

The Heritage News

Issue 4

Jefferson Heritage and Landmark Corp.

July, 1993

Letter From the Editor

With this issue, Jefferson Heritage and Landmark Society has been sending copies of our newsletter to all members of the local historical societies for a period of one year. I hope you have found it interesting and enjoyed receiving it. As we will soon be sending the Heritage News to only our members, I would like to encourage you to join the Jefferson Heritage and Landmark Society. Membership is only \$10.00 per year and entitles you to all benefits including the Heritage News and notification of special programs. We meet quarterly on the third Sunday afternoon in September, January, March, and June, and have several interesting programs planned. Please send your dues to Mrs. Betty Olson, Treasurer of the Jefferson Heritage and Landmark Society at; 712 S. Main St., DeSoto, MO 63020. Please join us in order to continue to receive the Heritage News. Thanks and hope to see you at the next meeting!

Lisa K. Thompson

The Board of Directors met on July 11, 1993 at the Fletcher House in Hillsboro. Several issues were discussed, including election of officers, nomination of new board members, status of grants to libraries, upcoming programs, and the condition of the Fletcher House. New officers for the coming year are as follows:

President	Della Lang
Vice President	Frank Magre
Secretary	Catherine Crawford
Treasurer	Betty Olson

There are four openings on the Board of Directors for the term of 1993 - 1996. The following nominees will be voted on at the next general meeting in September. Nominees for the Board are:

John Anderson
Rebecca Gagnon
Glee Heiligtag
Jean O'Brien

The Board voted to again extend a grant of \$1200.00 to each of the five Jefferson county libraries; Crystal City, DeSoto, Festus, Jefferson College, and Jefferson County North. This grant is to be used to purchase books and materials concerning Missouri history and genealogy. Most of the moneys from last years grant have been disbursed, with Crystal City, Festus, and Jefferson College still having a small amount remaining. This years grant will have a time limit in which to stipulate how the money will be spent, with all unspecified moneys reverting back to the Society to be redistributed to the other libraries.

The meeting of the Board of Directors at the Fletcher house in Hillsboro raised questions as to the condition of the historical site. The house was built in 1851 by Thomas Clement Fletcher, the first native born Missouri Governor. The house was purchased in 1974 by the Jefferson Heritage and Landmark Corporation. It was then given to the Jefferson County Park and Recreation Commission to be restored to its appearance in 1855. This was completed in 1976. There are now several areas of water damage in the house and steps are being taken to have the house inspected and a recommendation given as to the best way to correct this problem.

Selma Hall

by : Lisa K. Thompson

Selma Hall, or Kennett's Castle as it is locally called, sits on a high bluff overlooking the Mississippi River, a few miles south of Festus. The land on which it is situated was first acquired in 1805 by John Smith of Tennessee. He was interested in mining the extensive lead deposits in this area. As he traveled to Missouri to view the property he had purchased, he added the initial T to his name to distinguish himself as having newly come from Tennessee. He used this initial all of his life.

John Smith T was born in 1770 in Virginia to a wealthy family. He married Nancy Ann Walker and they had one daughter, Ann. After arriving in Jefferson County, Missouri, he named the bluff overhanging the Mississippi River, the "Cliffs of Selma." He became active in sugar production and lead smelting and mining. The ruins of a smelter he operated in Shilboeth are still standing, as is the foundation of a mansion he built there. John Smith T died of Yellow Fever and is buried in the family plot directly behind Selma Hall.

John and Nancy's daughter, Ann married David S. Deadrick and had two children, John S. and Julia. After David died, Ann married Capt. James M. White. They also had two children, James M. and Moses J. Captain White and Ferdinand Kennett met on a trip down the Mississippi River. They went into business together, first in mining and general business and later into steamboat ownership. Ferdinand Kennett became a friend of the family and soon married White's stepdaughter, Julia Deadrick.

Ferdinand St. John Kennett was born in Kentucky in 1813. He moved as a child to St. Louis where his family became active in business and politics. He and his wife Julia were responsible for the building of Selma Hall. It took four years, from 1850 to 1854 to build the castle at a cost of \$125,000.00. It was built of Missouri limestone from nearby hillside quarries. The castle has 18 rooms, a square four story tower, and two main entrances. The north entrance was the carriage entrance and the south had a stone stairway leading to the Selma boat landing.


Ferdinand and Julia had five children, Ferdinand Beaugard, Preston Graves, Latty John, Agnes Lowry and James White. Ferdinand St. John died May 19, 1861 at the age of 48 of a severe hemorrhage and was buried beside John Smith T. Julia, who had been paralyzed on her left side for most of her life, was left to raise the five children during the civil war years. The Kennetts had also built a shot tower on top of the bluff and as it was still in operation at the time of the war, it was considered of great importance to both sides. Because of this, the castle was frequently fired upon, so the family moved to St. Louis. Union troops overtook the cliff and set up cavalry barracks on the estate. The common soldiers were finally removed but the officers continued to use it as their headquarters for some time.

The property was left to Ferdinand B. Kennett. It has been said that his wife, Sally Boyce, later divorced him as a drunkard. He supposedly spent ten years in prison while out west for killing a man in a saloon quarrel. Preston Graves Kennett became a doctor. Latty John married Congressman Richard G. Frost and had

five children. Agnes Lowry married Thomas G. Brent, and James White Kennett married and had six children.

Selma Hall was sold to Robert Brookings at the end of the 19th century. In 1902 he sold it to W. K. Kavanaugh, a St. Louis ice and coal dealer. He used it for lavish entertainment, especially during the 1904 Worlds Fair in St. Louis. In 1918, the castle was sold to Wm. Schock. He was still the owner on March 13, 1939 when fire destroyed most of the original furnishings. Mr. and Mrs. Schock renovated the castle in 1940 as closely to the original as possible, spending \$190,000.00.

The Mississippi River Fuel Corp. purchased the castle in June of 1953. William Marbury, President of the company, and his wife, continued to restore and maintain the estate, purchasing many antiques for the castle. M. R. F. Corp. became the parent Co. of Missouri Pacific Railroad and was renamed the Missouri Pacific Corporation. Selma Hall became the property of Union Pacific when they merged with MOPAC in 1982.



The following two letters are part of a collection purchased by the Jefferson Heritage and Landmark Corporation in September of 1984. They were written to and from Ferdinand Kennett during the period of 1842 to 1861.

Jefferson City, Dec. 24, 1842

Dear Wife,

I take the opportunity per Mr. Risley of writing you a line to say that I am well and am truly grateful to learn that you are improving so finely, but am uneasy to hear that my little Jakes is unwell. You cannot conceive how much gratification is afforded me to receive a letter from you more especially as it informed me that you are mending and breathed the same tender affection which you have ever manifested towards me. In two weeks or less I will be with you not to be separated soon again I can assure you. Tell White his pa will soon be at home and will love him better than ever. Kiss both my little ones over and over for me as they are doubly dear to me on account of the sufferings of their dear dear Mother.

Your own husband,
Fer. Kennett

At Home Sunday night
St. Louis, March 14, 1847

My dear wife,

I am in rect. of yours of the 8th and 9th and rejoice to hear that our dear boy is improving. I also saw Capt. Goslie today who informed me that he met the boat pretty well down all safe. From what I can learn however, you must have had rather an unpleasant trip, as it must have rained nearly the whole way down. I do hope when you get to N.O. (New Orleans) you may be

repaid for it by bright sunshine and that both my Julia and my dear son may feel the beneficial effects of the baking sun of the south. I will try if possible to go down on the White next trip to accompany you home, should I find it out of my power to do so, I will write you advising

whether I think you ought to come home or not. You must be the judge though as our dear boy's health must govern your action. Nothing on earth should induce his return till he is quite well, although it is a great trial for me to be separated from my two principal ties to earth. Ever since you left we have had the worst weather I ever experienced at any season of the year. On Friday the snow fell all day, leaving 5 or 6 inches of it on the ground. The river is now full of ice from which you can form some idea of the coldness of the weather. Indeed there has not been much colder or more disagreeable weather during the winter. Owing to the badness of the roads and ice in the river, coal has been selling for a week past at 40 to 50 cents per bushel and wood 7 to 8 dollars per cord. You may form some idea of the weather from these facts. I am much engaged all day and try to keep contented as possible at night, but all in vain; when I look around the dreary room and miss the bright smiles of my boy, or the fond look of my afflicted wife I feel indeed lonely and cannot overcome my feelings. I have been so tired and dirty by night ever since you left that I have not been to see any of our friends yet. I went to the wedding tho, and staid till half past ten o.c., found it very dull and came home. I go over to the Planters almost every evening and stay till bedtime to kill off the evening and keep off the blues. I am so pushed to fill orders for shot at home that I do not know when I can send Mr. Dougherty any, but hope it will not be too long first. With oceans of love to you all.

Your affectionate husband,
F. Kennett

Tell your Ma that all your bro. John's family are well except some of the Blacks. Teo is getting well.

served a term in the National Congress, having been elected over Col. Benton. He went to Europe for the benefit of his health, so we understood.

March 1877

Report reached here last week, through reliable men, that F. B. Kennett and P. G. Kennett, with their entire party, on their way to the Black Hills, were butchered by Indians. We do not credit the report, but think the reliable men have been misinformed. We hope to hear soon that the report is false in every particular.

April 6, 1877

J. W. Kennett has a letter from his brother, dated Moss Spring Ranch, March 16th. They expected to reach Custer City on the 20th, and Deadwood on the 23rd. The party were all well and in fine spirits. We have also seen a copy of the Cheyenne Leader, stating that the party left that place March first, well armed and provisioned. That Indian tale was evidently a hoax.

February 7, 1879

The owners of Kennett Castle, this county, have offered to sell or rent it to the State for an insane asylum. Our advice to the State is to take one of their Normal school buildings for an asylum. There is no use spending money to buy or build an asylum when the State has three buildings that would answer the purpose.

February 14, 1879

There appears to be a fair prospect for the location of State Lunatic Asylum No. 2 in this county. When the proposition was first made to sell Kennett Castle to the State for an asylum, we had no reason to hope that there would be sufficient unanimity of action on the part of the members from this part of the State to command even a respectable hearing, but from what we have since learned they are pretty well agreed on the subject. There cannot be found in the State a more suitable location for an asylum, and if we are correctly informed, the proposition made to the State is to either sell or lease at a price to be fixed by commissioners or appraisers appointed by the state. In other words, if the State wants the place for an asylum it can take it at its own price. The castle is on a beautiful and healthy location on the bank — or rather a bluff — of the Mississippi river, convenient to both fuel and water, and would probably require but little alteration to fix it for an asylum. Senator Byrns is interesting himself in the matter, and will do all he can to secure favorable action by the general assembly.

June 17, 1881

Capt. F. B. Kennett formerly of this county, has been appointed chief of police for the city of St. Louis. His many friends here will rejoice at his promotion because they wish him well, and are satisfied that he will fill the position with credit.

July 29, 1881

Dr. P. G. Kennett, who some time ago moved to Mississippi will soon return to make DeSoto his future home. Evidently the doctor has got enough of the sunny south.



The following are articles from The Democrat

March 1873

Hon. Luther M. Kennett died in Paris, on the 12th inst.

Mr. Kennett was well known to all our old citizens, having spent a good portion of his life in this county. From a poor boy, he arose, by industry, perseverance and business tact, and amassed a fortune, was always plain Luther Kennett, and a pleasant man to deal with. His history is closely identified with that of the city of St. Louis, in its rapid rise the position it now occupies, as one of the first cities of the Union. Mr. Kennett was for a long time a member of the City Council, and served three terms as Mayor. He also

August 26, 1881

St. Louis, Mo., Aug. 16, 1881
Editor Jefferson Democrat:

Dear Sir; I received from a friend yesterday a copy of the DeSoto Herald, of the 11th of August, in which there appears an article written by the editor, which unless disproven by me, would lead the public to infer anything but the truth of the disgraceful and unfortunate affair relative to the "Kennett baby." In the first place, I did not go to Mr. Isham with "my story" — he came to me and requested the details, and I gave him truthful ones. Again, I never requested Mr. Isham to publish them, but on the other hand requested him in writing not to publish the affair. Then as to my writing to Mrs. K. for the child, I will say I never requested the custody of the baby until she wrote me "that I had to either take the baby away or support him," as she had Mr. Atwood's two children to support and could not keep the baby. As soon as I learned that I could get my baby, and also learned that he was very ill, I of course was anxious to obtain the child and have him treated. I had been led to believe all the time that the child was doing well. I wrote several letters to Mrs. K. before I got the child as she wanted him taken away out of town. I received him July 9th on the street in an emaciated, weak condition, and immediately called in Dr. J. S. Deaderick to attend him. I afterwards called in R. C. Volker, who treated him in Carondelet until his death. These two physicians as well as myself can testify as to the cause of his death. The child received a fall about the middle of May and was not taken sick until June 6th, with malarial fever, from which he had several spasms on the boat. The fall had nothing to do whatever with his death. As to Mrs. Kennett's willingness to care for the child, I deny. She chose him, the youngest, sick and weak, to be sent away, and kept her two healthy children, 4 and 6 years old. Had Mr. Isham gone to the trouble to satisfy himself as to the truthfulness of my statements, he could have done so, and can yet see the entire correspondence, as I am determined the public shall know all. Then they will be better able to judge whether I misled Mr. Isham and tried to make capital of other people's mistakes. It matters not what inducements I may have offered to obtain the child — all of which I deny and have the letters to prove he was in no condition to be sent away from his mother among strangers. He looked for and called out for his mother from the time I received him until his death, as the ladies that called through kindness can well attest. None of the family of his mother ever sent to see or tried to learn of his condition to my best knowledge, after I received him. As to the famished condition and scantiness of clothing, that remains to be told, as will all the surroundings, when the proper time comes and in the proper place. I have been careful not to speak of the separation, causes, etc., to any one since it took place, and have only mentioned the facts in the case when asked to do so in speaking of and about the baby; and had I known Mr. Isham intended publishing the article of July 28, would certainly have asked him not to do so. And as he did publish the article without my sanction or knowledge, he should have satisfied himself he was right before retracting it, as I have the entire correspondence which will show. I did not know my wife intended leaving me, or I did not know it until we

reached DeSoto. Also that I was written to, to take my baby, and that I was deceived, and deluded, into bringing herself and children all the way home from Stormville, Mississippi, to be left like a culprit on the very doorstep of her mother's house with the surprising information "that she had left me, and would remain with her mother." My neighbors can testify as to my efforts and the surroundings under which I labored while in DeSoto. I don't wish to cast any blame off of myself upon anybody, but respectfully request the public to reserve its verdict until all is told. I enclose you the three letters which Mr. Isham seems so worked up about. Hoping I have not occupied too much of your valuable space.

I am very Resp'y
Press G. Kennett, M. D.

July 21, 1882

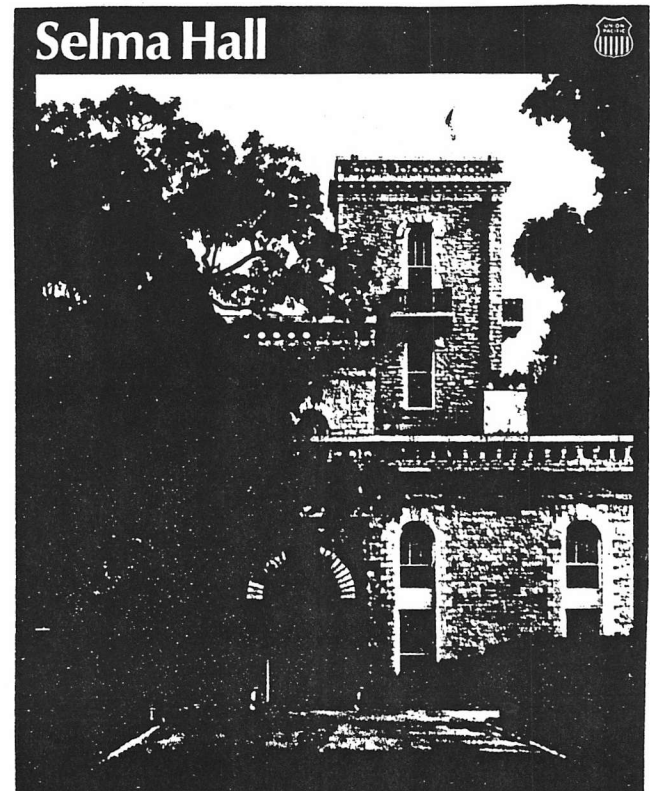
Died — DEADERICK — At DeSoto 10:00 A. M. ,
July 12, 1882, John Smith, infant son of Sallie R. and Dr.
J. S. Deaderick aged four months and 21 days.

September 19, 1883

Dr. P. G. Kennett and Mrs. Ida Kennett were married again, last week in St. Louis. They have our earnest wishes for a happy and prosperous journey through life.

October 17, 1883

Drs. Farrar and Kennett performed a difficult surgical operation for a Mrs. Maclay. She had an arm broken, last February, and the physician in attendance did a bad job setting it, in consequence of which the arm was stiff and useless. They had to break and reset it, and it is thought the operation was very successful.



Daughters of the American Revolution

by: Maxine Carter

About 100 years after our country was established, there was an upsurge in patriotism, and a desire to honor those men and women whose sacrifices made our country free and independent and to perpetuate the freedom for which our ancestors fought.

Mrs. Benjamin Harrison, wife of the President, organized the women around her into a society to carry out these ideals. On October 11th, 1890, the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) was organized. Soon after, a suite of beautiful buildings were built in Washington, DC featuring a Congressional Hall, Administrative Offices, a remarkable Museum and a Genealogical Library.

Any woman — 18 years of age and up — is eligible for membership who can prove her bloodline back to an ancestor who gave military service, or helped in any way the cause of the Revolutionary War. The Sons of the American Revolution and the Children of the American Revolution have equivalent membership requirements. Our own Louisiana Purchase Chapter of Jefferson County was organized October 7, 1916.

What Does DAR Do?

Besides being genealogy buffs, what do members of DAR do? We're a community organization that promotes educational, historical and patriotic endeavors. There are too many areas to mention here, but here's a sampling.

EDUCATIONAL . . .

Among our organization's primary responsibilities are the two schools in the Appalachian Mountains that we support. The DAR school at Tamasee, South Carolina has pupils, both boys and girls, who need a home. The children are completely cared for by the DAR from kindergarten through the 6th grade. Our other school, "Kate Duncan Smith" in Grant, Alabama, is a day school: kindergarten through the 12th grade. Over 1000 students are enrolled in these two schools each year.

There are other schools that DAR supports through donations. In addition, we provide scholarships to those interested in pursuing history and nursing.

Each year, the Louisiana Purchase Chapter looks forward to the honor of presenting certificates and pins to Jefferson County's outstanding high school students who are being recognized for their accomplishments as "Good Citizens." As a "Good Citizen" they are selected from among their senior high school peers as individuals demonstrating outstanding qualities of leadership, dependability, service, and patriotism.

PATRIOTIC . . .

The DAR was at Ellis Island, helping newly arrived immigrants settle in their new country. Many of these individuals received some of the 100,000 plus copies of the "Manual for Citizenship" that we published in 1912.

We're among the prominent flag-wavers during patriotic events. Perhaps you've seen some of our chapter displays at DeSoto Library or in some of the local schools promoting September's "Constitution Week," the week commemorating our Constitution.

The American Veterans also benefit from DAR's contributions, through donated time, gifts and funds.

HISTORICAL . . .

Obviously, genealogy is an avid hobby for most of us. The National Society DAR is instrumental in promoting February as American History Month. With the urging of the DAR, local and state officials issue proclamations for American History Month. Annually, elementary students compete in the nationwide DAR American History Month Essay Contest.

About the Louisiana Purchase Chapter DAR

The Louisiana Purchase Chapter was organized on October 7, 1916 in DeSoto, Missouri, and is currently the only chapter of the DAR in Jefferson County. Members meet monthly in local historical and educational sites or in member's homes. Individuals interested in applying for membership are assisted by the Chapter Registrar.

GRAND BARBECUE

—TO BE GIVEN AT—
JOHN W. CLOVER'S, ON DEWEYS CREEK,
—ON—
JULY 4, 1881,
—BY—
THOS. CLOVER & FRANCIS BLACK.

Refreshments of all kinds will be on the grounds, and good music has been engaged and two platforms erected for dancing. All are cordially invited. 24 26*

The Event of the Season!

Grand 4th of July Celebration

—AT—
CRYSTAL CITY, MO.,
July 4th, 1881.

Athletic sports and olympian games of various classes; \$150 given away in premiums. Grand fire-works at night. Two bands of music at night; dancing day and night. Meteoric balloon ascension at night. Refreshments of every kind in any quantity (excepting intoxicating drinks) on the grounds. Reduced rates over the Crystal City R'y and trains will make connections with all I. M. & S. R'y trains that stop at Crystal Station that day. This will be the finest entertainment ever given in this part of the county.

Directed by
CRYSTAL CITY BRASS BAND.

1776. 1881.
Grand

Fourth of July Celebration!

—AT—
De Soto, Mo.,

—IN THE—
Fair Grounds,

TO BE GIVEN BY THE

Jefferson Co. Agricultural & Mechanical Association.

The following is the Programme:

1. A Grand Procession, headed by a Band of Music.
2. Speeches by the Hon. David P. Dyer and Martin L. Clardy, and the reading of the Declaration of Independence.
3. Dinner.
4. Foot Race.
5. Slow Mule Race.
6. Bicycle Race.
7. Sack Race.
8. Fine Gold Watch to be voted to the Handsomest Lady on the Grounds.
9. A Ten Cent Knife to be voted to the Ugliest Man.
10. Grand Tournament.
11. Grand Display of Fire-Works in the evening.

Dancing both day and evening.

The managers have secured a first class Band of Music, and everything will be done to make this the most enjoyable occasion ever in this county. The proceeds of this entertainment go to the making of new improvements, and otherwise improving the grounds.

Let all who desire to have a good time come, and bring with them their neighbors.

NEW CLOTHING STORE



Schweizer



Brothers!



We have opened with a large and carefully-selected stock of Men's, Youths', Boys' and Children's Ready-made CLOTHING, HATS, CAPS, TRUNKS, VALISES AND GENTS' FURNISHING GOODS.

Our Goods were bought from Eastern houses for Spot Cash, thereby enabling us to offer better inducements and sell cheaper than any house in town. Call and examine our well-selected stock before purchasing elsewhere, and be convinced that we do as represented. Our mottoes shall be: "Live and Let Live," "We Aim to Please," and "No Trouble to Show Goods." **SCWEIZER BROS.,**

CRYSTAL CLOTHING HOUSE,
LIMITVILLE, NEAR CRYSTAL CITY, MO.

Postoffice Address, Festus, Jefferson County, Mo.

1882

Jefferson Heritage and Landmark Society
6413 Reynolds Creek Rd.
Hillsboro, MO 63050

ADVERTISEMENTS.

FOURTH OF JULY, 1881.

On MONDAY, JULY 4, 1881, A
GRAND CELEBRATION!
With Picnic, Dancing and Speeches,
WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE
"HOTEL PARK," De Soto, Mo.

The best orators of the county are invited for the occasion. A GOLD LEADED CANE will be voted to the most popular candidate for any office in the gift of the people of Jefferson County.


Committee:—
J. D. LUCAS, ENG., HAJ. DONNELLY,
CAPT. ALEX ZIEGLER, HENRY STEUBING,
DR. J. N. DEADERICK, GUST. HAFEL,
HERMAN HAMEL, R. W. McHILLIN,
JUDGE VAIL, H. B. HARRIS,
GEO. DURGAN, GUST. FROHOLD,
JAN. F. GREEN.

Round half fare tickets to De Soto from all points on the I. M. R. R. during 4th and 5th of July. Everybody invited.

Grand 4th of July Celebration

AT THE
De Soto House Park!
DE SOTO, MO.,
Wednesday, July 4th, 1881
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
DE SOTO BRASS BAND.

This well known park has an abundance of shade, rustic bridges, seats, etc., is supplied with a large platform for dancing, and seats will be placed at convenient places, to accommodate all who may attend. The De Soto Brass Band will dispense the wind music, and an able String Band will be in attendance, including the Hamel Bros., Prof. Wittig, etc. Several prominent speakers have been invited, and some will be on hand. Refreshments of all kinds can be had at the different stands, viz: lemonade, soda, lunch, beer, wines, and liquors. At night the grounds will be well lighted by lanterns. A grand display of fire works will take place, commencing about 8 1/2 P. M. Arrangements are being made to make this the celebration of Jefferson county, and no pains will be spared to make all who may attend feel happy. Admittance to grounds, (ticket good all day) 25 cts., during 25 cts. extra, in P. M., and 50 cts. per couple, at night.
A. L. COLEMAN, Jno. L. DOWSEN,
Pres't. De Soto B. B. Secretary.



M. ZIEGLER,
KIMMSWICK, MO.

*Watches, Diamonds,
Clocks, Jewelry,
Spectacles,
Silverware,
Standard Sewing Machines*

MAIL ORDERS PROMPTLY ATTENDED TO.

1902

