

Baxter County History



The Wolf House is the most historical building in Baxter County.

Photo courtesy of Ray Grass

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BAXTER COUNTY HISTORY

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LLOYD FISK

Lloyd Fisk was born in a little community west of Mountain Home called Monkey Run. The family later moved to Mountain Home where he grew up. He was the son of Mary Tucker Fisk and the late James Evan Fisk.

He and Florene Baker were married April 27, 1940.

He is survived by his wife, mother, son Gary Fisk, daughter Mara Jane Thorn, a sister Clara Alley, and a brother James Fisk.

The following was written by Jim Bodenhaner and reported by Bob Knight at KTLO Radio, Mountain Home, Arkansas, Friday October 6, 1979:

We at KTLO would like to take a moment or two and say a few words about a Baxter County man who died last night. Lloyd Fisk was a friend of ours and a good many people in this area. More important Lloyd was a "doer" and a supporter of this fine Twin Lakes Area and its people. Whether it was as a member of the State Parks and Tourism Commission, or more simply, as a master of ceremonies for a community pie supper, Lloyd always seemed to be there.

Lloyd had his roots in this area and he took pride in it. He was a successful businessman, but always seemed to have time for countless community projects...an attribute that is a lot harder to find these days.

Lloyd was an area history buff and many times we called on him for facts and information, as I'm sure many others did.

Lloyd was an "up-beat" person. You could usually count on a meaningful "Hello, how you doing" comment from him.

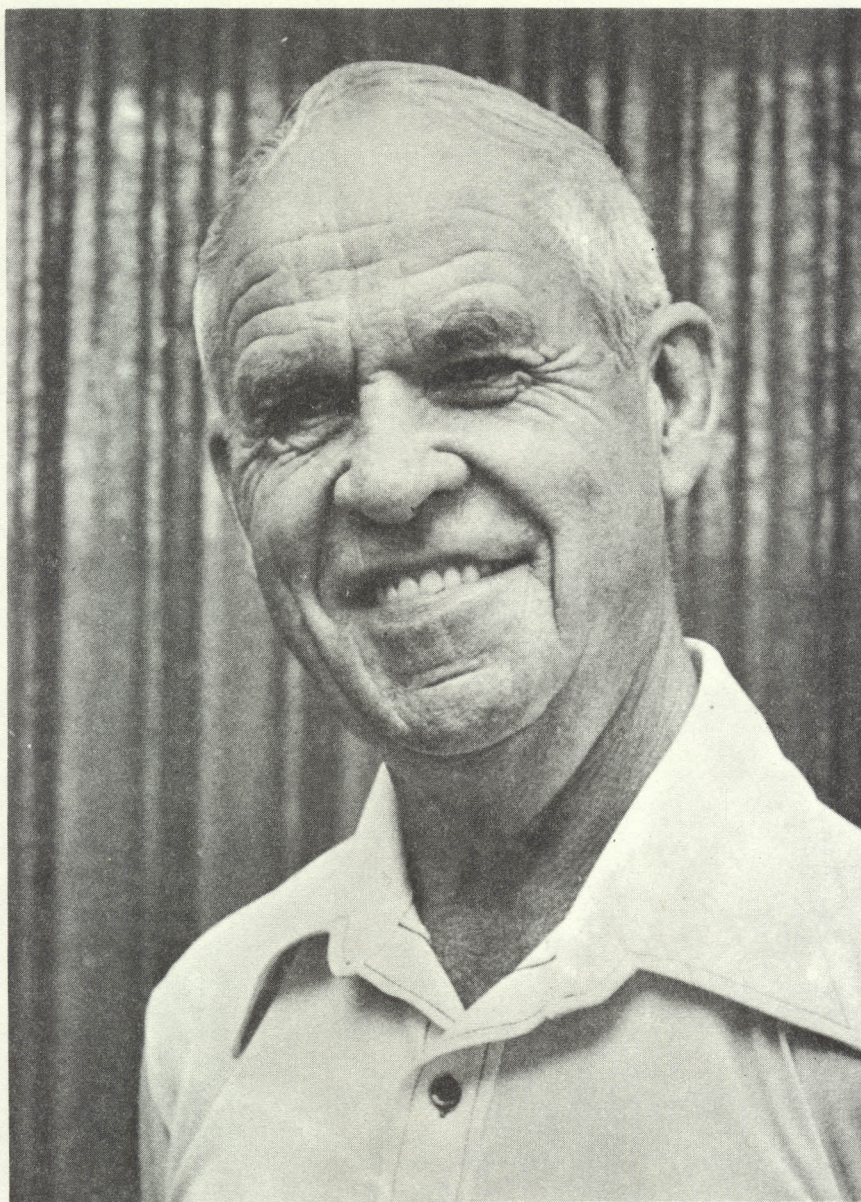
It would be difficult, almost impossible, to list all the honors Lloyd accumulated. But for us that does not give the full measure of a man. Lloyd Fisk symbolized this area and its progressiveness more than most people realized. People like Lloyd will never be replaced. But he will long be remembered.

It's sad we have to wait until a man dies for us to take a moment to praise him. But we at KTLO would like to say "Thank you, Lloyd Fisk."

These words of Jim Bodenhaner express, fittingly, the esteem and affection the Historical Society felt for Lloyd.

Our Society mourns the loss of this friend. His many contributions to the organization will be held in grateful remembrance.

This issue of the BAXTER COUNTY HISTORY is dedicated to the memory of Lloyd Fisk, who was one of the organizers of the Baxter County Historical Society in 1975. He served as the organization's president through the year of 1977.



LLOYD FISK

February 27, 1914 - October 5, 1979

PROGRESS OF THE BAXTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Hazen Bonov, Historian

June 1, 1979 - Quinby Smith spoke on "Colloquialisms of the Ozarks."

Communities developed their own languages, the origin being Anglo-Saxon. These pioneers were originally from England, Scotland, and Wales. They migrated to the Carolinas and Virginia, later coming to Georgia, Tennessee and on west to Arkansas, Missouri, South Illinois, etc. They brought their own language with them. They may have been unschooled, but they were not ignorant. Their time was spent making a living to survive. Some told time by the sun, getting up before sunrise to go to work and going to bed at sundown. Some people called them corny, country or Hillbillies.

A few of the Elizabethan expressions used were: reckon, fetch, down-yonder, youngins, you'ns, you all, fixin to go to town, and a pone of bread. Bread such as we eat today was called light bread, and they also had corn bread and biscuits. Potatoes were Irish potatoes. The youngins got a lickin' or a whoppin' when they were bad.

This was an informal meeting, and each member took turns recalling interesting expressions they had heard. Quinby said that it was unfortunate the county was fast losing this interesting dialect.

July 3, 1979 - No meeting due to the July 4th holiday.

August 7, 1979 - Quinby Smith gave an interesting talk on the "Early Trails and Roads of Baxter County."

Our roads were not laid out by a drunken Indian or a drunken surveyor. Based on Carbon 14 dating, man was living in this area and using trails 3000 or 4000 years before Christ walked on the Sea of Galilee.

Indians used trails made by deer and other wild animals. A trail is a single track for walking, and a road is anything to accommodate 2 or 4 wheeled vehicles. Improved roads have chat or gravel placed on them.

The land was surveyed mostly in 1820, but mapping showing roads was done in 1840. A few fields were noted around the mouth of Buffalo River. One house, Matthew Adams', was across the river from the present town of Horfork. Land surveyors only established lines and corners every half mile, so some trails could have easily been missed. No fords were shown then.

The first white men here were hunters and trappers, but they traveled mostly by river, trapping as they went. The trails made by animals and later used by the Indians may not have been direct.

The first cross-country road was from Horfork to Springfield, Mo. This was probably the Salt Road. It was used to transport salt and other supplies overland that came to Horfork by boat. The east-to-west road across the county was later called the Military Road. These were roads used for moving Indians to western reservations.

Quinby displayed maps of the area in 1890 showing roads and fords of that time. As new settlers moved in, more roads were built and improved as needed.

About 1910, the road between Mountain Home and Cotter had crushed limestone placed on it from a nearby quarry. No concrete or blacktop was used until W.P.A. funds were made available in the "thirties." Highway 5 was built in the middle 1920's. Old Highway 5 went through the village of Arkana. The first state road was Highway 12. It was the forerunner of U.S. 62.

River fords were placed where the river could be most easily crossed at low water. Quinby mentioned the following:

- Tracy - Near the Tracy Ferry Dock
- Friends-Only Ford - Near Norfork Dam
- South's Ferry - Norfork
- Calico Rock - Not in Baxter County
- Fords on the White River were:
 - Mouth of Little Norfork - Near Oakland
 - Pace's Ferry - About 3 miles down stream from Oakland on Promise Land Rd.
 - Dew Ford - Just below Bull Shoals Dam
 - Collis Ferry - Mouth of Bruce Creek
 - White's Ferry - A mile or so below mouth of Bruce Creek
 - Mooney Ford - Mouth of Hightower Creek
 - Denton Ferry - Hurst Boat Dock
 - None shown at Cotter in 1890
 - Buffalo City - Mouth of Buffalo River
 - Nelson Ferry - Halfway between Buffalo and Shipps Ferry
 - Shipps Ferry - South of Shady Grove

The ownership of many of these fords and ferries changed hands over the years and consequently changed names.

A question and answer period followed. It was recalled that when cars first came into use, a large magnet was used across the back of the vehicle to pick up the nails on the road.

September 4, 1979 - Leo T.C. Davis, whose teaching career began in 1932, gave a talk on the early school system of Baxter County. Following his teaching career, Mr. Davis became County Supervisor of Schools and later served as assistant Superintendent of Mountain Home Public Schools.

Mr. Davis was born in 1910. His father was a teacher and preacher before him, and his grandfather before that. Mr. Davis grew up as an only child on the family farm, and decided while still in the 7th grade that a teaching career would be preferable to farming. Teachers at that time had to be 21 years of age and take a teacher's examination given by the County Superintendent. They had first, second, and third grade certificates which were issued based on the examination grade. A first grade certificate was the hardest to obtain.

If a prospective teacher preferred to go to college, a state teaching certificate would be issued after completing the requirements and the teacher would then be exempt from the county exam. Mr. Davis elected to attend college where he took Algebra, Geometry, and Calculus, and played horseshoes the rest of the time.

At the time Mr. Davis began teaching, the pay was \$40 per month for 7 months if the money was available. The teacher usually had to pay room and board out of that unless fortunate enough to be able to live at home and teach.

Mr. Davis started teaching on July 2, 1932 in a one-room school house furnished with a desk and benches. The building had three windows, two doors and a path to the woods for a bathroom.

There were forty-five students and the hours were from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. His only supplies were a half box of chalk and rags for erasers. The students brought their books from home, if they had any. The teacher's job included janitorial work as well as teaching. Since the school building became a church on Sundays, the school had to be cleaned every Friday after school before the teacher could leave. Water was carried from a nearby spring.

Mr. Davis rode seven miles on horseback to school each morning, so he preferred to teach standing up. The students ages varied widely, from the very young in the first grade to adults as old as 27 years. Four classes a day were given, and they were taught on the front bench.

In 1932 there were 2,307 students in Baxter County. Of these, only 872 were promoted. The first free text books were issued in 1937.

In one school where Mr. Davis taught, there were 10 or 12 grown boys and the first few days were difficult due to their mischievous pranks. He later became good friends with the boys and enjoyed having them in class after the discipline problem was worked out. One of the more popular games was "throwing lasso" and had to be learned in self-defense.

When a well was dug at the school, the boys enjoyed pumping the water and the hogs and cattle enjoyed the mud. A little "Hi-life" in the mud soon discouraged the hogs.

The curriculum was Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Geography, History and Physiology.

In 1932 there were 55 school districts in the county. After consolidation in 1947 the number dropped to 5. Now there are only 4 districts as Gamaliel has consolidated with Mountain Home.

We all enjoyed the program and thank Mr. Davis for giving so freely of his time.

INQUIRY

Mountain Home Funeral Home: I am looking for information about Simon Aldridge Clark. He died in 1915. He lived at or near Gainesville, Mo. He supposedly was buried near Noble, Mo. Is there anyone who would know where the grave is located?

Mrs. Hable Flippin
601 N. Hayes
Wagoner, Oklahoma 75567

INQUIRY

March 2, 1978

Dear Sir: I am preparing a family history of the KEHELEY family who lived in Arkansas off and on from 1900 to 1950. They lived in Mountain Home and Flippin.

I am interested in obtaining any information that you may have on the family. Some of the names that I am interested in are: Josiah Green Keheley, Buried in Rogers, great grandfather; Thomas Luther Kehely, buried in Flippin, grandfather; Thomas Luther Keheley, great uncle. I am willing to pay costs for reproducing material. I am enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Ed Keheley
Bernicia, California 94510

INQUIRY

December 13, 1979

Dear Historians,

I have received a copy of Baxter County History, Vol. 5, No. 2. Also the County Church and a letter from Mr. Lynn McGuire pertaining to the Foster and Starky information I have been seeking. He suggested I write you to see if you knew where any of the family lived and might be buried.

Since my letter which was printed in this publication I received several letters. A month or so ago, my uncle, aunt, and I visited two of his and my mother's first cousins, Mr. Dove Foster and Mrs. Iva Beavers of Donkey Run, Cassville. Dove also visited me here shortly after the letter appeared in the Baxter County Bulletin. They were unable to give me much more information than I knew, but I was glad to visit with other members of your society and use them in any publication.

I visited Mountain Home twice a few years ago. We visited Mr. Foster, Superintendent of Baxter County Schools and teacher. (I'm sure it was the same) and determined that he is not kin. At the time, I didn't have enough information to know whom to ask and did not locate any relatives. I did go to the courthouse and found my grandmother's record of marriage. Mary Alice Foster to Ed Starkey in August 1896. His name was Edward A. Starkey. We do not know what the A. stands for, but believe it may be Arthur. His son, my uncle, Arthur Starkey and his children would like to find any of his other possible descendents or any other source of information on their family history.

My mother (Fay Fidella Foster (Barnes) Goodfellow) and I made a trip to an old cemetery while in Mountain Home. We found my great grandmother's headstone: May J. wife of Marcus D. Foster, Born Sept. 8, 1851 died Sept. 6, 1902. In my grandmother's obituary, her mother was listed as Melvina Foster, so I am a bit puzzled, but know obituaries are often wrong. My mother said this stone was her grandmother's. (Marcus D. remarried Janie Genkins or Jenkins and had 2 children, Jay and Virgie. Janie is buried at Flippin and Virgie was last heard of in Oklahoma. Jay died.

The other stones we located in that cemetery were: G.W. Foster, B. August 6, 1840, D. May 21, 1920. I am told he was a brother of Marcus DeLafayette Foster, my great grandfather and was Sheriff of Baxter Co. 1900 - 1904. This information from the History of Baxter County by Mary Ann Hessick. H.D. Foster is listed as Coroner 1910-1912 in the history. A Hoyen Foster is listed 1955-56, but I don't know if related.

Robert Foster B. May 7, 1868 D. April 10, 1899. (My mother's cousin and son of G.H.). Louisa J., wife of G.H. Foster, died 1901. If there are any other graves there, we didn't find them, but hope you know.

Our Foster cousins at Monkey Run have been told that Marcus D. Starkey was buried in a family plot East of Mountain Home and a fairly new house is built where it was. Probably it had only field stones for markers. We don't know, but hope you do.

How to go back as far as I know: My great grandfather, Marcus D. Starkey came to Mountain Home from Oswego, Kansas in 1882 or 84. My grandmother was born there on June 13, 1878. Other children were Adah Foster, Jackson Rosie Foster-Hughes, Andrus Foster, married to Belle Henderson. Marcus Foster married 1. Nettie Hopkins of Joplin, Mo. and 2. Melinda Jennings, Mountain Home? Iva Beavers and Dove Foster and others are children of Andrus Foster.

My grandmother, Mary Alice Foster Starkey and E.A. Starkey lived at Oil Trough near Newport for about 6 years. Then they homesteaded in the Oakland community. In 1902 or later they lived on the Goodall place there, her Uncle George's place in 1904. Children of Mary Alice were my mother, Fay Fidella Foster, Marcus DeLafayette Starkey, Arthur B. Starkey, and Louisa Starkey.

Mary Alice took the children and headed west with a family named Hulsenbeck in 1909 after she was separated from Edward. She and the children went across Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and back to Arkansas. She died near Sheldon, Mo. and was buried there 1943. The little girl, Louisa died 1909, age 16 mos. while they were traveling. Marcus Starkey died in 1976 and my mother in 1977. Arthur is the only one living. He has heard that his father remarried and had a boy and a girl. He and family wish to trace their ancestry. I would like to know as much as possible, and further back than Oswego Kansas. Thank you for your time.

Neva Barnes McClurry
Prairie Grove, Arkansas

GENEALOGY - William Dale McCormack

In 1858 and 59, William Dale McCormack moved to Marion County. (Later to be Baxter County, Arkansas.) He put up the first cotton gin in the county. All of the cotton grown on the two rivers and on the upland was brought to this gin, one mile south of the Big Pond school house. He hauled the seed off and threw it in his fields and discovered that it made good fertilizer; he also accidentally discovered that it made good feed when his stock started eating it. Besides the gin, he ran a general store, bringing the goods by wagon from Springfield, Mo., and was a stock raiser and farmer. He was a native of Tennessee and upon arriving here traded his steers for a farm and a yoke of oxen.

Dale married Elizabeth (Betsy) Jane Littlejohn of McHenry County, Tenn. Their children in order were: Elizabeth Caroline, John Needs, Mary Lucinda, James Monroe, Ephran E., Mahala R., James Bethel, Thomas Lee, Porter Field, Julia Ann, Charles Madason (Doc), and Albert William.

Dale was a Master Mason and a charter member of the Adams Masonic Lodge #164 in Norfolk, Arkansas. The lodge was chartered on November 7, 1860. There were 20 charter members. The Civil War started on April 12, 1861 and ended on April 9, 1865. The charter of this lodge and the beginning of the war were at about the same time.

Dale's name first appears in the 1860 records (Nov. 30) as having paid his dues of \$10 for his Entered Apprentice Degree. The next entry was February 1861, for his Fellow Craft Degree and dues of \$10. The next entry was unclear, but it appeared to be "Paid by cash \$5 and dues paid to 1863. In 1864, Dale was shown as paying quarterly dues of \$1. The records of the years 1866 to 1869 reflect dues paying entries. In the 1869 remarks column, there was an entry that indicated he had transferred membership. He does not appear on 1870 or subsequent records.

It should be noted that Adams Lodge was established in 1850, and minutes are irregular during the Civil War period. No other McCormacks appear either before or after 1870. The 1860-1870 Lodge minutes are in the last half of an old store ledger from a store in Norfolk 1851-1853. This ledger does not reflect a McCormack as having an account there. The building was owned by Jacob Wolf. The 100-150 names of old settlers contained several Talburts. One was "Sin" Talburt, believed to be a preacher.

As the War of the Rebellion or Civil War spread into Arkansas, men of all ages were called upon to choose a side. Dale and his son, John Needs, chose to fight for the Confederate States of America. Dale enlisted in the army at Yellville, Arkansas. He was assigned to Company B, Schnabel's Batt'n Cavalry. Dale was described as being forty-one years old on or about the date he enlisted, dark hair, fair complexion, black eyes, and height six feet one inch. Dale's unit surrendered on May 11, 1865, by Brigadier General H. Jeff Thompson, CSA commanding said army to Major General G.M. Dodge, USA, commanding department of Missouri. The unit was paroled at Jacksonport, Arkansas, June 5, 1865.

There was a J.M. McCormack on the rolls of those who fought at the Battle of Shiloh. He was in the 7th Arkansas Reg't Co. D. John Needs McCormack fought and was wounded at the Battle of Shiloh, April 6, 1862. He never fully recovered from injuries received in the fighting.

Sometime just after 1880, William Dale McCormack moved his family to Logan County, Arkansas. There he would continue farming. He would stay in that area until his death on September 7, 1907. Dale was buried in Lick Creek Cemetery located in Logan County.

HOW OLD IS THE WOLF HOUSE?

A Continuing Saga.....

The following is taken from a letter to Howard H. Knight from David H. Stahle who was working on his master's thesis at the time it was written.

Thirty tree-rings were derived from the wall logs in the Wolf House. The dates of the outer rings range from 1816 to 1829, but more significant are the clusters of "cutting dates" at 1825, 1826, and 1827, and the single cutting date of 1828. Cutting dates refer to those specimens which contain bark immediately after the final dated ring on the specimen. When bark is present, we can be certain that the final annual ring on the specimen was the last year of growth before the tree died. In the case of historic log buildings, the vast majority of logs were deliberately cut for the construction, thus killing the tree and recording in the tree ring record the year of this event.

Therefore, at the Wolf House, we may conclude that there was significant tree-cutting activity in 1826-27. The Wolf House could not have stood before 1827 when at least nine wall logs located throughout the

house were still living trees. In fact, a single cutting date at 1828 was derived from the top wall log in the upstairs partition wall. Since I saw no evidence that this log was a later replacement (although it could have been), I would conclude that the Holf House was not fully erected until after the summer of 1828 when this specific log was still a living tree.

In a different light, the clusters of cutting dates at 1825, 1826, and 1827 probably indicate that Jacob Holf had well-formulated plans to construct the large two-story house as early as 1825. To this end, Holf cut and seasoned (stockpiled) the logs in preparation for the actual construction which may have begun in 1827, but not completed until 1828 at the earliest.

Please note: The editor would more than welcome any and all researched articles on this subject from either point of view.

FACTS NORTH KNOWING

by Alyce Harbury

These FACTS were taken from an old "White House Cook Book" published in 1905 (During the time Teddy Roosevelt was President). It was given to my mother in 1906 on her 15th birthday by her stepfather J.C. "Uncle Jess" Copeland.

TO PREVENT RUST FROM FLAT-IRONS: Beeswax and salt will make your rusty flat-irons as smooth and clean as glass. Tie a lump of wax in a rag and keep it for that purpose. When the irons are hot, rub them first with the wax rag, then scour with a paper or cloth sprinkled with salt.

TO PREVENT LAMP WICKS FROM SMOKING: Soak them in vinegar, and then dry them thoroughly.

TO TOUGHEN LAMP-CHIMNEYS: Immerse the article in a pot filled with cold water, to which some common salt has been added. Boil the water well, then cool slowly. Glass treated in this way will resist any sudden change of temperature.

DEATH TO BUGS: Varnish is death to the most persistent bug. It is cheap - ten cents worth will do for one bedstead - is easily used, is safe, and improves the looks of the furniture to which it is applied. The application must, however, be thorough; the slats, sides, and every crack and corner receiving attention.

TO PREVENT CREAKING BEDSTEADS: If a bedstead creaks at each movement of the sleeper, remove the slats and wrap the ends of each in old newspapers.

BOSON PALS

By: W.H. "Mike" Adams

While actual command of the old White River Division of the Missouri Pacific Railroad lay in the capable hands of Superintendent John W. Daniels at Aurora, Missouri, the nerve center of the division was the office of the Chief Dispatcher at Cotter, Arkansas. Cotter was built by and for the railroad about 1904, when George J. Gould, scion of Jay Gould, extended the division from Cushman Junction, Arkansas to Carthage, Missouri.

In charge of this office was a veteran of many years at the KEY and over a train sheet, Mr. William Alonzo Anderson. Mr. Anderson had service extending back to the late 1880's, but the gang of young bucks he supervised and on whom he depended for train dispatching and other assistance were not even born when Bill Anderson started railroading.

Among these stalwarts were Ted Potter, first train dispatcher, and my father, Walter Adams, who distributed cards, handled the crew board and waited on Mr. Anderson in general. Ted has been dead now for some time, but my father is now 80 years of age and enjoying a well-earned retirement.

My Dad and Ted were cronies - they hunted, fished and camped together and had participated together in several escapades up and down the river. Ted, according to Dad was especially inventive in dreaming up schemes and one Fine Day came up with a little incident that could well have put new faces on the staff of the CHIEF. At that time the gasoline powered "motor car" was a rather primitive affair and, in fact, the maintenance of way forces on the White River still used the old "Irish Mail" type car propelled by brute strength.

At this particular time there was a motor car on the division, an early Sheffield, and assigned to the Division Engineer's staff at Aurora and used by the young rod and chainmen to cover the division in pursuit of their cavalistic rituals. Such a pair had been working out of Cotter for several days, leaving their motor car set off at night just north of the depot. On the day in question, July 4th, these fellows boarded the northbound local for Aurora and home to properly celebrate the occasion.

Now, this same day the Cotter baseball team, mostly MO-PAC employees, were playing the team from and at Flippin, four miles to the north of Cotter. Ted and Dad were sore pressed to attend this game.

The simple solution would have been to go home and get one of their automobiles (we had a high-wheeled Dodge touring car - Ted had an over-land coupe). Apparently this was too simple and besides, some of the family might want to go and this was a no-no.

Ted kept eyeing the two cylinder contraption alongside the right-of-way and finally said to Dad, "Walter, I know how to start that thing - let's put it on the track and go to Flippin - there's nothing on the railroad until late tonight." Dad was as anxious as Ted to celebrate the grand and glorious 4th, so they lost no time wresting the vehicle on the rails and presto, Ted had it going!

ELECTRIC POWER-DA 2

Leaving Cotter, the railroad climbs a long curving 1% grade around town and then crosses the White River on a massive turn-span bridge and almost immediately plunges into a short tunnel through a rocky ridge. Once across the bridge and through the tunnel Ted hollered at Dad, for the conveyance made a fearful racket, "Walter, hold on to your hat - I'm going to widen on her." And widen he did - and when he did, something - the clutch, a gasket, or some other necessary internal works of the machine, came unglued or the rubber band broke - anyway they stopped and that was that.

Our two heroes, with all their sterling qualities, were not mechanics and they knew it. After a hasty consultation they just un-ended the contraption and ran it down the dump and into the brambles on the banks of the Fallen Ash Creek and headed, afoot, back down the railroad track to Cotter and hopefully, help.

Hot, dusty, tired and somewhat apprehensive, our two would-be motor car operators found a sympathetic garage man who agreed to shoulder his tool box and trudge the two or so miles across the towering bridge and through the tunnel, to the scene of the crime. This fellow was a pretty good mechanic of the bailing wire variety and they soon had the recalcitrant car rerailed, started and headed back down the hill to Cotter - the baseball game and further celebration had lost its appeal. There was only one thing wrong. Where previously the machine had preambulated along with a steady and rhythmic chug-a-lug, it now went ping-POH, ping-POH and the speed was far short of the normal.

Our two worthies eased back down to the depot and set the car off and went their separate ways to home and family.

The next day dawned as the previous one - hot and dry. The southbound local was not due until around noon, but to our pair of miscreants it seemed no tin at all until the neat little Pacific came gliding into the depot under the careful rein of engineer Jim Harrison. Dad's office window looked out directly on the hateful machine. Ted walked in and they stood by the window and sure enough - off the coach came two pairs of high-topped boots carrying the engineer fellows. These individuals headed directly for their steed and Ted grasped Dad by the hand and said, "Well, Walter, it sure has been nice working with you. I guess I'll try to get a job on the Frisco."

Our two engineer types loaded their transits, stakes and chains on the motor car, hoisted it to the rails and did whatever was necessary to coax it into life. It started, albeit with a distinct catch in the throat, and ping-POH, ping-POH, up the hill they blissfully went their way, I presume to Aurora. Our two argonauts slunk back to their desks and busied themselves issuing train orders, ordering crews and other required tasks, both giving thanks that the courses at the better class of engineering schools at that time apparently failed to include any degree of familiarization with a two-cylinder internal combustion engine.

This Article is from the February 1976 EAGLE, a publication of the Missouri Pacific Historical Society. It was submitted by Mr. Ed Ellis of Kansas City, Missouri.

ELECTRIC POWER-DAMS

by Ellen Shiras Ramey

Baxter County people today are profiting from the vigorous actions of old-time citizens who forty years ago sent a delegation of four men to Washington, D.C. to tell Congress what the County expected from the two dams, then in their earliest stages of construction here.

The Baxter Bulletin in early 1940 had reported that the dams had been authorized by Congress only for flood control and the dreams of the people had been for stable lakes with the streams supplying electrical power in addition to preventing flood damage downstream. Old-timers can remember seeing the roof on the "ice-house" at Cotter, located just above the Cotter spring, protruding from the floodwaters as they raced towards Batesville.

Rex Bodenhaner, Baxter County Democratic Chairman then, has preserved correspondence with Congressman Clyde T. Ellis who was preparing a meeting with congressional committees there.

Neil Nelson, now president of the Peoples Bank and Trust Company, but then in his mid-twenties, was serving on the city council and as acting mayor of Mountain Home in March of 1940 when the planning was done to establish the local position on the dams.

County revenues were necessarily a factor in these decisions because all of the Northfork river bottom would be flooded by the closing of the dams, as well as many creek bottoms which were producing good crops at that time, according to the Baxter Bulletin. A cotton gin was in operation southeast of the square in Mountain Home.

The delegation was selected in late March of 1940. Two of them were descendants of pioneers of Baxter County: T.J. McCabe, a businessman and landowner and Hugh Hackler, also a businessman who previously and again in later years was Mayor of Mountain Home. T.J. McCabe's grandfather was a doctor in Baxter County before 1900 and his father was a Baxter County lawyer and State Senator. Hugh Hackler's grandfather was a Methodist circuit-rider minister serving this county in the early 1880's and his father was a pioneer doctor here.

The other two delegated had been in Baxter County since about 1901; County Judge R.H. Ruthven, a persuasive speaker and a resident of Cotter; and Tom Shiras, one of the editors of the Baxter Bulletin.

Judge Ruthven had been to Washington D.C. before. With the head of the Arkansas Works Progress Administration in the early 1930's, he had met with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, convincing him that W.P.A. funds could create employment just as effectively and with better results if the workers put down their picks and shovels and worked with the county road machinery. As a result, the county furnished the fuel and equipment and Judge Ruthven, it is still remembered, built roads out into the county, plotting them into the hills and valleys where the people lived. An experienced engineer, he used common sense criteria, such as,

if otherwise practical, putting the roads along the south side of the mountain to reduce the problems of ice and snow. What had been not much more than trails became pretty good all-weather roads.

When Judge Ruthven arrived in Washington with the delegation, he told the congressional committee "To build a dam for flood control only would be most disastrous to the counties affected. The result would be a large body of waste water usually unusable. It would destroy the value of the shore and prevent counties from increasing their valuation to offset the costs of inundated lands."

Tom Shiras, the fourth member of the delegation had written in the Bulletin for many years of the possibility of "corralling the wild horses running down the streams and putting them to work." He had worked on the survey crews of the Missouri Pacific Railroad and in earlier years often walked from the train in Cotter to Mountain Home, because it was "faster than the hack."

As remarkable as the men who went to Washington, were the ones who sent them. Convinced that the future of Baxter County depended upon their immediate action, they made donations to get the delegation on its way.

Arriving in Washington, D.C. after midnight on a Sunday night, the delegation registered at a hotel and immediately phoned Congressman Ellis to tell him they would be in his office at nine the next morning. During the next two days they met with the entire Arkansas Congressional delegation and testified before a congressional committee. They saw Congressman Ellis introduce an amendment to the Flood Control Act to authorize power units in the construction of Bull Shoals and Table Rock dams, and on that Tuesday President Roosevelt approved five million dollars extra for Norfolk Dam, insuring power installation there.

Between June 1944 and the end of September, 1977, more than six billion kilowatt hours of electricity have been generated at Norfolk Dam; since September 1952, when generation began at Bull Shoals, until September of 1977, over fifteen and a third billion kilowatts were produced there.

Dollar savings from flooding, until September 1977, credited to Bull Shoals Dam were almost twenty-eight million dollars and to Norfolk Dam, more than nine and a half million dollars. The very wet year of 1979 and the 1978 credits will increase these amounts.

Only one of the delegation who went to Washington is still living. He is T.J. McCabe, and he has been involved in many civic projects since this time.

JOSEPH NATHAN CURLEE

By: Beulah S. Logan

In the year of 1876 Joseph Nathan Curlee and John Criss left Bond County, Illinois, on a hunting and trapping trip; they spent three days in St. Louis finding supplies and warm clothing, which relatives of John Criss had said were necessary, and put out for streams in Arkansas.

After hunting and trapping several months not far from New Port, Arkansas, they went up the White River in an old canoe they had traded for and stopped in Marion County near what is known as the #1 School House - - or was then, in the Newton neighborhood. There was another school house where the Baptists held meetings once or twice a year and was near the John Newton home.

Children there had no place to go to learn "readin', writing' and spellin'" so it was arranged for Joe Curlee to teach a school at the Newton School House for three months, getting as pay his room, board, and washing and taking turns living in each home. He also was paid \$1.00 a scholar. He taught more or less about 13 months when S.E. Denton, who was one of the partners of the Cox and Denton BIG RED STORE at Cassville, Arkansas found and persuaded him to work as a clerk in the Big Store. Accordingly, he took the job and went back to Illinois, after awhile, to get his family; consisting of father, John O. Curlee, his step-mother, Jane Curlee and two sisters, Lucy and Hattie and step-brother Sylvester Henry, a cripple.

As Joe rode the plush seats in the train passing through Sorento, Illinois going to Hoburn after his folks, he spied a lovely girl on the front porch of his cousin Ann Curlee Guinn's house - combing her yard-long hair; he right away wrote to his cousin and asked her name, following which a correspondence was started, following an engagement - to be married as soon as proper arrangements could be made. During the correspondence, it was learned that Nancy Alice Smith - for that was the girl's name, was a half-sister of Albert Guinn (who was the husband of Joe's cousin Ann Curlee Guinn.

Before returning to Arkansas, Joe went to the home of his cousin where he personally met Alice, which meeting resulted in a swift courtship and promise to marry.

In order to make as quick a trip back to Arkansas as possible, Joe sent his mother and two sisters via railroad to Batesville, Arkansas. They stopped at the Johnson Hotel in Batesville and waited for the boat which took them up the river to Dentons Ferry where they debarked on the Baxter County side. Joe, his father and step-brother drove through with the household goods and other provisions - arriving some two weeks later than the ladies - who were already staying with the Cox and Denton families.

At this time, S.E. Denton was a widower so the family lived there with him until Joe went back to Illinois and married Alice Smith at Elm Point Church on Sunday, February 29, 1880 - which was the 5th Sunday and last day of February, an occurrence happening only each 40 years.

Joseph Nathan Curlee (2)

Joe returned to Cassville with his bride - where they rented a furnished house from Cox and Denton. The house had a "big fireplace room, a side room for beds and a lean-to cook house" and the furnishings were considered FINE at that time -- there was a rare piece of equipment in the kitchen - an iron cook stove with sundry pots and pans which came with the --- acorn cook stove. There was another unusual piece of furniture for that district-- a bureau with a stand table and the two pieces had white marble tops. Alice had brought with her a White Sewing Machine, a gift of her parents and a lot of bedding - feather beds, pillows, quilts, etc.

There were 10 children born to Joe and Alice, four daughters and six sons. All lived to manhood and womanhood except one.

The above account was written by an Aunt of Alyce Marbury. It was found among some of her things when she died several years ago.

A PRAYER PRAYED BY JOSEPH NATHAN CURLEE

Oh! Thou most High God cast us not off in our old age; forsake us not if our strength faileth; may our hoary heads be found in righteousness! Preserve our minds from dotage and imbecility, and our bodies from protracted disease and from excruciating pain; deliver us from dependency and despondency in our declining years - and enable us to bear with patience whatever may be Thy holy will concerning us.

We humbly beseech Thee that our reason may continue to the last, and that we may be so comforted and supported by Thy precious promises, that we may be able to bear our testimony in favor of the reality of the Christian religion as the only hope of the family of God on earth, and with an abiding faith in the fulfillment of Thy gracious promises.

And when our spirits leave this tenement of clay, Lord Jesus receive it. Send some of Thy angels to convey our inexperienced souls to that mansion which Thy love has prepared for us in the city of God, the new Jerusalem. And, oh, may an abounding welcome be administered unto us upon our entrance in the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Ah Men.

A copy of this prayer was also found among the things of my aunt.