3, 1905

Russell Lynn and Miss Christie Crossett of Excelsior Springs vicinity were united in marriage here Wednesday afternoon by Rev. J.J. Hill at his residence. The bride is a daughter of John Crossett and the groom is a well-known young farmer. They were accompanied here by Mr. McCullough and Miss Mabel Morrow.

November 10, 1905

Mrs. Isaac Hutchings died at Excelsior Springs last Saturday. She leaves a husband and two children. Her maiden name was Odell.

License to Marry: Burton Vermillion and Bertie Linville of Smithville; Richard L. McCrorey and Minnie E. Summers of Mosby; Marion F. Johnson and Rosy M. Spencer of Holt.

November 17, 1905

John Mosby of near Linden died November 8 of typhoid fever. He leaves a wife and two children, the youngest being only 3 weeks old. He was a brother of William Mosby who also died of typhoid fever a few weeks ago. They were the sons of the late Washington W. Mosby.

The news came here this week that Hood Cravens who has been visiting in Kentucky for some time was married last week to Mrs. Margaret Hayley of Lexington, Kentucky.

December 1, 1905

Jim Mace who lived east of town near the railroad bridges at Rush Creek, was found dead early Sunday morning. The body was lying by the side of the track, just back of W. R. Downing’s house, east o William Jewell College. Two holes were found in the top of his head and a slight cut on the side of his face. The authorities are puzzled to know just how the death was caused. L The body was not run over and was not thrown to any distance. His hat was found only a few feet away and also a bundle which he had been carrying was close by. Marshall Hallissy thinks it probable that he laid down there so close to the rail that the cowcatcher struck it. L His death occurred some time Saturday night. Mace was 38 years old and leaves a wife and several children..

The marriage of Miss Pearl Towne and Otis L. Davidson took place Tuesday evening at the home of the bride’s mother, Mrs. J. C. Nichols, in Kansas City. Miss Towne was raised in Liberty by her grandmother, Mrs. Murray. Mr. Davidson, the groom, is a son of William Davidson and in the employ of the Grand Pants Corporation of Kansas City.

December 8, 1905

Miss Florence Carpenter, a young woman who was spending a few days at Excelsior Springs, fell from a horse while riding last Friday and was killed. The accident happened north of town near the residence of C. F. Bates. It is supposed that she became dizzy, lost her balance and fell off.

**Excerpts from our new publication,  
“Doctor on the Western Frontier: The  
Diaries of Dr. William Wallace  
Dougherty, 1854-1880”**

For the next several newsletter issues, we will be printing in this space excerpts from Dr. Dougherty’s diaries. We will use spelling and punctuation as shown in the book.

**Monday, August 14, 1854**

After visiting the store this morning I went in search of someone to do some plastering for us at the store, found Mr. Tom Gardner’s negro man, who said he would try and do it for us next Monday. I just heard a steam boat whistle at the landing; I wonder if it is up or down. If up it may bring some long looked for friend from a distance to the far west, no telling what may bring doubtless joy to some hearts, and it may be pain and disappointment to the others.

**Tuesday, August 15, 1854**

No rain as was predicted by many water witches. Sam made a large sale of candy to day – wholesale – to some one in Haynesville.

*Note: The town of Haynesville was located 1-1/2 miles east-northeast of Holt in Clinton County. Originally it was called Bobtown after its first merchant, Robert Harris, but it soon became known as Haynesville, named after a local farmer, Collet Haynes. Established in the early 1840’s, it was a real frontier town. It had several stores, a blacksmith shop and four churches. It was home to over 600 people. Moses E. Lard, who became a favorite Christian minister in Clay County, was raised in Haynesville. He would later say that the old town was known for its muddy streets and dogs. Before and during the Civil War feelings ran strong on both sides. At least 25 people lost their lives in shoot-outs on the streets of Haynesville. After the war the James Gant would stay there from time to time. In 1868 the Kansas City & Cameron Railroad was built 1-1/2 miles west of Haynesville. A stop named Holt Station was established and gradually the town moved to that new site.*

**Saturday, August 19, 1854**

I believe the Whigs have succeeded in electing congressmen all over the state. At

that rate old Democratic Missouri will soon become a Whig state.

*Note: Dr. Dougherty’s prophecy about the demise of “old Democratic Missouri” didn’t come true until the election of Eisenhower a century later. Several children in Liberty were named for the Whig leader, Millard Fillmore*

**Monday, August 21, 1854**

I was called to see Prof. Jas. Love early this morning with something like remittent fever. Much disturbed in the gastric region, almost constant vomiting, gave him a purgative, and visited him again and found the distress increased and the vomiting very difficult to arrest – gave the usual remedies for that purpose, but with no effect. Left him some better this evening.

*Note: Prof. James Love was born in Manchester County, Kentucky on September 30, 1820. He attended Missouri University of Columbia, graduating in 1853. He taught smath at William Jewell College until 1855 when he established the Clay Seminary, a finishing school for young ladies. This school was very popular and drew girls from across North America. It was the only ladies school in Missouri to continue uninterrupted during the Civil War. Carrie Nation, the popular temperance leader, attended this school. In 1865 Prof. Love sold the school and became president of Farmer’s Bank of Liberty, which later became Clay County Savings. This was the bank robbed by the James Gang, in the first daylight robbery in U.S. history. Prof. Love passed away Sept. 11, 1914 at the age of 94.*

**Friday, August 25, 1854**

I saw the new moon this evening over the right shoulder, which according to the old saying is good luck for this moon – I hope so, and think if the old saying for dry weather is true we will still have dry weather – the moon still hangs on her southern limb – very much on the point.

**Saturday, August 26, 1854**

We received a telegraphic dispatch this morning that the S. B. Isabel had sunk near Boonville, and very heavily freighted; there may be such a thing as our books and medicines purchased in the East were shipped aboard of her; if so, we will lose them entirely as they were not insured. Mr.

J.M. Jones returned from the East to day, on board the "Polar Star". He doubtless will bring a fine stock of fashionable cloths and I think will do well in his line. The cow has now been missing for two days & nights.

*Note: The Polar Star on which J. (James) M. Jones was a passenger had quite a history on the river. Liberty society went on an excursion on it once. Mr. J.M. Jones was mayor of Liberty during the war and a Union man, but his wife helped save the lives of several Confederates. Among them, J. T. V. Thompson, whom she disguised as an old Negro mammy and took "her" in a buggy out of Clay County. People speaking of her in later days always mention that she ran the Wine Cellar, but they also spoke of the lives she had saved. When Mr. Jones was the Clay County Court Judge, he, along with other Union sympathizers, was forced to leave the county for a period of time in 1861. The Joneses owned slaves, and after the war, some of their slaves did not want to leave their home.*

### **Sunday, August 17, 1854**

Being the Holy Sabbath day, I have not been out any today, only at church to hear Bro. Talbott, from the Cherokee nation, preach. He preached us a very good sermon, and to a tolerably large audience; larger than usual for the Methodist Church. Very dry & warm with no sign of rain -though there has been considerable rain all round us lately. The almanacs both speak of rain tomorrow and from the pain in my right hip it may come, God send it in copious showers to refreshen the thirsty earth.

## **RECENT ACCESSIONS**

Following is a list of recent donations to the Archives. These documents are available for our members and visitors to use in their research.

**Scrapbooks on Liberty Schools' Parent-Teacher Associations (P.T.A.)** belonging to Sue Stockwell and donated by her children.

***The Dalton Gang Story*** by Nancy B. Samuelson.

Article: ***Those James Connections*** from the ***Journal of the Western Outlaw*** by Nancy B. Samuelson

Excerpt from ***Revenge and Other True Tales of the Old West*** by Nancy B. Samuelson

Above material by Nancy B. Samuelson was donated by Ms. Samuelson

## **The Clay County MOsaic**

Clay County Archives & Historical Library, Inc.  
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