

The Heritage News

Issue 13

Jefferson Heritage & Landmark

February, 1996

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Jefferson Heritage & Landmark Society is dedicated to the preservation of Jefferson County Missouri history. We welcome those who may be interested to become members. Annual dues are \$10 and may be sent to **Mrs. Betty Olson, Treasurer, 721 W. Kelly St. DeSoto, MO 63020.**

We had a great presentation by Karen Hyslop of Creative Memories in November at the College. I apologize for printing the wrong date for the program in the newsletter. I hope no one missed being able to come because of it. Karen is so talented and has great ideas and tips on preserving and displaying your family photographs. One of my favorite albums she presented was one that contained photographs of her treasured momentos of the past. She wrote the story of each momento beside its photograph in order to preserve the story for her family. We have a Creative Memories consultant, Janelle Els, in Hillsboro. If you have questions or need supplies, contact her at 789-3144



Village Smithy in Antonia Operating Since 1895

The village blacksmith, that useful and respected citizen, has almost disappeared from small villages and towns. But here and there, you'll find a master of the trade still existing. One of them is in Antonia, a little village on the old Lemay Ferry Road between Goldman and Maxville.

Here in the same shop he opened in 1895, Henry Hoffarth works each day, attending to the many tasks awaiting him. These tasks are varied. While talking to the writer, he heated nicked iron tools with flattened points, then hammered them to their original shape with skill and dexterity. Men came and went. A rake fitted with a new handle awaited one customer, a sharpened plowshare stood outside the door. In an incredibly short time a pair of hames for harness were fixed to their owner's satisfaction. Axes and hammers that had been repaired, were ready and waiting.

Mr. Hoffarth's nephew, Paul Reiche, was having work done at the shop. He turned the handle of the blower, fanning the flame in the forge, while his uncle thrust the irons in the heat. In a few minutes the red hot tools were being hammered on the anvil.

Mr. Hoffarth was born in 1874 on a farm near Antonia. When he was 15 years old, he began to learn the blacksmith trade, spending 18 months in St. Louis County, Hillsboro, and Maxville. At the age of 21 years he opened his own shop at Antonia.

Antonia was a small place then. Mr. Hoffarth remembers distinctly that it was called Bulltown, and that an old log building graced the spot where Heiligtag's Chapel now stands. A general store, saloon, and blacksmith shop about summed up the town.

The blacksmith shop, its open doorway facing toward the low valley of Glaize Creek, has seen much of life as it teemed for 54 years through the open door or on the road. A memento of past days is the rows of rusty horseshoes of all sizes, hanging along the beams overhead.

Mr. Hoffarth no longer shoes horses. One winter day five years ago, a stranger brought a team to be shod. The man explained he hadn't owned the

horses long, but that they were gentle. Mr. Hoffarth tied on his apron and approached the team to determine the size of the shoe needed. As he neared them, one of the horses suddenly raised his feet and kicked him viciously. No bones were broken, but his leg remained in very bad shape for some time.

The doctor, learning that Mr. Hoffarth was 70 years old, delivered an ultimatum, "No more horse shoeing." Since that time he has given up the shoeing of horses. "If I'd been younger," asserted Mr. Hoffarth, "I could have dodged that horse's feet by jumping aside." Mr. Hoffarth is 75 years of age.

He and his wife live in their home in back of the shop. They have five children. A son, Walter, helps his father with the shop work, but Mr. Hoffarth was alone on this particular day because Walter is slowly recovering from an attack of pneumonia.

The shop stands now, a landmark in the community — its owner a familiar figure through the years. Every day a flame in the forge spits out sparks, while irons are heated, and red chips fall from their glowing tips as they are hammered upon the anvil.

And what could be a more fitting tribute to that time-honored tradesman than the words of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow;

*"Toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes,
Each morning sees a task begun,
Each evening sees its close."*



The Democrat — Victoria, June 1902

I saw in your paper of the 5th last, a statement that the seventeen year locust had made its appearance in Chicago and that people were afraid that the parks would be destroyed. I have heard of fourteen year locusts all my life, but deny there being any now or ever have been, scientists to the contrary notwithstanding. I will name each year the locusts they call fourteen year locusts have been here since I was three years old.

I was born November 1, 1826. I had a little dog which I set great store by in 1829, which was a locust year, and my little dog commenced eating the locusts. My brother and I made the dog quit eating them, as we were afraid they would kill him, but when we found they did not hurt him we let him eat all he wanted and he got fat on them. He ate of them as long as they lasted. The dog's name was Drum. He had a double nose.

In 1842 we came to Missouri, which was a locust year. I was married in 1854. 1855 was a locust year.

1868 was a locust year, which a great many now living can remember, and a great many more can remember 1881, which was a locust year.

And surely you have not all forgotten that 1894 was a locust year, so you see they are thirteen year and not fourteen year locusts.

All of you who live until 1907 remember reading this, and every 13 years after remember.

J. B. Dover

(According to this article, we should watch for locusts in 1998)

The Democrat — August 1878

For sometime an animal, supposed to be a lynx, had been infesting the hills of Glaize Creek, frightening the women and children with its howling. It had been seen several times, but nobody had succeeded in getting a shot at it till one day about the first of this month. Jesse Johnston rode up to Harrison Wilson's, on Jas. Moss' farm, just as Mrs. W. was getting the children in the house to keep them from the jaws of the animal, which was heard close by. Johnston got a gun and went for the brute and succeeded in putting a load of shot into it. He then pursued it with dogs and killed it. Several persons saw it after it was killed, but none of them

could determine what it was. It was said to be seven feet in length, of brownish color, and with a long tail with white on the end of it.

Unclaimed Letters — Remaining at the post office at Hillsboro on the 25th day of January, 1866:

Ladies' List

Barr, Mrs. Ann
Evans, Miss G.A.
Hail, Mrs. C.C.
Josslin, Mary A.
Pinkerton, Mrs. H.
Hail, Miss Mary E.
Herrington, Nancy
Lear, Mrs. Rosa 2
Pipkin, Miss Julia
Rogers, Sarah H.
Cook, Miss Am'rica
Rogers, Sarah S.
Williams, H.K. 2

Gentlemen's List

Black, Jas.
Christian, N.M.
Decker, John
Droomgoole, H.A.
Dugan, William
Greer, S.T.
Herrington, S.
Morris, Sam'l E.
McKee, Harvey
Moss, L.
Phillips, A.
Rowe, Noah
Stegen, Martin
Williams, Falkland
Bolton, F.C.
Cook, Stephen
Dodson, James
Dongan, Martin
Greer, W.H. 2
Gashe, H.
Johnston, G.
Mooney, A.T.
Moss, C.T.
Ogle, Jacob
Rippey, S.A.
Robert, G.W.
Williams, John
Welge, Louis

Derby City, Missouri, Dec. 14, 1883

In compliance with your request in your issue of the 12th inst., I will give you some of the particulars of the finding and general appearance of what is supposed to be the Aeorolite or meteoric stone referred to in your local items. The field in which the stone was first discovered, about the middle of last October, is situated in Plattin Creek valley, some two miles south of Crystal City, and contains about fifty acres, principally second bottom or table land. This field has been in cultivation at least thirty years, and this rock suddenly made its appearance during last wheat-sowing time, nearly in the center of the field, and you can well imagine my surprise at finding so large a stone where none had ever been seen before. When first discovered, about eight inches of its smaller end projected above ground -- a sufficient height to prevent a reaper or mower from passing over it. The field has been in wheat and clover every alternate year for ten or twelve years, and has been reaped and mowed ever as often. Having driven the reaper, mower and sulkey rake over the identical spot of ground where the stone was found, I am satisfied I could not have failed to see it had it been there. It is about thirty inches in length and has four sides, one about fourteen and the other sixteen inches, forming an oblong square. The sides and ends are covered with slight indentations or depressions, and the convexities formed by them are smooth, with the appearance of having been worn off by some kind of friction. The appearance of the substance, when broken, is that of exceedingly fine grained, bluish-grey granite and is fully twice as heavy as ordinary limestone. It is almost impossible to break it with anything but a sledge hammer. Several other much smaller stones of a similar character were found lying near it, and apparently never having been ploughed under. How this rock came there is a mystery to me. As to its preservation -- it is too hard to be broken, too heavy to be carried away as it is, and has no appearance of decaying; and if the Fair association, or any other association, would like to possess it, they can do so by coming after it, and they and your readers can draw their own conclusions. Whether it be indigenous to our earth, or a chip from another planet, I can not say, but the above are facts.

Very truly,
R.G. Madison

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