

Yesterday

By: D. Craig Asbury

ANNUAL #4 – 2024

MOBERLY, MISSOURI

16 Pages

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 - ➔ **A VERY DISTURBING MURDER (Reader Discretion Advised)**
 - ➔ **MURDER AT THE FORTUNE TELLER'S HOUSE**
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- Plus Other Local Stories, Trivia and Images From the Past**

THE GREATEST RACCOON HUNT IN HISTORY

The early 1900's was the era of the train. Automobiles were making their appearance, but the horse was still the main method of local travel. To go to other towns, the railroad was king and taking a train back then was as common as jumping in a car today.

Moberly was a major railroad hub with tracks radiating out to all points of the US. It had a population of around 11,000, which doesn't sound big, but at that time, Moberly was the 9th largest city in Missouri. It was about the size of Jefferson City and was larger than Columbia. Moberly was a very important city in the State and was well-known nationwide.

Back then, raccoon hunting was a popular sport enjoyed by the old and young, rich and poor. In 1912, several prominent Randolph County citizens formed the Randolph County Coon Club and promoted itself with a parade and a raccoon hunt with several visiting dignitaries.

This was a time before the internet, TV and even radio. Less than 10% of the people had phones. The newspaper was where everyone got their news.

The Coon Club wanted to do something 'newsworthy' so their yearly event would be written up in newspapers across the nation.

The Club pulled out all the stops for their 1913 raccoon hunt.

A couple of the Club members had captured a raccoon and took it to a local dentist. The dentist put a gold cap on one of the raccoon's front teeth.

It was named Ben and was to be the grand prize given to the hunter that got the first raccoon at the hunt.

Gold-Tooth Ben did generate newspaper buzz around the country but it was short-lived.

Then the Club invited the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, to the hunt, but he graciously declined. The Governor of

Missouri, a US Senator and several other high-ranking State officials accepted the invitation. This made the papers for a few days and then went away. The Club needed to generate more publicity for the event.

The Club decided the hunt would be held on some wooded property a few miles east of Moberly. Now it just so happened that there was an old cabin on the land where a man had been murdered 30 years earlier.

(This murder really happened and it caused a nation-wide sensation, but that's another story for another time.)

Suddenly stories started to appear in the newspapers that the annual hunt would use the old cabin as their headquarters and the cabin was haunted. The ghost of the murdered man would wander around the forest at night looking for his killers. The ghost story and the upcoming hunt made just a few appearances in the newspapers.

Then the story changed. Instead of being one about a murdered man's ghost looking for vengeance, a much more endearing tale was spun. The story was now that an elderly widow had lived on the property and was afraid people were trying to steal hams from her smoke house.

Her last request was to be buried standing up in the nearby family cemetery so she could keep an eye on the smoke house. It was then said that the ghost of the old woman would wander about the property at night protecting her hams.

This new ghost story also made the rounds in the newspapers but it still didn't get the coverage the Club was looking for.

Then came the reports of a wild man that lived on the hunting grounds. This wild man wore the skins of rabbits, raccoons and possums and he had been seen on several occasions.

Next it came out that the wild man had a wooden leg and not just not any wooden leg, but one that was filled with bees. Now if that wasn't enough, the wild man also wore a strange hat that housed a beehive.

A WILD MAN!



The Wild Man at the Raccoon Hunt as Depicted by the *Kansas City Post*

The Club now had it all: The Governor of Missouri, a US Senator, a haunted house, a ghost, a wild man and a gold-tooth raccoon named Ben.

The newspapers all across the country now jumped on the bandwagon and wrote stories about the upcoming event.

St. Louis and Kansas City newspapers sent special reporters and photographers. Even a 'moving picture show' company came to film the event.

This was the black and white silent movies era with the big hand-cranked cameras mounted on a tripod, so a movie company coming to town was a very big deal. People from all across the country came to Moberly.

The day before the hunt was to begin, a large parade was held in downtown Moberly. The Missouri Governor and local dignitaries led the parade, followed by the other state and local officials. There were over 250 automobiles in the parade at a time when the average person still rode a horse or used a buggy.

Next in line were the hunters with over 150 dogs. Then came a procession of carriages and buggies. Bringing up the rear of the parade were wagons with cages loaded with wolves, coyotes, foxes, raccoons and even a badger.

A few of the Club members then braved the haunted house and spent that night there. Sometime after bedtime, the men were seen by the big-city newspaper photographers running for their lives out of the spirit-infested cabin, heading towards town.

Soon the men appeared at a Moberly downtown hotel in time to tell their ghost story to the awaiting movie company. How these half-dozen, middle-aged men actually got the 4 miles through the woods to town in the dead of night in less than a half-hour is unknown. One of them

*** CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 ***

Image From The Past



The Coates Street Railroad Crossing Guard Shanty - circa 1960's
Now on Display at the Railroad Museum
Image from the Collection of James L. Stone at the Missouri State Historical Society - Columbia

Trivia Question

In the early days of Moberly, the Post Office frequently moved around to various rented old store fronts.

Where on Williams Street was the first brick building especially built for the Post Office located?

See Page 4 for the Answer.

THE GREATEST RACCOON HUNT IN HISTORY

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

was Oak Hunter, who was, putting it nicely, very rotund.



Oak Hunter

The next day, the hundreds of guests and visitors went over to the hunting ground. There they found an assortment of tents and various sleeping quarters. The dining tent was large enough to hold a table that would seat 150 people at a time. The sleeping quarters for the Governor and other state officials had a steam heater for their comfort.

Just before dark, the hunters made last minute preparations for the all-night hunt and, as the story goes, the wild man appeared. He ran through the camp, grabbed a sandwich and climbed a tree faster than a monkey. As the hunters slowly approached the tree, the wild man then glided from the upper branches like a flying squirrel, landed and disappeared into the woods.

After this bit of excitement, the hunt was started. It was led off by the Governor riding his white Missouri mule. The hunters then broke off into several groups to pursue their prey.

The Governor's group of hunters treed a raccoon. The Governor went to take his shot when someone in the treetop shouted "Don't shoot, I'll come down". It was the wild man.

He was brought down and taken to camp where he was placed in a man-sized cage that somehow had been conveniently located in the center of the camp. Then the hundreds of visitors crowded around the cage to get a glimpse of the wild man.



Actual Photo of the Wild Man (Thomas Siebler)

The wild man told his story. He had been a normal young man with a good job and a beautiful fiancé. Then he had an unfortunate accident where he lost his leg. The wild man refused to go into details, but his love then rejected him and he became a recluse out in the woods for the last 30 years.

After a few years in the wilderness, he became lonesome and became friends with the bees.

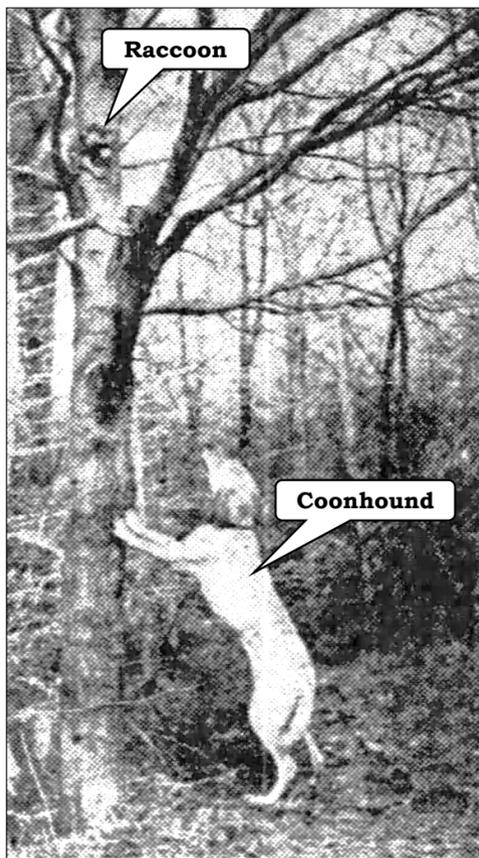
The wild man ended his story and the hunt went on. Edward T. Goltra, a millionaire industrialist from St. Louis, got the first raccoon and was awarded Gold-Tooth Ben.

(Being a millionaire was really something back then. Just one million then was like having 30 million today.)

The state officials left the next day, but locals stayed another night to get in some serious hunting.

[Trivia: When a coonhound chases a raccoon, the raccoon tries to get out of harm's way by climbing into a tree.

The dog then barks at the bottom of the tree to let the hunter know which tree the raccoon is in.



Raccoon

Coonhound

Sometimes the raccoon is able to get out of the tree without the dog knowing. When the hunter gets to the barking dog and finds no raccoon, it is because the dog is "barking up the wrong tree".]

Photos and stories peppered the national newspapers for several days afterwards. A newspaper in Sidney, Australia even ran a story.

Within a few days, the newsreel of the hunt was shown in Moberly theaters. Over the next few weeks,

the movie made its way through the theaters in the Midwest.

At The Logan Theatre on Tuesday Night Jan. 6, The Randolph County Coon Club Will present their second annual Hunt in Moving Pictures. "Ben," the Famous Gold Tooth Coon, Will be seen. This show will consist of 5000 Feet of Pictures Admission: Adults 15c, Children 10c.

Macon Daily Herald - Jan 3, 1914 (15 cents is about \$4.50 today)

Meanwhile, Ed Goltra had made a coonskin cap from the raccoon he had shot. In January of 1914, he traveled to Washington DC with the cap and Gold-Tooth Ben to visit President Woodrow Wilson. The White House security guards wouldn't let the live raccoon in, so Ben was tied outside to the fence.

Goltra went inside and presented President Wilson with the Randolph County coonskin cap. Whether the President of the United States actually put on the cap is up for debate.

Then Goltra went over to the Capitol and presented Gold-Tooth Ben to Missouri Senator Stone. Not wanting a 'white elephant', the Senator promptly donated the raccoon to the Washington DC National Zoo.

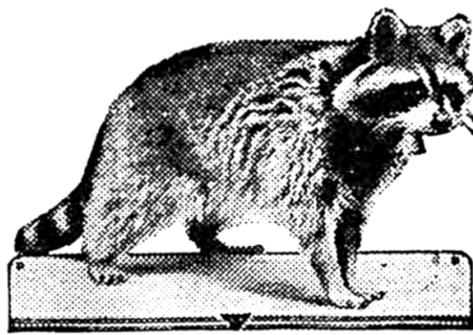
The National Zoo at Washington DC was recently contacted and they confirmed that their records do show that they received a gold-tooth raccoon on January 21, 1914.

The National Zoo said they donated the raccoon to the St. Louis Zoo in May of 1916, but didn't have a record that the St. Louis Zoo had received it.

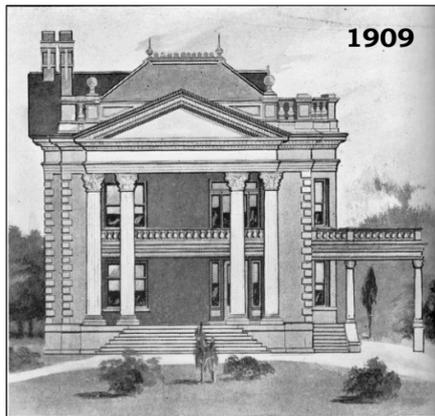
In contacting the St. Louis Zoo, they stated they had no record of receiving such an animal.

It is possible that Ben somehow found a way back to the woods of Randolph County, but after over 100 years, there would be nothing left of him ... except his gold tooth.

'COON WITH GOLDEN TOOTH



115 YEARS OLD (1909) 801 West Reed Street



Sunday Morning Democrat. MOBERLY, MISSOURI, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1909.

The corner of Reed and Tannehill streets will be one of the show places of Moberly upon the completion of John W. Faessler's new residence, of which the above is a true type.

This palatial home will be constructed of stone, light brick and oxidized copper with roof of tile and will be a creation of beauty, elegance and convenience.

The ground is broken and the contractors are pushing the work with all possible haste, consistent with substantial building, so Mr. and Mrs. Faessler will soon be the possessors of one of the finest homes in Moberly.

For a look inside, see the 17 minute video on YouTube, search for: moberly what style is this

AN INTRODUCTION TO ERNEST ROBERTS

In April of 1886, Ernest Edward Roberts was born to Stephen Alexander Roberts and Josie [Slaughter] Roberts.

Ernest quit school after the 8th grade to go to work – a pretty standard occurrence at that time for young teens to help out with the family finances.

At the age of 20 in 1905, Ernest was working at John Haworth's Livery where he was charged with embezzling \$2.50 (about \$90 today).

Two months later, Ernest was charged with carrying concealed weapons and disturbing the peace. He was sentenced to 30 days in jail.

Ernest was not unknown by the judicial system and had several other brushes with the law during his 'formative' years.

In March of 1906, Ernest joined the military and was sent to Cuba. (The U.S. had obtained control over the country in the 1898 Spanish-American War and maintained a military presence there.) Whether he upped at his own choice or was highly 'encouraged' by the court is unknown.

After 25 years of marriage, his mother, Josie, was granted a divorce from her husband in the spring of 1907. Her maiden name of Slaughter was restored and she was given custody of the minor children. She had accused her husband of desertion, cruelty, neglect and several other things.

Ernest was released from service in 1909 and returned to Randolph County.

Three years later, 27-year-old Ernest walked into a Moberly shoe store and picked out a pair of shoes and then used a pre-signed check for payment. The clerk was suspicious.

The check was endorsed by Josie Slaughter, but it didn't look right. The store took the check to the bank and they agreed and would not cash it. Ernest said that his mother told him to sign her name as she was sick.

Ernest was arrested for forgery.

One year later, 1913, Ernest Roberts was in Trenton, Ontario, Canada. He told the authorities there that he had murdered a man in Moberly in 1906.

The Moberly police were contacted but they could find no reference to an unsolved murder in that timeframe. It was thought that Ernest was just looking for free transportation back to Missouri.

In August of 1913, Mrs. Etta Howell of Centralia filed a divorce suit against her husband. Among the several sensational charges were habitual drunkenness, mistreatment, failure to provide and occasional 'misconduct'.

Misconduct at the time was having an affair. Several women from surrounding towns were identified. One of which was Josie Slaughter of Moberly.

By 1916, Ernest was married. (Spouse's name unknown)

The City of Moberly celebrated its 50th anniversary of her founding on September 27, 1916. There was a parade, speeches, band concerts, chorus singing and various community activities.

31-year-old Ernest celebrated in his own way. He left his wife at home and imbibed in adult beverages downtown. He was arrested before noon for intoxication and thrown in jail.

A few hours later, his mother Josie, accompanied by his wife, went to City Hall and pleaded to the police chief to let him be released. Josie promised that her son would appear in court the next day and pay any fine.

The Chief relented and released Ernest into his mother's custody.

Ernest, his wife and Josie then went to the mother's house where they all lived. Josie read Ernest the riot act in regard to his drinking.

The 5'-5", 118 lb. drunken Ernest had enough of that and picked up a pistol.

Josie ran screaming out of the house and Ernest took a shot at his 49-year-old mother. The bullet hit her in the right arm, just above the elbow, shattering bone.

The force twisted her body to the left. Ernest then fired a second shot.

This bullet struck his mother in the back part of her left armpit, followed a back rib around and lodged in her right side. The woman fell to the ground, gravely wounded.

Ernest's wife went out and bent down to check Josie's pulse. Ernest said, "If she ain't dead, I've got a notion to shoot again."

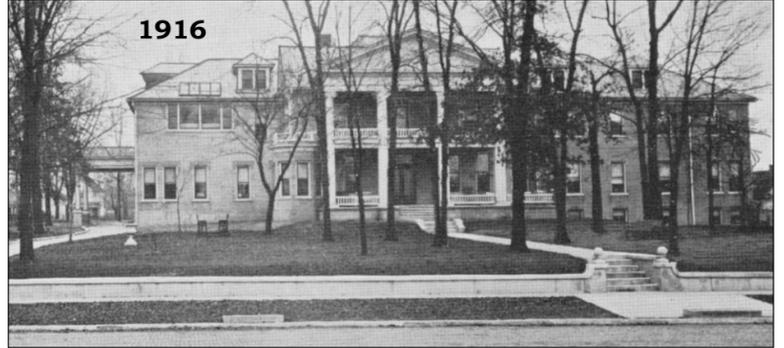
His wife looked up at Ernest, "She's gone Let's leave." (This utterance by her daughter-in-law may have saved Josie from being shot again.) The couple quickly packed up a suitcase and fled.

They went to his brother's house a few blocks away where Ernest passed out on a bed. The brother, not knowing what had happened, took that opportunity to get

the gun away from drunk Ernest and unload it.

Josie's neighbors had heard the commotion and went over to investigate and found the mother moaning on the ground. Some carried Josie to a nearby house to give what comfort they could. Others went to the police station and reported the incident.

Josie was transported to Woodland Hospital and the police interviewed the neighbors. The officers then set out to find Ernest and his wife.



Woodland Hospital

Soon, the couple was found at his brother's house. The brother turned over the empty gun to the authorities. Then Ernest and his wife were taken to the police station and placed in the same jail. Ernest was still drunk.

Josie was interviewed at the hospital where she said she wanted her daughter-in-law arrested for assault and battery with intent to kill.

Ernest stated that his mother had fired four shots at him first. He then took the gun away from her and shot her twice defending himself. He said that his mother should be arrested for assault and battery with intent to kill.

During the grand jury hearing, the neighbors testified that they only heard two shots. Ernest was charged with felonious assault. No charges were placed against his wife.

At his trial in December, Ernest pled guilty and was sentenced to the state pen for two years. Sounds a little lenient, but back then, it wasn't too serious if you didn't actually kill someone. (But being a horse or chicken thief was a different matter.)

Ernest was released on April 30, 1918 under the 2/3's good behavior release rule at that time.

As the US was in the midst of WWI, Ernest soon found himself in the army again. (Whether he was drafted or volunteered is unknown.)

Just a few months later, Ernest was onboard a troopship bound for Europe. He arrived there just as the Armistice (peace) was signed.

After serving several months overseas in peace-keeping duty, he returned to the US in June of 1919.

Ernest came back to Randolph County. It is not known what happened between Ernest and his wife, but they got divorced somewhere around then, as on February 8, 1921, Ernest married Daisy Gilpin.

In June of 1934, Ernest and Daisy were living in Huntsville, when 54-year-old Daisy died under mysterious circumstances. The death certificate only stated: "*Dead in Bed, Cause Unknown*".

Three months later, Ernest Roberts was judged insane and became a ward of the state. Nothing is known about the circumstance or his condition. He was just declared: N.C.M. (non compos mentis – 'not of sound mind').

For whatever reason, he was not committed to a state hospital for treatment. His everyday activities basically remained the same. A guardian was appointed to oversee Ernest's financial and medical needs.

On Christmas Day, 1935, Ernest married for a third time, to Sarah Vaughn.

Four years later, 70-year-old Josie Slaughter died at the home of her son, R.M. Roberts, in St. Louis. Her body was returned to Moberly and buried at Oakland Cemetery.

And that's an introduction to Ernest Roberts – don't worry, he will come up again later, there's much more to his story.

75 YEARS OLD (1949)

Emerson Street Underpass Constructed



1974 WAYBACK ITEMS

Items Gathered from Moberly Newspapers 50 Years Ago
(Prices or Coupons No Longer Valid)

Gasoline Price Reaches 50 Cents a Gallon

55-Mile-Per Hour Speed Limit Bill Is Signed by President

Cinema
Starts Friday
Starting Time 7:45
OLD YELLER
TECHNICOLOR

Ad Good Tues., Wed., & Thurs.
SPECIAL
Little Dixie Fried Chicken
SNACK BOX
Includes 2 Pc. Chicken, Hot Roll and Choice of French Fries, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy or Cole Slaw
79¢
Reg. 99¢
Curb Service Or Dine Inside
Phone 263
So Order Can Be Ready for Pick-Up

Temple's
WIENERS
Oscar Mayer
lb. **95¢**

Campbell's Chicken Noodle, Cream of Mushroom
SOUP 5 10½ oz. Cans **\$1.00**

FOLGER'S COFFEE
lb. Can **99¢** With This Coupon

Temple, Grade A
LARGE EGGS Dozen **73¢**

Temples
BREAD 4 16 Oz. Loaves **97¢**

HUNTS BACON
Sliced Showboat
1-lb. Pkg. **73¢**

RED POTATOES
20th Bag **96¢**

PAMPERS
Daytime 15 \$1.99
Overnite 12 \$1.15
Toddlers \$1.29

Temple's 100% Pure
GROUND BEEF Any Size lb. **77¢**
Sealed in Vacuum Package
Freezer Ready

Navel Oranges . . . 20 For **89¢**
Kraft Cheese Slices . . . 12 oz. **89¢**

HURRY ON DOWN TO HARBEES'S
OPENING SOON
721 North Morley
Moberly, Missouri

Kidnappers Urged to Release Hearst Girl

BERKELEY, Calif. UPI — Two days after Patricia Hearst was dragged screaming from her apartment, police said nothing has checked out although they have followed dozens of leads. The daughter of Publisher-Editor Randolph A. Hearst was kidnaped Monday night and the kidnapers have not contacted the Hearst family or authorities as yet.

SAN FRANCISCO UPI — The parents of Patricia Hearst were stunned and disbelieving today after hearing their daughter renounce her former life, call her father "a liar" and declare she has joined the band which kidnaped her 59 days ago. A tape recording of Patricia's statement, broadcast over radio KSAN in San Francisco, and KPFA in Berkeley, had been brought to the stations by messenger who also delivered a color snapshot of Patricia.

It showed her dressed in overalls, cradling a submachine gun, standing before a red flag bearing the seven-headed cobra symbol of the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA).

In the taped message, she denied that she had been "brainwashed, drugged, tortured, hypnotized or in any way confused."

Victory Bar & Steak House
Fourth & Coates.
Turkey Fries
All You Can Eat
Every Wednesday Night.

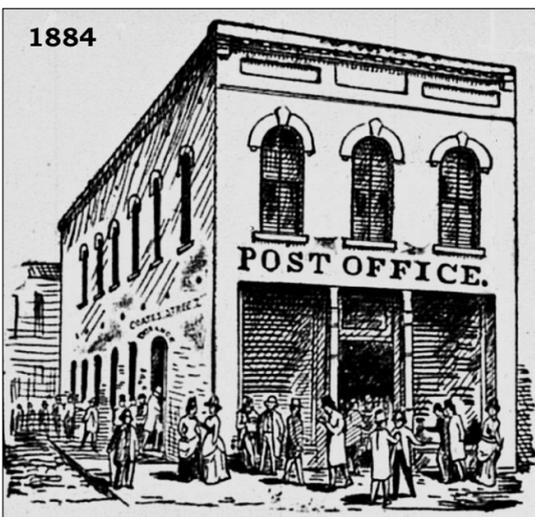
New Barber Here
Phil Wetrich, who recently completed barber school, has assumed a position at the East Side Barber Shop, 107 East Coates. The youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Wetrich, Cairo, he is married and has one son. Young Wetrich is also a graduate of Northeast R-IV High School at Cairo.

TRIVIA ANSWER (From Page 1)

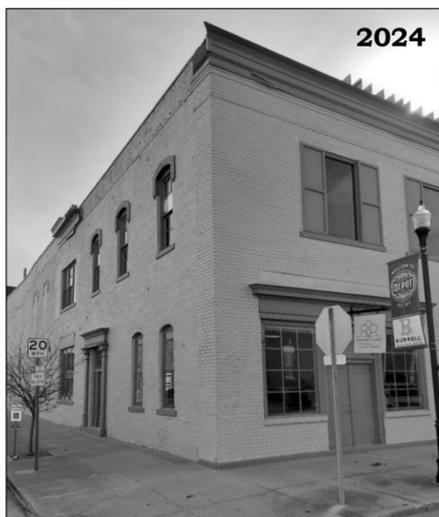
(Where on Williams Street was the first brick building especially built for the Post Office located?)

**224 North Williams Street
140 Years Old (1884)**

This building was constructed in 1884 by a private company to specifically house the U.S. Post Office. Around 1892, the Post Office was moved to a different location and this brick building became the Moberly Steam Laundry. In 1906, the government built the red brick building across the street to the west which housed the Post Office until 1961, when the current Post Office was built at the west end of downtown Reed Street.



Wm. Firth post master, L. M. Wilson, assist. post master, A. G. Robey, delivery clerk, office south east corner of Williams and Coates. Office hours 7 A.M. to 7.30 P.M.



Currently the location of Morning Glory Christian Counseling

125 SOUTH FIFTH STREET

Three Died, Four Bodies and a Little Mysticism

In the late 1850's, the North Missouri Railroad was created which ran west out of St. Louis, turned north midway through the state and went to the Iowa border. The railroad tended to parallel an old Bee Trace.

A Bee Trace was a trail used by bee hunters to locate honey and travelers to trek cross country (think of Daniel Boone times).

Several towns popped up along the new rail line, including Centralia, Sturgeon, Renick, 'Old' Allen and Jacksonville.

A new branch of the railroad was proposed to run west to Kansas City. After some wrangling, it was decided that the connection would be one mile south of 'Old' Allen and the town of Moberly was created on the property of William Roberts. (For the story of 'Old' Allen see Yesteryear 2022)

Elijah Williams owned the land just to the west of the new hamlet.

[Local Historical Note: Williams Street was the approximate location of an old Bee Trace.]



ELIJAH WILLIAMS

Elijah Williams divided up his land into several Additions for the new town to expand. The very heart of downtown Moberly is in one his of Additions, including the location of the Little Dixie Library and the 4th Street Theater. The businesses on Coates, Reed and Rollins, between Williams and Fifth are all located in Williams Additions.

Several churches and untold houses have been constructed on the Williams Additions.

These properties have contributed greatly to the town's economy through job creation, property taxes, business licenses and sales taxes for over 150 years.

His house was at 125 South Fifth.

The Williams' house changed owners over the years and became a boarding home.

In the fall of 1922 one of the room renters was a clairvoyant.

CLAIRVOYANT
Are You Willing to Be Convinced?
Too Well Known to Need an Introduction—Has Returned
By Special Request.

PROF. VAN ZAN

I do hereby agree and guarantee to make no charge if I fail to tell your name, occupation and what you called for. I promise to tell you whether husband or wife or sweetheart is true or false; tell you whom and when you will marry; in fact tell you every hope, fear, and ambition of your life, giving truthful advice on matters of business or professions you are suited for; what to do and where to go to bring success. I reunite the separated, restore lost affection, cause happy marriages, give good luck, develop a secret you should know—the Power of Control. Parlors quiet; business confidential.

PRICES IN REACH OF ALL

Hours 10 a. m. to 8 p. m.

125 South Fifth St. (25)

In December of 1922, the owner of the house, 66-year-old James Green Patrick, passed away in the house due to acute indigestion.

By early 1929, a boarder, Madam Murl, operated a palmistry business.

MADAM MURL

Palmistry

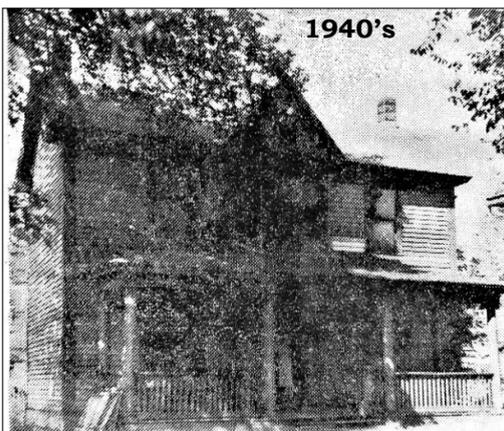
Lately arrived, informs the public of her wonderful powers of reading the history of one's life, telling the Past, Present and Future. Advice given in all business matters and family affairs; lost or stolen property; tell you the initials of your future companion.

125. South 5th St., Moberly, Mo.
Special Holiday Reading
At Half Price

1933 brought the death of a second resident, 64-year-old James C. Capp.

In 1941, the owner and three room-renters occupied the house. Sarah Roberts was one of the renters. She was the third wife of Ernest Roberts.

(Remember him? Ernest was living elsewhere, which will be delved into later on.)



Elijah William's House

77-year-old James Browne became the third resident to pass away in 1944.

By 1946, the owner moved next door and rented out all the rooms of the old house. Eighteen people were living in the small dwelling and the place was neglected. There was no electricity and the occupants had to use coal oil lamps for light.

Only one toilet existed in the

structure, but had no running water.

If the residents wanted to flush the toilet, they had to carry in a bucket of water from somewhere off site. Instead of using the toilet, most of the occupants just used the yard or the surrounding vacant lots. The neighbors complained to the city.

In January of 1947, the owner was cited for the poor sanitation situation, so water was installed to a single faucet in the basement. The boarders then had to carry a bucket of water up the steps to flush the toilet, many just still used the 'great outdoors'. Charges were then filed against the landlord.

By 1955, Dr. E.T. Whitaker acquired the house, which was next door to his hospital.



Whitaker Hospital

He put \$1,500 (about \$18,000 today) into refurbishing the place and turned it into an annex to his hospital. In 1958, he held the hospital's annual Christmas party there.

In 1973, Mr. and Mrs. Parda, of Ferguson, MO got a contract to purchase the house. They came to Moberly to clean up the place prior to moving in. They went downstairs to the basement and quickly left.

They needed to re-read their contract. They must of missed the part about the house coming furnished with human remains in a burlap sack on a shelf and assorted other body parts in an old boiler.

The police were called and investigated. It was concluded that the body and parts were from an embalmed cadaver that Dr. Whitaker had used during his time at osteopathic school. The coroner took charge of the remains and had them cremated.

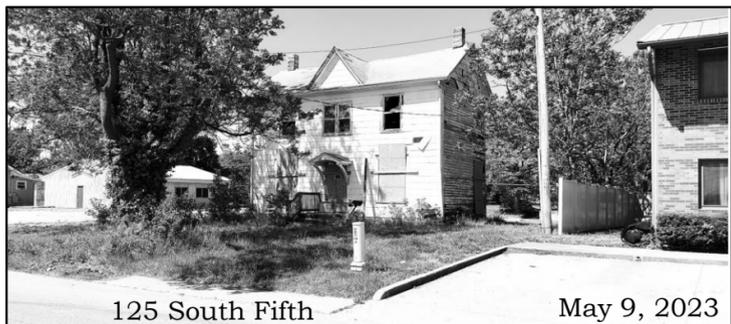
The City of Moberly obtained Elijah William's homestead and filled in the basement. The building remained in disrepair and along the way, the rooms that been added to the structure years ago and the front porch were torn off.

This house existed before the first grand lot sale of Moberly and saw the rise of the town out of the dirt of the prairie into a thriving city, with the original owner being an integral part of that success.

Elijah William's Additions to the town practically doubled the size of Moberly at that time and generated untold wealth to the City over the years.

No trace of this Civil War era house and monument to Moberly's beginning exists today as the City of Moberly demolished it in May 2023.

(It is unknown if a thorough search of the attic was made for any other bodies.)



125 South Fifth

May 9, 2023



125 South Fifth

June 1, 2023

A 'Lamp on the Past' True Crime Story

A VERY DISTURBING MURDER

[Warning: This Story Has Content That is Not Appropriate for Younger Readers or Those Easily Distressed]

It was a hot summer afternoon on July 22, 1885 when J.F. Clingman and John Long were swimming in Moberly Lake. While swimming, Clingman's foot touched something under water that didn't feel right. He called for Long to get a stick so that he could pull it out.

After a bit of trying, the object was lifted from the lake bottom. It was a heavy gunny sack tied with a small rope. The bag was dragged to shore.

Visions of a treasure swept through the men's minds as they untied the rope and opened the sack. But instead of finding riches, their discovery would make the entire Midwest recoil in horror.

A few months earlier, during the fall of 1884, 32-year-old Louis F. Griffin and his 33-year-old wife, Francis (Fanny), lived at a boarding house in Hannibal. They were barely getting by; Louis being a broom maker and Fannie a housewife.

Also staying at the boarding house was Mary Ballinger (no relation to any local family). She worked as the housekeeper there to pay for her rent. Mary was a destitute, undisciplined young woman that was a suspected prostitute. She had a baby and a 6-year-old son named Eddie.

Little Eddie Ballinger was a frail little lad, small for his age, always dirty and walked around as if in a daze. He had a scar on his wrist and another one on the left side of his face.

After staying at the boarding house for a short time, the Griffin's were able to move to a rental house.

A local woman was looking for a live-in housekeeper and hired Mary, but was soon kicked out due to her uncleanliness, bad disposition and poor work habits. Mary was sent to the 'Home of the Friendless' with her children.

Fannie Griffin heard about Mary being in the 'poor house' and offered her a room in the house where Louis and her had moved. Mary moved in, but she was a very unclean person and would not take care of herself or her children. The Griffin's were ready to kick her out when a man came to their house in early December.

He told the Griffin's that he was there to take the young boy and that Mary could have a place to live in Quincy if she could get there. Little Eddie left with the man. The Griffin's scraped some money together and bought Mary a train ticket to Quincy on Christmas Eve.

Shortly after Mary left, the man returned with the boy, gave him to the Griffin's and disappeared.

Fannie tried to locate Mary, but to no avail, so Little Eddie stayed with the Griffin's. Louis moved to Moberly in the early spring to look for work there and Fannie was to follow after he got settled. In April, Fannie and Little Eddie moved to Moberly.

Shortly after the Griffin's moved to Moberly, they received a letter from an unknown third party at Quincy that told them to find a home for the little boy.

Not long afterwards, a male stranger appeared at their door. He said he lived south of town and would take the boy in. The Griffin's quickly obliged. A few days later, the man returned Eddie to the Griffin's.

The poor boy's young life was in shambles. He was in bad health and had been passed around to different "caretakers".

The Griffin's had been in Moberly a couple of months and the youngster was rarely seen. On the infrequent occasions when Louis and Eddie were seen together, it was noted that Louis was physically abusive to Eddie and was known to slap him if he got in the way.

One day the Griffins gave the child's

toys and clothing to a neighbor and Little Eddie was no longer seen in the neighborhood.

Several weeks later J.F. Clingman and John Long made their fateful swim and found the gunny sack. When the sack was opened, it was found to contain some rocks and the body of a small boy. Even though the body had been in the water for a while, the boy and his clothing were still in somewhat recognizable condition.

This was a time when newspaper investigating reporters did just that. One reporter from the local newspaper accompanied the coroner during his search for the identity of the dead boy. They canvassed all over town inquiring if anyone had noticed a missing child.

Those that seemed to know of such a person agreed that he wore the type of clothing that was described as being found on the body.

Through tips and observations, they zeroed in on the suspected offenders, the Griffins. The reporter interviewed Louis, who just said that it was a mystery to him how the body was ever discovered.

The couple was picked up.

A coroner's jury trial was held in October to determine if a crime had been committed in the death of the boy. Fannie wore a veil to cover her missing eye.

Several people testified that the body and clothing were that of the boy in the Griffin's household that had disappeared, along with the abusive behavior of Louis towards Eddie.

Fannie and Louis also testified, but both denied that the boy was the one they had cared for. During their statements, both Fanny and Louis never used Eddie's name and many times referred to him as 'it'.

The coroner's jury determined that Little Eddie's death came at the hands of Fannie and Louis Griffin. Both were then charged with murder.

After being charged, Fanny stated that the boy had died from natural causes and they put the body into the lake as they could not afford to bury him. As the trial date got closer, Fanny again changed her story and said that her husband was the one that was responsible for the boy's death and she had nothing to do with it.

The trial opened to a packed court, many of which were women. The myriad of witnesses included the two men who found the body, those that identified the lad, those that saw the abusive behavior of Louis and the

doctor that examined the body.

Louis was then called to the stand. And right out of a *Perry Mason* episode, he broke down and confessed to what happened.

The Griffin's came home from church on a Sunday and Louis told the boy to go out and play with his wagon. In the midafternoon, Eddie came back into the house all covered with dirt.

Louis got upset with Eddie's condition and slapped him hard and the already frail boy fell unconscious to the floor.

Fannie cleaned the boy up and placed him in a bed. The next morning, Louis checked on the boy and he was resting comfortably so he went to work.

When he got home, he asked Fannie about the boy and she said that he was dead. She then put on her shawl and went downtown. Louis said he became afraid and decided to hide the body.

Later that night, Louis grabbed a gunny sack, put Eddie into it and took the bundle over to Moberly Lake. There he put a couple of rocks in with the body, tied up the sack and threw it into the water and went home.

The couple was found guilty of manslaughter. Fannie Griffin was sentenced to serve five years and Louis Griffin was sentenced to 15.

Female spectators were interviewed and were surprised at the verdict. All said that the couple should have been convicted of murder and both hung.

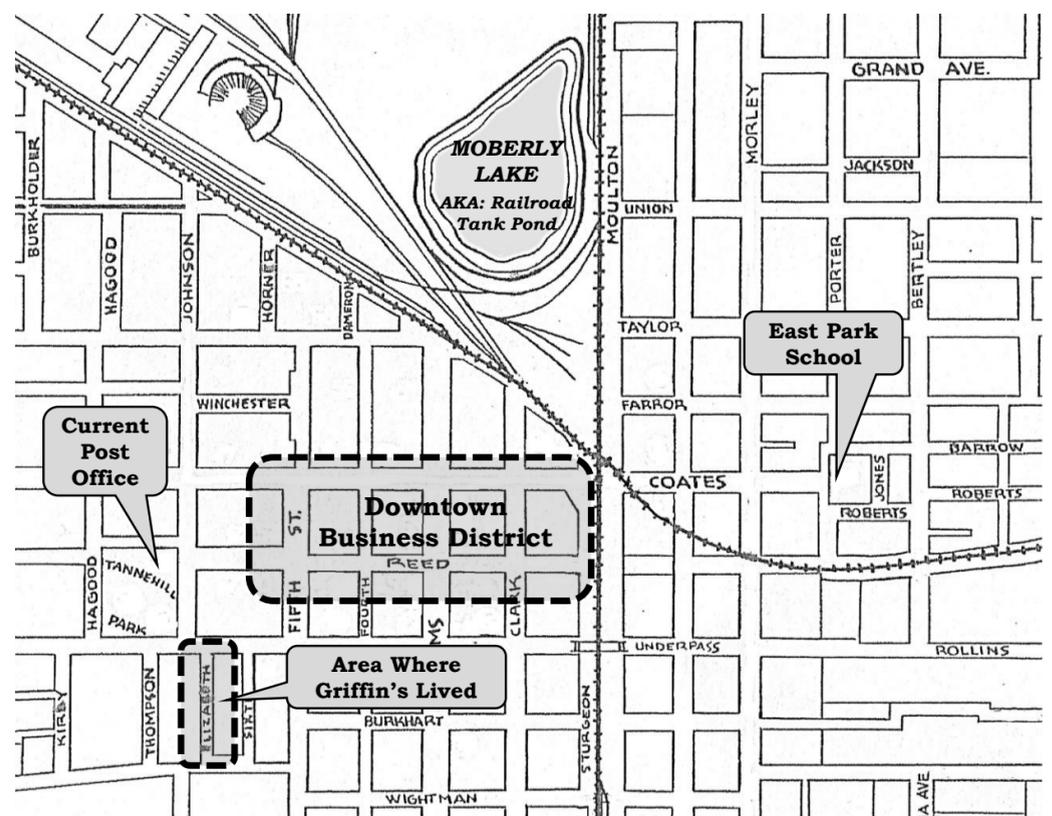
Little Eddie Ballinger's body was buried in an unmarked grave in the Potter's Field section of Oakland Cemetery. (The section just south of the railroad tracks and in-line with the Lincoln Statue.)

Hundreds of people went to the train depot to watch the murderers sent off to the State Prison at Jefferson City.

Fannie was released from prison after serving less than four years due to the 3/4 good behavior law at that time. Louis served a little over 11 years. It is not currently known what became of them after prison.

One last thing to note was the trial testimony of Dr. Cox who examined Eddie's body shortly after he was taken from the lake. His statements that Little Eddie was not dead when he was thrown in the lake but had drown, and the fact that the youngster suffered from syphilis makes this:

A Very Disturbing Murder.



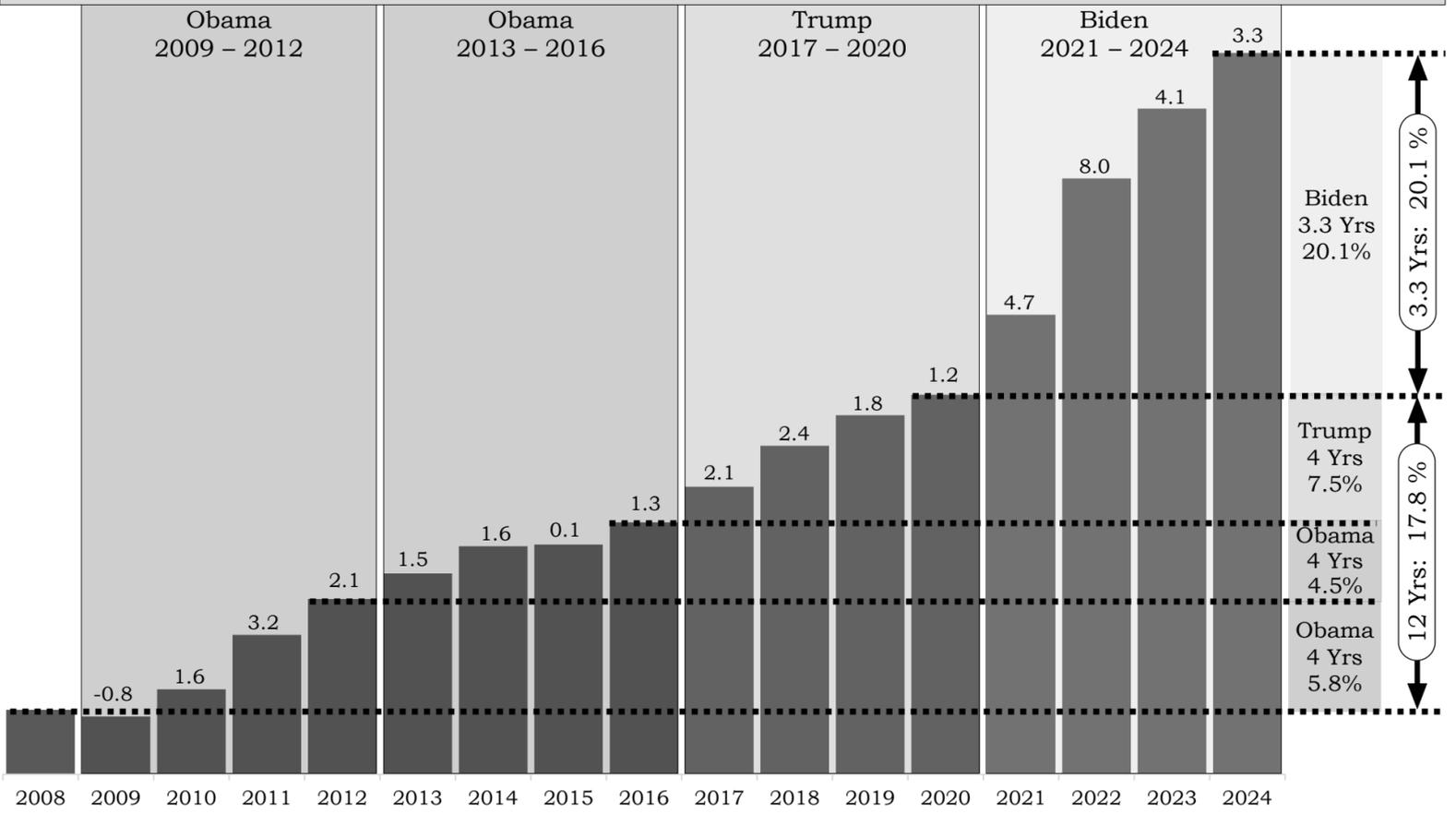
Map of Moberly – Circa 1885

Moberly Lake was a water source for the railroad's steam engines. Trains switched from steam-power to diesel in the 1940's and 1950's and the lake was no longer required and no longer exists.

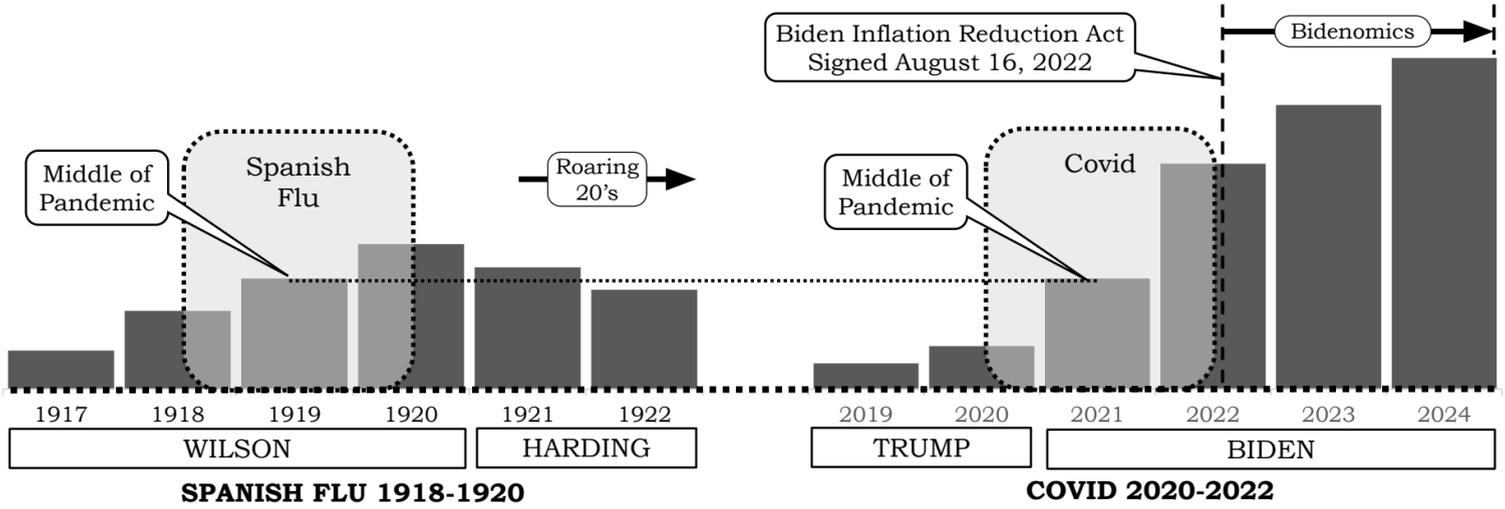
JUST THE FACTS

from the U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS (Interpret The Data However You Choose)

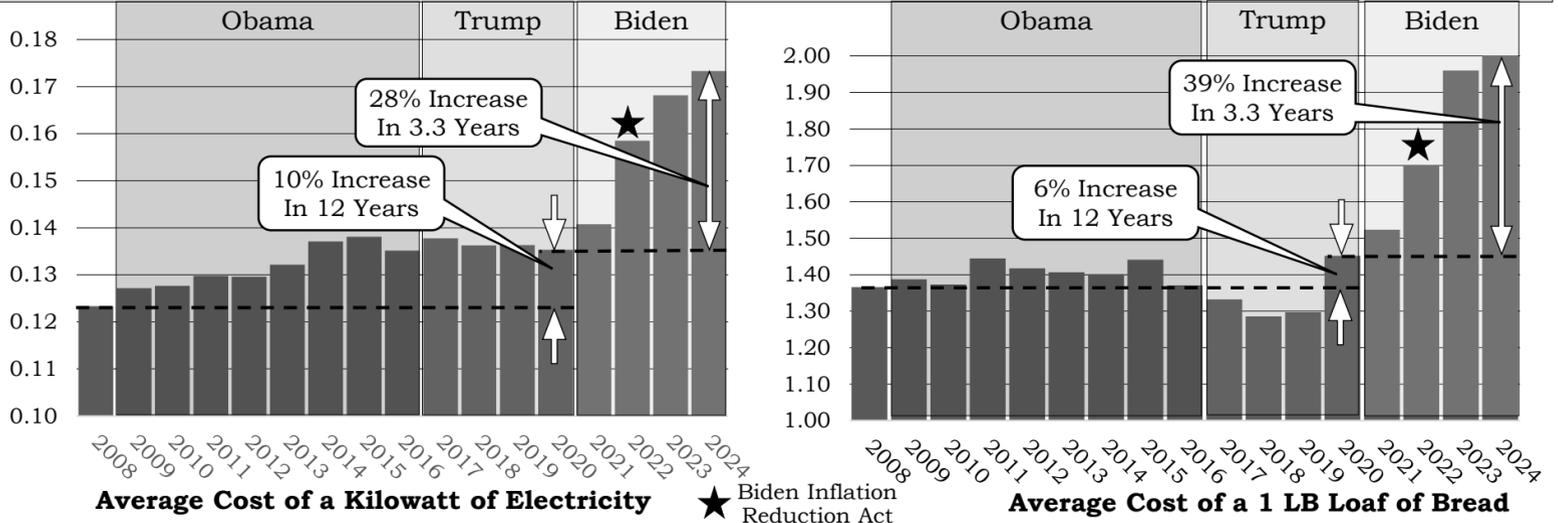
U.S. OVERALL INFLATION CHART 2009 - 2024



U.S. INFLATION RATE TREND COMPARISON OF SPANISH FLU VS. COVID



AVERAGE COSTS IN REGARD TO A COUPLE OF TYPICAL USA-MADE EVERYDAY ITEMS



FOR TAXPAYERS

This information is just simply provided. Interpret it however you choose.

One item of the Nov 15, 2021 Biden Infrastructure Law provided for 500,000 nationwide electric vehicle charging stations to be constructed by the Federal Government (i.e. paid by taxpayers) in just over 8 years (by 2030).

The cost: \$7.5 Billion dollars.

If you are a taxpayer, everyone of you will 'donate', on average, about \$58 for these EV charging stations.

According to *Independent* (a news agency of the United Kingdom), as of March 29, 2024 (almost 2-1/2 years after passage), the total number of charging stations built so far by the U.S. Federal Government: Seven (Just 499,993 to go)

By the end of May, 2024, Biden 'forgave' about \$167 Billion in student debt. These debts are for student loans that they

voluntarily signed up for and were legally responsible to pay.

This 'forgiveness' is not from the colleges, professors, dormitories, bookstores and food services; they all got paid.

These students received a letter stating:

"Congratulations! The Biden-Harris Administration has forgiven your federal student loan"

This 'forgiveness' is not from Biden or Harris. They put the debt cost onto the Federal Government, which means that the taxpayers get to pay for these student's loans.

So, if you are a taxpayer, on average, you will 'donate', out of your own pocket, over \$1,250 to pay for these individual's personal debts.

Maybe you'll get a thank-you note from these students.

There are plans to have even more 'forgiveness' by fall.

Just for Your Information: The total U.S. National Debt is over \$34.8 Trillion and climbing. To put this in perspective, if you are a taxpayer, on average, you each owe over \$269,000 on this debt.

(That is in addition to your current taxes - you knew that, right?)

The legislators keep overspending more and more money that taxpayers and future taxpayers are responsible to pay at some time. Overspending is when the Government spends more than it receives in taxes. (FYI: 'Invest' or 'Investment', is Gov Speak for spending.)

Even if *all* the money of U.S. Billionaires (which includes Michael Jordan, Rihanna, Jay-Z, LeBron James, Taylor Swift and Magic Johnson), was taken from them, estimated at \$5.5 Trillion, each of you would still owe over \$226,000.

(To let you know, the U.S. Government spent over \$6.1 Trillion just in 2023.)

The U.S. National Debt is a major concern that no politician is talking about. (If you don't pay your debts, what happens?) They just talk about the *yearly* finances and *yearly* inflation, not the cumulative.

The Deficit is just one year of overspending, not the total. If politicians tout that they have reduced the Deficit, they are bragging that they haven't overspent that year as much as they planned on. (This is added to the National Debt each year.)

(Does increasing Billionaire's income tax rate appear to solve the problem or just be campaign propaganda to deflect the cause?)

From J.W. Ballinger’s “History on the Radio” on KWIX

(as told by guest D. Craig Asbury on August 30, 2023)

THE FISH WITH THREE EYES ... IN ROTHWELL LAKE

When Moberly was first built on flat ground, water was a major concern for the town. There was no Deer Pond, no Water Works Lake, no Rothwell Lake, no Sugar Creek Lake. Water came from backyard cisterns or wells.

In 1880, the City built the Deer Pond for a water source for the town, but didn't have the money to construct a pumphouse or piping.

Finally, in 1885, a private company built the Water Works Lake, a water pumping station and installed water mains throughout the town and sold the water to the town. One of the largest water customers was the railroad.

Major droughts would hit the area every 10 or 12 years or so and the Water Works Lake would start to dry up. The Water Company had to make a choice during those times on whether to provide water to the town or to the railroad ... and they chose the town.

That didn't set well with the railroad as they now had to transport water from the Grand River.

Finally the railroad puts its foot down and threatened to move out of town if Moberly didn't do something about the water supply. So the town of Moberly purchased the land between the Water Works Lake and the Deer Pond that had a large ravine and allowed the railroad to build a dam.

In 1907 the dam was completed and it eventually became known as Rothwell Lake.

The folks of Moberly saw this new lake and thought the town should make it a park and that's what happened. The initial part of the Park was on the East side of the lake. This new park was just a wild, wooded wilderness with no good roads into it.

The first Park Superintendent once said that those that wanted to swim in the new lake would: "drive out in the brush a ways, walk to the water's edge, pull off their clothes, hang them on limbs, and wade in."

When money became available, the City slowly improved the Park. Brush and old stumps were cleared to open up the area and roads were built.

Moberly now had an official place where they could go to swim. The most popular site was the shoreline just down from the area of the current dog park. People started to come in droves to the new park to have picnics, go fishing, boating, swimming.

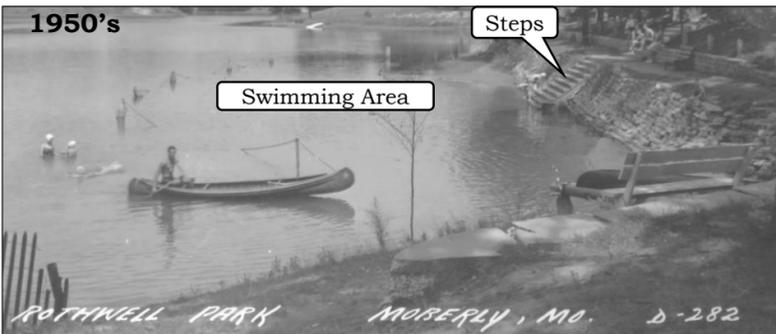
Unfortunately, about once a year, someone would drown. A more controlled and supervised area was needed, so a place a little to the north was chosen.

Around 1928, an art-deco entrance building with men and women changing areas was built on top of a red brick patio.

Everything was built well above the water line so those not swimming could easily see any swimmer in trouble.

A rock retaining wall was constructed to stabilize the hill and a sand bottom was laid. Concrete steps were built that led from the entrance building down into the water. A raft was put in the middle of the lake and a high-dive tower was added. This new Rothwell Lake swimming area became a very popular destination, not only for Moberly, but for people in all the surrounding towns.

Some might remember going swimming there in the 1950's and 60's.



Well back in August of 1937, Gus Etter, who, I think, lived on Concannon Street, was enjoying an afternoon swim at the lake. He took a deep dive into the water, but quickly popped back up.

What happened to Gus made him leave the water immediately.

Stories then circulated around town that there was a fish with three eyes..... in Rothwell Lake.

The talk made the rounds throughout the fishing community to be on the lookout for this special fish.

Fishermen of all ages were soon out with hopes of a catch of a lifetime. But try as they might, no one ever hooked this "out of the ordinary" fish.

While a fish with three eyes could not be confirmed, twenty years later, 1957, the Missouri Department of Health closed the swimming area due to the contamination in the lake.

That was when open sewers existed at the edges of town. The waste water from a home or business was directed by ditch towards the nearest creek for removal

instead of going into an enclosed sewer system like in town.

This was way before the current 4-lane Highway 24 took you to Huntsville. At that time, Highway 24 was what is now Route JJ and all along this area to the north of the lake were houses, a trailer park, filling stations, a restaurant, a dance hall and a slaughter house.

All had open sewers and the raw sewage would find its way into Rothwell Lake. Algae and moss choked the bottom and shores of the lake. Decaying vegetation added to the contamination.

After the closing, the City was without a swim area.

Over the next couple of years, bond proposals were submitted to the voters for a new swimming pool that was to be built inside the oval drive just to the East of the Candy Cane City. Voters didn't seem interested, so the proposals always failed.

In 1960, a no-holds barred, massive campaign was put in motion to pass the swimming pool measure with newspaper ads, radio spots, a house-to-house crusade, a parade and a Miss Swimming Pool Beauty Pageant.

When the proposal went to the voters, a little over 50% favored it, but it was far less than the 2/3 required to pass.

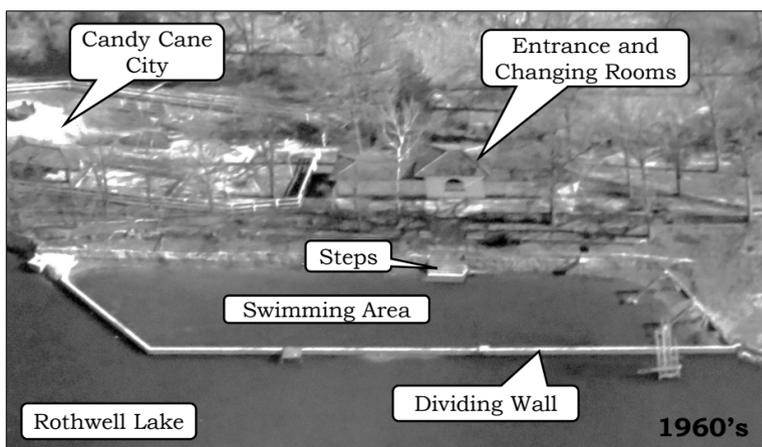
With Moberly still not having a public swimming area, the Country Club's membership increased to take advantage of their pool. A little outside of Clark, out in the country, a 35-acre lake was converted to a swimming area with bath houses, a sand beach, a dock, rafts, picnic tables and a concession stand.

Some may remember this place: Lake Bon-Tricia.



Then Moberly decided it needed to just revamp the swimming area in Rothwell Lake. A containment lagoon was constructed north of the lake to hold back the waste from the slaughter house and the trailer park. A syphon drainpipe system was installed in the lake to easily lower the water to clean the shore each year if required.

When the water was initially lowered, the swim area bottom was thoroughly cleaned and new sand was put down. A concrete dividing wall was placed around the swim area to help separate it from possible contaminants in the lake.



In the early 1960's, the swimming area inside Rothwell Lake was reopened.

But unfortunately, the swim area didn't last but just a few short years as heavy rains would overflow the slaughter house and trailer park lagoon and the raw waste would again run into Rothwell Lake.

The State Health Department again shut down lake swimming in 1967.

This time, the closing of the lake didn't have quite the impact as before. There was the Country Club and Lake Bon-Tricia to go to. And the Sun-N-Fun swim club had been opened a year earlier.

The new Thomas Hill Power Plant lake had been completed and swimming there was free, although pretty primitive. But not everyone could afford the expense of joining a club or driving out in the country for a swim.

After a few years, a bond was finally passed and the City of Moberly constructed its first totally enclosed and environmental protected municipal pool.

On its opening day in 1970, the new pool in Rothwell Park, located inside the oval drive, had an attendance of almost 2,000 adults and over 200 kids. This pool was

THE FISH WITH THREE EYES ... IN ROTHWELL LAKE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8)

used for 40 years until it was replaced with the Aquatic Center at the north-west section of the park in 2009.

Now I know, you're still wondering about that part about Gus, his dive and the fish with three eyes. Well, I'll tell ya:

If you find yourself out fishing at Rothwell Lake, be sure and check the stomach of any fish you clean, because what had happened to Gus was

He lost his glass eye during that dive and he thought that a fish may have swallowed it.

Now if someone happens to find a ... 3-eyed fish ... , you might mention it to Troy Bock, the Parks and Rec Director.

The old lake swimming area has changed quite a bit after it closed. The old 1928 Entrance and Bath Houses were torn down in 1973. The concrete dividing wall in the lake was removed a couple of years later. An overlook was built on top of the old concrete steps into the water.

There's an updated red concrete brick stamped patio where the old entrance and bathhouses were, just in front of the overlook.

And that's the story of: The Fish With Three Eyes ... in Rothwell Lake.



Original Entrance and Changing Rooms of the Rothwell Lake Swimming area. (That's a Dr Pepper sign under the window)



Current location of the old Entrance and Changing Rooms. Visible is the Overlook above the old Steps to the old Rothwell Lake Swimming Area.

65 YEARS OLD (OPENED AUGUST 24, 1959) CANDY CANE CITY

Playground for Tots Proposed For Park Here

\$3,000 to Be Sought For 'Candy Cane City' Around Wading Pool (\$3,000 in 1959 is around \$32,000 today)

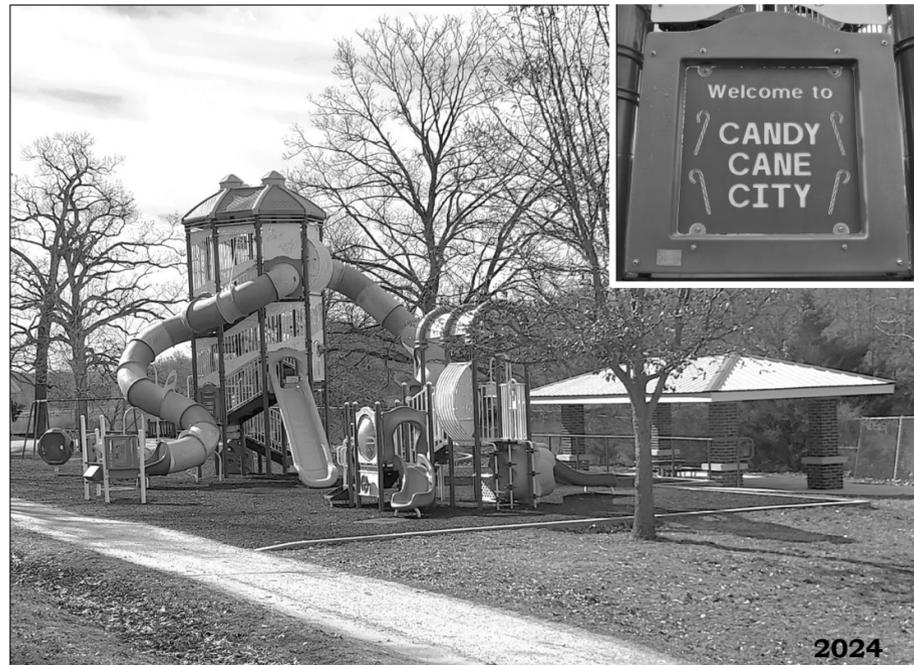
Candy Cane City Receives Several More Donations

Out-of-Town Donations Added To Fund for Candy Cane City

Candy Cane City Fund Mounts To \$2,000, Two-Thirds of Goal

Candy Cane City Opens With Big And Happy Rush

Parents and Kids All Like New Play Equipment at Park



2024

THE WADING POOL



2024

In 1953, the defunct World War II Victory Chorus donated \$800 (about \$10,000 today) to build a small wading pool for young children that would be separate from the lake swimming area. The concrete, in-ground rectangular pool was 6" deep at the north end and 18" deep at the south. A brick-pillared shelter house was constructed over the wading pool. Candy Cane City was built around this structure. The wading pool was also closed due to contamination and was made into a sand playbox. Later, it was filled in with concrete and is now a seating area.

FROM SLAVE TO RESPECTED BUSINESSMAN

The Story of Thomas H. Phillips

Thomas H. Phillips was born into slavery. During his slave years, he was sold twice on the auction block and three times in a private sale.

In April, 1864, Phillips enlisted in the Union 1st Kansas Colored Infantry. (Signed up in Arkansas and the unit later became the 79th US Colored Infantry) His enlistment card listed that he was 18 years old and was born in Virginia. (He was actually older.)

As he was illiterate, he signed the form with an "X". He served until the end of the war and was mustered out in October of 1865.

After the war, Phillips moved to Kansas and began his education. In the 1880's, he looked to expand his opportunities and moved to the flourishing town of Moberly.

Moberly has had over 30 different newspapers over its history. U.S. newspapers at that time were of a declared political persuasion. Republican newspapers backed Lincoln-type politics and the rights of Blacks. The Democrat party had backed slavery and made Jim-Crow segregation laws and those newspapers perpetuated those beliefs.

To further their political views, Thomas H. Phillips and his brother started a Republican monthly newspaper in 1887.

They named it, the 'Brothers Optic'. It was the first Black—owned newspaper in Missouri. The newspaper was increased to a weekly and then to a daily.

In the 1889, the U.S. celebrated the 100th jubilee of the inauguration of George Washington. Moberly had a large parade where the Phillips brothers had a float and passed out copies of their newspaper. T.H. Phillips announced "that he was publishing the only daily paper by colored men in the United States." The banner on the side of the Optic float stated: "What A Change In A Hundred Years".

The expense of publishing a daily newspaper soon caused the 'Brother Optic' to revert back to a weekly.

In addition to publishing a newspaper, Phillips studied the medical disciplines of healing mud baths, vapor therapy and massage, popular in that era. Phillips was also a paster for the Baptist Church and promoted the United Brotherhood of Friendship, a benevolent society created in 1861 for both free Blacks and slaves to improve their condition. He helped start Lodge #9 in

Moberly around 1884.

In the early 1890's, the newspaper was renamed to the "Western Optic".

After around 10 years of newspaper publishing, Phillips closed up shop and moved to Iowa. No copies of this newspaper are currently known to exist.

At Keokuk, he opened a house of healing which grew over time. Always the entrepreneur, Phillips built a merry-go-round in 1902 and charged neighborhood children 5 cents a ride. He hand-pushed the contraption himself (he was in his sixties).

With hard work and determination, Phillips expanded his house and constructed a health sanitarium. Hundreds of patients, both Black and White, from Iowa and Illinois, came every month to partake of his magnetic and healing bath treatments.

He obtained as many books as possible and created a library for the use of Blacks as they were not allowed to use the public one.



T.H. Phillips Home at Keokuk, Iowa

On his 86th birthday in 1919, he was honored with a reception was held at the A.M.E. Church that was well attended by both Blacks and Whites. One of his gifts was a coin purse with a gold coin.

Rev. Thomas H. Phillips died on October 12, 1920.

In 1952, one of Phillip's newspapers was found.

Moberly Monitor-Index and Democrat
June 17, 1952

From the Western Optic of 60 Years Ago:

**NEGRO ACTIVITIES RECALLED BY OLD NEWSPAPER
PUBLISHED HERE**

Negro activities in Moberly 60 years ago are recalled by a copy of the Western Optic, dated Aug. 12, 1892, found recently by Mrs. Francis Strayhall.

The paper was stuffed in a hole between some laths in a partition being torn away at the rear of the Strayhall home. Mrs. Stayhall brought it in the Monitor-Index news office.

The Western Optic, prepared for Negro readers, was published here every Friday and was entered at the Moberly postoffice as second-class matter. Its office address was at Fourth and Gilman streets. Its masthead listed T.H. Phillips as editor and A.C. Phillips as proprietor. J.W. Childs and William M. Lyon were listed as managers of the paper's St. Louis office.

Among advertisers in the Western Optic was the Negro grocery firm of Cassidy, Coleman and Company at 210 North Fifth street. The Colored Fair Association announced that its second annual meeting would be held here Sept. 6-10, 1892. W.C. Turner, 210 North Fifth street, was secretary of the fair.

There was much political news that summer and the Western Optic was supporting this Republican ticket:

Benjamin F. Harrison for president, Wiltclaw Reid for vice-president, William Warner of Jackson County for governor of Missouri, George P. Wright for Randolph county representative.

Unfortunately, what became of this single issue is unknown.

T.H. Phillips is to be admired for what he accomplished. Without any help or handouts, but through his own hard work, grit, determination and ethics, he rose from a destitute slave that couldn't read or write to be a successful Black business leader, respected by all.

Let him be an example that anyone can succeed if they choose and are willing to work for it. Just look beyond perceived barriers and take advantage of different opportunities, no matter how life's cards were originally dealt.

***"Argue for your limitations,
and sure enough, their yours."***

Richard Bach - ILLUSIONS

A STORY OF GOLD

When it comes to telling the very old stories of Moberly history, J.W. Ballinger and I have two different approaches. I spend countless hours reading 100-year-old newspapers, dusting off the old land records and going through a hodge-podge of unnumerable old maps and photos.

J.W. just remembers his childhood.

Some might chuckle that I might be insinuating that J.W. is old, but the following story illustrates those different methods.

When I go through the old newspapers, I don't necessarily find a total story – sometimes I find just a nugget about something that I think might make a good story with more research. So I make a note about it in my 'To Be Researched Files'.

One day, J.W. and I were sitting around talking some of that boring old history stuff. I mentioned something about a fire cistern that was dug in front of the old St. John's Catholic Church on Ault Street. (The church was built around 1875 and was located where the south end of the Moberly Towers is now.)

As J.W. had grown up in the area, he told me a little history of the surroundings. He then hesitated and said he isn't sure if he should relate one story told to him as a child by his grandfather, as the elderly man was known to take a nip or two and sometimes would 'overstate the truth a bit' to the wide-eyed youngster.

J.W. went on to relate the account as told to him: It was back around the turn-of-the-century and some boys in the area had found some buried gold coins.

I then piped up and said that a few years ago, I had come across a turn-of-the-century newspaper tidbit about some buried gold coins that were found on Ault Street, but hadn't researched it any further.

J.W. and I then dove into research and here is the story according to our combined efforts:

It was a hot summer in 1917. To escape the heat, some grade-school boys decided they needed a wading pool. So 9-year-old Donald Kappler got permission from his mother to dig a small hole out in their backyard on North Ault Street to fill with water.

Soon, the boys had a shovel in hand and were busy taking turns replacing the dirt with air. They envisioned

JUST SOME HISTORY

To Understand Thomas H. Phillip’s Political Alliance - Interpret the Information However You Choose

EXCERPTS FROM 1856 POLITICAL PLATFORMS (Just Prior to the Civil War)

DEMOCRAT

“Non-interference by Congress with Slavery in State and Territory, or in the District of Columbia.”

REPUBLICAN

“That we deny the authority of Congress, of a Territorial Legislation, of any individual, or association of individuals, to give legal existence to Slavery in any Territory of the United States ...”

The historical difference of these parties is illustrated in U.S. National Politics through the use of public records:

1866 Civil Rights Act Approval Rate

- Act to protect all persons in their civil rights
- 80% Republican Representatives
- 0% Democrat Representative
- 89% Republican Senators
- 0% Democrat Senators

This was vetoed by Democrat President Andrew Johnson. Congress then overrode Johnson’s veto with the following approval:

- 94% Republican Representatives
- 0% Democrat Representatives
- 86% Republican Senators
- 0% Democrat Senators

1875 Civil Rights Act Approval Rate

- Act to protect all citizens in their civil and legal rights
- 82% Republican Representatives
- 0% Democrat Representatives
- 72% Republican Senators
- 0% Democrat Senators

1957 Civil Rights Act Approval Rate

- Act to further secure and protect civil rights
- 75% Republican Representatives
- 55% Democrat Representatives
- 80% Republican Senators
- 46% Democrat Senators

1960 Civil Rights Act Approval Rate

- Act to enforce civil rights
- 83% Republican Representatives
- 65% Democrat Representatives
- 81% Republican Senators
- 59% Democrat Senators

1964 Civil Rights Act Approval Rate

- Act to enforce voting rights
- 76% Republican Representatives
- 60% Democrat Representatives
- 82% Republican Senators
- 69% Democrat Senators

1965 Civil Rights Act Approval Rate

- Enforcement of 15th Amendment (voting rights)
- 79% Republican Representatives
- 74% Democrat Representatives
- 94% Republican Senators
- 72% Democrat Senators

Democrat President Lyndon Johnson took credit for the last two laws even though his party had the smaller approval rate.

(Votes can be verified at: GovTrack.us)

STATUE REMOVAL

In 2020, then Democrat Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi gave a speech in regard to her approval for several statues to be removed from some government buildings. Those statues mentioned included: Jefferson Davis (President of Confederacy), Alexander Stephens (Vice President of Confederacy), John Calhoun (Pro-Slavery Advocate) and Roger Taney (Pro-Slavery Advocate). These individuals were cited as they “championed slavery and segregation”.

Pelosi did not mention that they were all members of the Democrat party.

BOOKKEEPING IN D.C.

In 2022, Biden’s first effort at student loan ‘forgiveness’ (\$430 Billion, over \$3,000 cost per taxpayer), was added to the 2022 Deficit.

The Supreme Court struck down that attempt. Biden kept the ‘debt’ on the books, even though it wasn’t spent.

He then took it off the next year so he could say he had a Deficit reduction in 2023.

This ‘bookkeeping’ had no effect on the 2023 Deficit. In fact, the Government overspent more in 2023 than 2022.

No matter how you spin it, any Deficit (over-spending) means you owe more money.



A STORY OF GOLD

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10)

what a treasure of having their own pool would be like when they came across a different treasure: a yellow coin!

It looked a little different than what they were used to seeing, but they all knew that it money and as any grade-schooler knows, there was only one thing to do with money.

They immediately set out to Edwin Wilcox’ candy store.

There they picked out all the fancy stuff they could never afford. They handed the yellow coin to Mrs. Wilcox who quizzed them on where they got it.

The boys related their digging a wading pool story and how they found the yellow coin. Mrs. Wilcox told them they had an old \$20 gold piece and wondered if there were anymore.

The kids looked at each other and ran out of the store to look for some more gold coins. They found another 15 gold coins which were all minted between 1850 and 1870.



Word quickly spread about the coins and it was speculated that they may have been owned by Father McKenna, the priest for the St. John’s Church.

The house that the Kappler’s lived in, was once the priest’s parsonage forty years earlier. It seems as if it was a tradition back then for a congregation to gift their priest on occasion with gold coins.

These gifts were possibly a way to support him in his old age. There was no social security or pension plans and being a priest was a non-paying job with no money for retirement savings.

There was nothing special that the gifted coins were gold, they were just standard currency at that time, like silver coins were to the early Boomers. The only thing is that if you had one \$20 gold piece back then, it would be like carrying around a \$500 bill today – not too many folks do that.

Father McKenna retired in 1888 due to poor health and passed-away 4 years later.

In 1917, the Keppler’s were just renting the house. The talk of the gold got back to the property owner who sought out legal advice in regard to the situation. He was told that anything found underground was his.

According to the passed-down story, the owner got the gold and rewarded the boys with bicycles.

There is a possibility that the boys might not have found all the gold coins if you see J.W. on Ault Street with a shovel, let me know.

1999 WAYBACK ITEMS

Items Gathered from Moberly Newspapers 25 Years Ago
(Prices or Coupons No Longer Valid)

PORK STEAK Family Pack 78¢ LB.	73% GROUND BEEF Family Pack 88¢ LB.
PORK COUNTRY STYLE RIBS Family Pack 88¢ LB.	RUSSET POTATOES 5 lb. 38¢
CHEERIOS 15 oz. \$1.99	RED BELL PEPPERS 35¢ EACH
COKE PRODUCTS 12-Pack \$2.69	DEL MONTE VEGETABLES Cut Green Beans, Whole Corn, French Style, 14.5 oz. 39¢

MACARONI & CHEESE 7.25 OZ. PKG. 19¢	ICE CREAM HALF GALLON \$1.49	PEPSI-COLA 2-LITERS 87¢
PORK & BEANS 16 OZ. CAN 19¢	BBQ SAUCE 28 OZ. 99¢	MEAT HOT DOGS 12 OZ. PKG. 49¢

Dana Plato dies while visiting in home of fiance's parents

MOORE, Okla. (AP) — Like her young "Diff'rent Strokes" co-stars, Dana Plato had seen her share of troubles since the show was canceled. They finally ended not with the happiness she sought, but with the fatal drug overdose she feared.

Ms. Plato played Kimberly Drummond on the NBC sitcom that ran from 1978 to 1984. Like co-stars Todd Bridges and Gary Coleman, she couldn't sustain the stardom the show brought her.

CITY LIMITS
Saturday,
May 15, 1999
The Legendary
PLATO & THE PHILOSOPHERS
1403 S. Morley, Moberly

Family Tradition Restaurant
formerly VFW Breakfast & Lunch Restaurant
OPEN EASTER SUNDAY 1347 S. Morley, Moberly **OPEN EASTER SUNDAY**
660-263-

Sunday Lunch Special 11-2
Choice Pan Fried Chicken,
Baked Ham with Cherry Sauce,
Roast Beef, choice of 2 vegetables,
coffee or tea, choice homemade
dinner roll or cinnamon roll **\$4.49**

APRIL BREAKFAST SPECIAL
6:00 am - 10:00 am Sun. • Fri. • 6:00 am - 11:00 am Sat.
1 Pancake, 2 Eggs, 2 Slices of Bacon and 2
Link Sausages - \$2.99



\$19.95
a month gets you
60 minutes
a month.
UNITED STATES CELLULAR.
WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS

A 'Lamp on the Past' BELIEVE IT OR DON'T Story THE BOOZE RUNNER

It was 100 years ago, 1924, and the country was in the midst of Prohibition. Illegal corn mash stills were operated in remote rural locations providing the intoxicating elixir that was sold in back rooms and speak-easies in town.

Getting the product to market was the perilous link in the chain as lawmen were constantly on the lookout for those transporting it. Arrests were not uncommon, but one booze running incident would shock mid-Missouri.

26-year-old Lou Lyle, who lived in southern Randolph County, was determined to make the trip to Fayette to sell the moonshine from the family back-woods distillery. The backseat of the Ford was loaded up with Mason Jars of the clear liquid.

Two of Lou's children, a boy aged 6 and a girl aged 4, were placed on the passenger-side of the front bench seat to make the car appear less conspicuous. Lou then got into the driver's position and headed to town.

Unknown to the booze runner was that the law had received a tip on the illicit cargo. Two officers of the Howard County sheriff's department waited for the 'whiskey wagon' about a mile outside the city limits of Fayette. The sheriff stood in the middle of the road to make the vehicle stop.

Instead, Lou stepped on the gas, veered around the lawman and sped into downtown Fayette. The patrol car was soon close behind, firing shots at the fleeing car's tires.

When the city limits was reached, Lou tried to evade the officers by making sharp turns at almost every intersection. The harried chase continued through both the business district and residential area. All the while, Lou was driving with one hand and reaching over to the backseat and breaking glass jars.

The car was finally stopped, but the driver did not want to be taken in. Lou picked up a pistol, leaned over the two children and pointed the weapon at the lawmen, but did not fire.

Lou was disarmed and arrested.

The officers found a number of shattered jars on the floorboard with lids scattered about. The backseat still had several unbroken jars, six gallons worth, all filled with corn whiskey ... and there was also a shotgun.

A few hours after arrest, Lou Lyle was released on a \$5,000 bond (about \$90,000 today) that was backed by Everett Lyle, Archie Lyle, Bud Lyle and Levi Pickard.

Not long after that, Levi Pickard withdrew his support for the bond and Lou was taken back into custody. At the new bond hearing, Everett Lyle punched Levi Pickard in the nose and broke it.

You see, Levi Pickard was the father of Everett Lyle's wife, Lucille 'Lou' [Pickard] Lyle.

Yep, Lou Lyle was a woman.

Believe It or Don't

A ‘Lamp on the Past’ True Crime Story**MURDER AT THE FORTUNE TELLER’S HOUSE
532 HORNER STREET**

(Be sure that you have read ‘An Introduction to Ernest Roberts’ on Page 3 before continuing.)

When the railroad junction was built at the site of the new town of Moberly, the folks at ‘Old’ Allen tended to physically move their houses and businesses there. One of those that relocated was Mary Heether, who moved her log cabin around 1868.

It was placed on the southeast corner of Horner and Surgeon Streets. (For local Boomers, this was a block north of the old Lincoln/Bradley School – for the rest, you can’t get there from here as the school and Horner Street no longer exist; but the cabin was just to the North side of the Ameren brick building on Franklin Street.)



The cabin changed ownership a couple of times and ended up in the Large family. Assorted relatives occupied the house for decades. Mary Large was a fortune teller that occupied the house in the early 1900’s.

People would seek out her guidance on the future through the use of cards or coffee grounds. When Mary died in 1920, at the age of 81, the house was passed to her 50-year-old niece, Anna Large, who also was a practicing fortune teller.

[Historic Note: Mary Large died from the 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic: See *Yesteryear* 2021 for more information about it’s effects on Randolph County.]

Anna was a well-known character that dressed the part of a fortune teller from the long, dark skirt to her neck full of long strings of beads. She was an alcoholic that kept several stray dogs with her in the dilapidated house.

In 1933, some historic minded citizens proposed that the notable little log cabin be preserved as a tribute to Moberly’s founding and progress. Nothing was done.

Somewhere around 1940, 55-year-old Ernest Roberts (yes, that Ernest Roberts), who was some sort of relative, moved in with the 70-year-old Annie.

Ernest’s third wife, Sarah Roberts, lived apart from her husband at the boarding house at 125 South Fifth Street (see Page 5).

To recap:

Ernest was jailed on numerous occasions and once confessed to an unknown murder. He shot his mother and went to prison. His first wife divorced him, his second wife mysteriously died and he was legally insane.

Somehow he was still able to get someone to marry him again, albeit not live together. He lived with a 70-year-old relative that was an alcoholic fortune teller in an old run-down log cabin.

[This is where we take a quick pause for you to absorb all that.]

On the early afternoon of March 3, 1943, Sarah Roberts went to Annie’s house to see her husband. After walking inside, she quickly left and went home. A few hours later she went to the Salvation Army Home, which, at that time, was on Johnson Street and about a block from Annie’s house.

There she talked with Captain Miller. He went over to the old house. He also quickly left, but he made a phone call to the authorities.

Coroner Griffiths immediately went to the ramshackle dwelling, arriving at 7:15 PM. He found the dead body of 73-year-old Annie.

She had been badly beaten. Her nose was broken and blood was still dripping from her mouth. There was a severe bruise on the right side of her chest along with evidence of recent burns on her forehead and legs.

The coroner determined that Annie had been beaten and tortured the day before and laid on the cold floor slowly bleeding for 24 hours. She had died only about an hour before he had got to the scene.

Due to the myriad of circumstances pertaining to Annie’s death, the Immediate Cause of Death on her death certificate was: “*Undetermined combination of a traumatic beating, alcoholism, bruises on legs, chilling and debility. Unable to determine exact cause if any single cause.*”

The 58-year-old Ernest was picked up and placed in the county jail. He made a statement that he had cashed an \$18 pension check (about \$350 today) for Annie that morning. Little imagination is required to surmise that Ernest probably forced Annie to endorse the check the night before as he did not want to get charged with forgery again.

While in jail, Ernest did not appear ‘right’, so a competency hearing was held. He was adjudged to be of unsound mind and ordered to be committed to the state hospital at Fulton.

A few days later, a manslaughter charge was filed against Ernest in hopes of a trial when, and if, he was released from the state hospital.

By the end of the year, Ernest was declared ‘sound’ and released from the state hospital, He was promptly arrested and placed in the Randolph County jail.

Ernest’s defense lawyer argued that his client had been declared insane by the state nine years earlier in 1934. He was never treated and therefore was still legally insane at the time of Annie’s death.

The judge determined that as Ernest was officially insane at the time of Annie’s death, he couldn’t be convicted of murder. As he had been sent to the state hospital after Annie’s death and then released and hadn’t done anything illegal since, they couldn’t send him back.

In the spring of 1944, the case was dropped from the court’s docket and Ernest was free to go about his business.

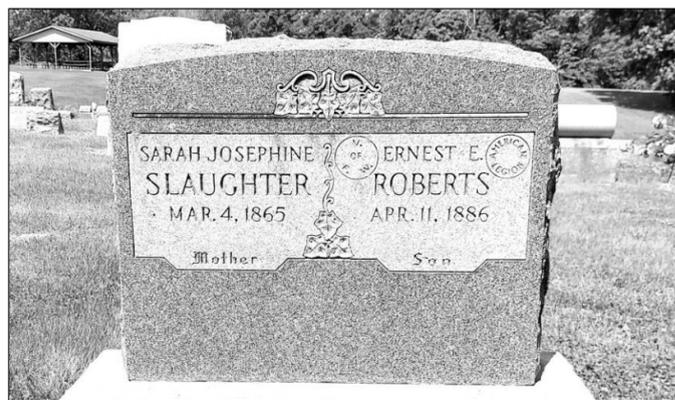
Shortly afterwards, Ernest and Sarah were back living together.

In early January of 1945, Ernest was charged with striking his wife and knocking her down (probably during his ‘celebration’ of the New Year). He was sentenced to one month in jail, but it was suspended on the promise of good behavior.

They were still together in 1946, but by early 1950, Ernest and Sarah were divorced (living apart but were apartment neighbors).

On April 23, 1950, 64-year-old Ernest Roberts died at Wadsworth, Kansas in a Veterans Hospital where he had been for about a week.

Ernest’s body was transported back to Moberly and buried at Oakland Cemetery, next to his mother, whom he tried to kill 34 years earlier.



The old log cabin at 532 Horner Street, the oldest house in the original city limits of Moberly, was torn down shortly after Annie’s death.

10 YEARS AGO (May 22, 2014 – Looking East)**First People Crossing the Just-Completed Rollins Street Footbridge**

(The Old Crossing Guard Shanty at the Railroad Museum, as shown on Page 1, can be seen to the left of the Caboose.)



THE STORY OF EAST PARK SCHOOL

After 94 years of service to the community, East Park School fell to the wrecking ball.

Countless children have learned and played within the walls and the surrounding grounds.

I was an East Park schooler and this is the story about that building.

(The following is in conjunction with J.W. Ballinger's 'History on the Radio' program on KWIX, March 27, 2024 in regard to East Park School.)

Back in 1866, Moberly was just a small, haphazard bundle of buildings with families trying to create a future.

The village had no money to fund a public school and education was a low priority. A few small private schools appeared that parents could send their children to for a fee.

In just a few years, the Magic City grew into an established town and the need for a public school was talked about.

It was decided that the school would be in Ward #1 and be located on Rollins Street, a couple of blocks West of Oakland Cemetery.

A 3-room frame building was constructed in 1873 for \$5,000 (about \$130,000 today) and was opened in August.



Moberly's First Public School

Public school was only opened for classes four months out of the year. If parents wanted for their children to have more education than the short-term public school year could provide, they would pay to send their children to one of the private schools.

Just 12 years after opening, on Dec 10, 1885, at 9:30 AM, while school was in session, the public school building caught fire.

A train engineer saw the smoke and blew his engine's whistle. (See YESTERYEAR – 2023 for early fire alerts.) The Fire Department's horse-drawn hose cart was quickly on it's way and stopped at Moss Park (the current location of East Park) to hook up to a hydrant, the closest one to the fire at that time.

The firemen then started laying the hose to the fire, a half of a mile away. When they got to the railroad tracks, a train blocked their progress. The train was quickly moved and the firemen threaded the hose under the train rails in case another train came along.

A second horse-drawn hose cart arrived and connected their hose and the fire was then reached.

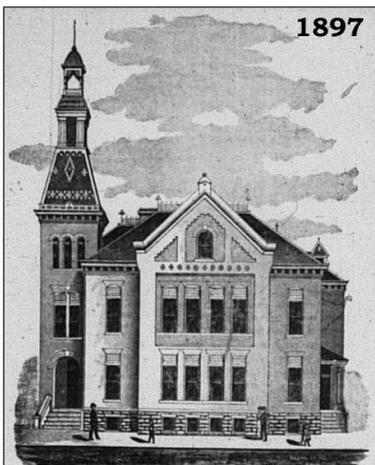
All the students had gotten out of the building, many carrying small items with them. Neighbors assisted but the fire spread quickly through the wood structure.

The firemen did what they could but the fire was beyond control. It was a total loss. It was found that a bad flue had caused the fire.

By the next day, a replacement school was proposed to be built on the Moss Park site.

In August of 1886, construction began on the new schoolhouse in the park.

The new building was 66' X 64', two stories high with six schoolrooms. The tower was 96' tall and had an outlook that allowed visitors to view the surrounding area. Total cost: \$13,175 (today about \$500,000)



The First East Park School Building

By 1929, the need to replace East Park due to structural problems was realized. A ball-park estimate for the new school was about \$53,000. (Today: \$1 million.)

A bond measure was passed and the project commenced.

The demolition of the old building began in June and was completely razed with the rubble removed in just 20 workdays at a cost of \$2,745 (today: about \$50,000).

The designs for the new East Park were completed in August by local noted

architect, Ludwig Abt.

In September, construction began on the new structure.

Along with the new East Park, work began on a new West Park, a new High School/Jr. College, a new Jr High to replace the building that burned down and an auditorium for North Park.

The Great Depression started in November, but these projects gave jobs when jobs were scarce.

Open house for the new East Park School was in August of 1930, which means that the building took less than one year to totally finish.

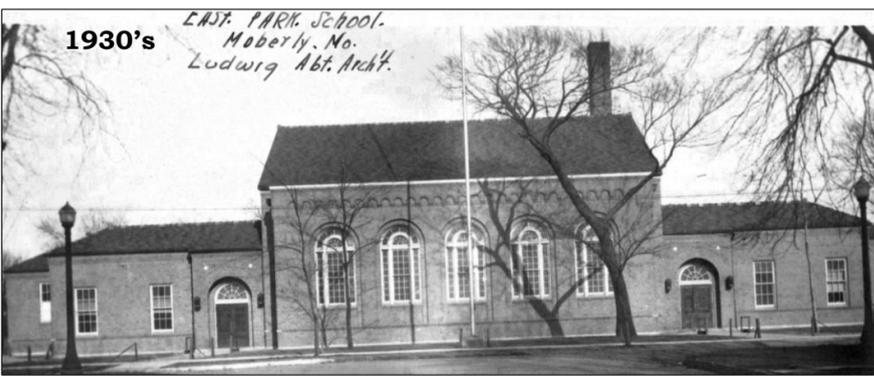
The concrete top, bottom and sides were said to be practically fireproof. A noted feature was the integrated footlights in the stage floor.

It was the only single-story school in town. The buff brick exterior, yellow tiled interior walls and light beechwood floors made the structure stand apart from other dark-bricked local schools.

The new East Park School was projected to be educating children for the next 75 years (2005).

The building was expanded over the years and was officially closed in 2023 and demolished this last spring.

(For East Park, school is out forever.)



Ludwig Abt Collection (C4465) The State Historical Society of Missouri, Photograph Collection

MOSS PARK

For those that don't know, Moss Park was a city park on the East end of town, similar to what Tannehill Park was on the West end. It became the location of East Park School.

How Moss Park got it's name is surrounded in mystery.

Dr. Henry C. Moss was a noted local physician and a member of the Moberly city council in 1873 and 1874.

In 1934, Miss Ella Clarkson (East Park teacher), gifted an oil portrait of Dr. Moss to East Park. She donated it in the name of her aunt, Mrs H.C. Frame (daughter of Dr. Moss). It was presented as Dr. Moss 'gave the city the ground on which East Park stands'.

The portrait was placed on display on a hallway wall at East Park.

Now, the real story that was lost in time:

Back in 1967, James L. Stone (an abstract company owner and local historian) did an in-depth research into the land known as Moss Park.

Stone found out the land never belonged to Moss. It was owned by Mr and Mrs Porter, Mr and Mrs Hunt and Mr and Mrs Godfrey.

They all sold the land to the city for \$1 in 1874 (when Moss was a council member) with the stipulation that it would be maintained as a park. If not, it would go back to the owners.

(The Moberly City Council Minutes at the time simply referred to it as the 'park on the East side of the railroad'.)

Dr. Moss did live in a frame house that was right across Porter Street from the Park that was the last house on the North side of East Coates.

(This frame house was moved to Ault Street in 1905. Bar-owner W.J. Stamm then built a large two-story brick house on the vacant lot. In the 1970's, an elderly neighbor once told me that each brick in that house represented a shot of

whiskey sold. Local Boomers might remember it as the Gordy and then the Brubaker house.)

When the Park land was chosen to be the location of East Park School in 1885, the land reverted to the original owners. The owners then sold the land back to the city at full price.

(City Council Minutes referred to it at that time as 'Moss Park'. So something happened to change the moniker from the 'park on the East side of the railroad' in 1874 to 'Moss Park' in 1885.)

Recently, more research was done on the subject.

Dr. Moss moved to Illinois around 1875 or so. There he was murdered on Feb 18, 1878, just four years after the park land was acquired by Moberly.

There was no official documentation found that specified that it be named Moss Park ... the park just generally took on the name to honor the murdered man that had once lived directly across the street.



The oil painting of Dr. H.C. Moss, that originally hung at East Park School, is now on display at the Randolph County Historical Society.

I remember this portrait during my elementary schools days and was a little wary of it as the eyes seemed to follow you walking down the hall – I was also afraid of vampires at the time.

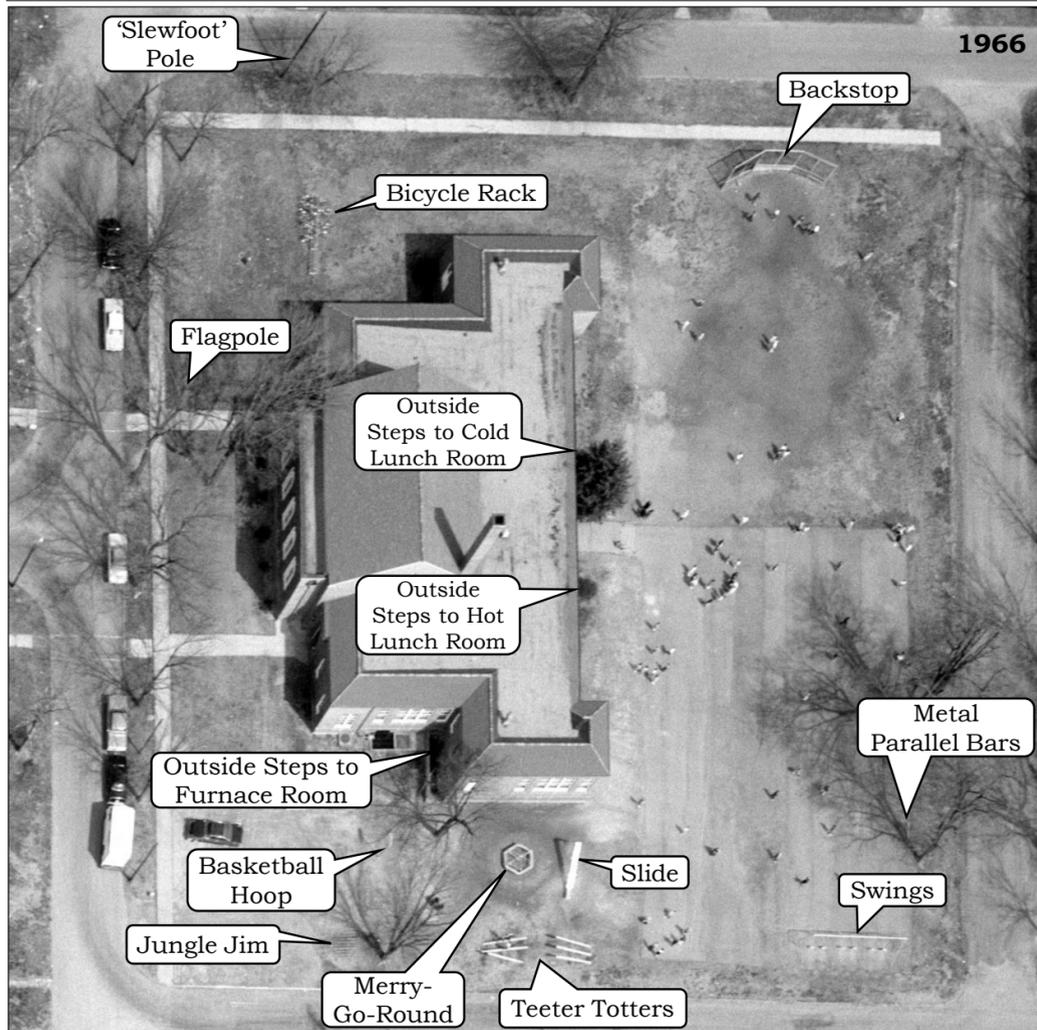
(My Dad said that its not the dead folk you need to be concerned about, it's the ones walking around ... and he wasn't talking about zombies.)



2024 - East Park School - Google Earth Image

MEMORIES OF EAST PARK SCHOOL

(They are from a long time ago and could be wrong)



Aerial MODOT photo of East Park School on March 31, 1966.

If you were in school that day, you might be in the photo. (I might be in the photo.)

SPOTLIGHT

One of the favorite summer pastimes for the East Park neighborhood kids in the 1960's was to play SPOTLIGHT (also known as flashlight tag).

After dark, the kids would gather at the school and hopefully someone brought a flashlight.

The first thing to do was to 'kick-out' the lone street light at the north end of the schoolground. Several methods were employed to do this and everyone would take turns kicking the pole to jolt the light out. It would automatically reset after some time passed and come back on. (I have no idea who figured out that you could 'kick out' the light, it was just passed-down neighborhood knowledge.)

Whoever successfully 'kicked-out' the light was awarded the nightly title of 'SLEWFOOT'.

The flagpole was BASE and someone was originally chosen as IT. IT would stand at the flagpole, close their eyes and shout 'Go!' The other kids would take off and 'hide' around the schoolyard.

IT would count as fast as they could out loud to 100 and then shout 'Here I Come!'

IT would then go looking with the flashlight to find another player.

If IT shined the light on someone, there would be a foot race to BASE. If IT got there first, IT would touch the pole and say, 'Spotlight on' and the person's name.

If the spotted person got to BASE first, they tagged the pole and said, 'Free', IT would continue the search.

All during the game, the other players would try to sneak or outrun IT to BASE, touch the pole and say 'Free'.

If IT successfully got someone out at the pole, that player would then become IT and the game would start all over.

DUST STORMS

The school yard was a get together place for neighborhood kids to play when not attending school. Impromptu baseball or football games were often played.

Playgrounds at that time were either gravel or grass (although the grass was sparse due to the kids playing).

The Merry-Go-Round was an octopus of curved arms that had wood planks for the seating area.

The area around the Merry-Go-Round was bare ground. Kids would pile up dirt on the seat planks. Someone would get inside the framework to push the contraption really fast.

Everyone else would stand back and watch the dust fly.

(Just something kids did back then.)

TORNADO and FIRE DRILLS

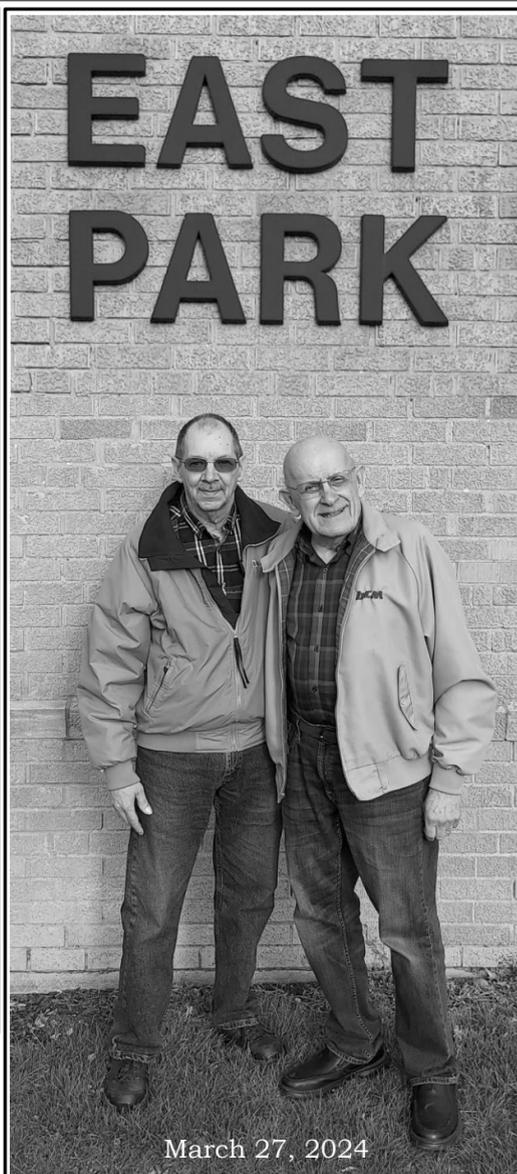
If you went to grade school in the early '60s, you might remember having a few tornado and fire drills during the school year.

Fire drills sent the students outside; tornado drills sent everyone to the basement.

Not all of the tornado drills were actually tornado drills, some were nuclear bomb drills (Cold-War era).

The procedures were basically the same. So, as not to upset the kids, nuclear bomb drills were called tornado drills.

At East Park, there was a concrete room in the basement, between the 'hot lunch' room (school-served lunch) and the 'cold lunch' room (lunches brought from home - brown bag) that had long-term food storage and had the Fallout Shelter sign on the wall.

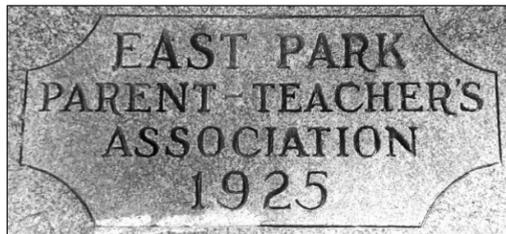


March 27, 2024

Me standing with my former East Park fifth grade teacher, Ron Self, who later became a long-time principal of that school.

If you like the YESTERYEAR newspapers, its because of teachers like him that gave me the old style true education of reading, writing, arithmetic, science and history.

(If you notice, we dress similarly, both wear glasses and our hairstyles are close.)



Plaque on the base of the flagpole that was donated and erected by the PTA in 1925. It stood in front of the original East Park built in 1886 and the second one built in 1930.

GRADING SYSTEM

Back in the 1960's, there was a different type of grading system employed:

- E = Excellent
- S = Satisfactory
- M = Mediocre
- I = Inferior
- F = Fail

For every 'E' that you received, Skateland would give you a free entrance pass. (You still had to pay for skate rental and snacks.)

READING

I remember using the 'Dick and Jane' books to learn to read (probably 1st grade.) We would sit in a circle and read out loud.

"Run, Dick, Run" - "Play, Jane, Play".

Then it came - a two syllable word. Everyone was just looking at it and the teacher said to sound it out.

All were confused until fellow student Mike Parrish finally figured it out: "father".

Don't know why I remember this, I just do.

50 YEARS OLD (1974)
Rollins Street Underpass Constructed

ROLLINS STREET UNDERPASS
MOBERLY, MISSOURI
1974

2024
Looking West

120 YEARS AGO (1904) Moberly Public Library



1904

In 1902, the Moberly Library Board contacted Andrew Carnegie (millionaire philanthropist) in hopes of obtaining an endowment for a new library building. To gain a gift of \$15,000, the Board had to own a building lot and a guarantee of \$1,500 a year (10% of the grant) in place to pay for upkeep and books.

The Board solicited for local donations, and with fund-raising events, enough money was obtained to purchase a \$2,500 lot. (\$90,000 today)

Several methods were used to provide for the yearly maintenance and the City was actually able to warrant that they could provide \$2,000 a year and asked for \$20,000 from Carnegie. This was granted.

J.B. Legg was the architect and F.M. Lambert was the contractor,

(Local-famous Ludwig Abt designed the Huntsville Carnegie Library but not the Moberly Carnegie Library.)

On June 15, 1903, ground was broken for the new library and the building was completed the next summer.

(\$20,000 in 1904 is about \$700,000 today.)

In 1994 (30 years ago), a large addition was added to the south of the existing structure which doubled the library's floorspace.



2024

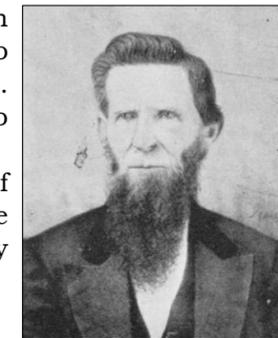
FIRST MAYOR OF MOBERLY

Thomas P. White was born in 1818 in KY and the family moved to Boone County, MO when he was 16. At the age of 18 (1836), he moved to Randolph County.

He was elected the first mayor of Moberly in 1873. He was a state legislator and a Randolph County judge.

He passed away in 1880.

And he was also my great-great-great granduncle. (Deep family roots in Moberly)



D. Craig Asbury

THAR'S GOLD IN THEM THAR WALLS

Before the Civil War (1861-1865), a prominent land owner had built a large mansion on his property between Roanoke and Yates (about a dozen or so miles SW of Moberly).

Many years later the antebellum home fell into disrepair and was owned by C.E. Yancey.

In 1912, Yancey hired a group of men to tear down the old dilapidated manor. While demolishing a stone casing on the second floor, Wycke Patterson's hammer hit something metallic. He continued to tear out the masonry and uncovered a sealed pot. The other workers crowded around as Patterson removed the lid from the vessel.

All the men were astonished to see a mound of gold coins in the container. The workers looked at the treasure and all muttered that they were rich.

Patterson was crouched around the pot listening to the men describing what they were going to do with their new-found wealth. Patterson racked his brain in regard to the events of the past few moments.

He searched his memory over and over until he came to the conclusion that at no time did he ever utter the word 'they'. Patterson grabbed up the pot and ran out of the house. By the time the other workers recovered from what had just happened, Patterson was gone.

Patterson went home and hid the pot and didn't even tell his wife what was in it.

A few days later, a man walked into the Bank of Yates and had the cashier, W.H. Stark, count out some gold coins he had brought in.

The cashier didn't reveal to anyone the total worth of coins counted, but it was known to be well over \$10,000, with some estimates of as much as \$40,000. (Between \$320,000 and \$1,250,000 today.)

Patterson wouldn't confirm nor deny anything about the gold coins. He pretty much kept everything to himself because if Yancey sued him over ownership, Yancey wouldn't know the true amount.

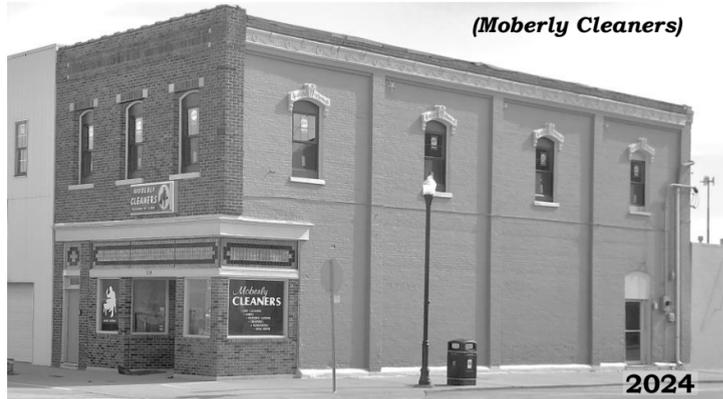
Yancey did find out about the treasure and did sue Patterson. Some bantering went back and forth between the two men and Patterson agreed to split the money with Yancey.

Shortly afterwards, Yancey deposited a bank draft of just over \$6,300 into his account (Around \$200,000 today).

How much Wycke Patterson actually ended up with is anyone's guess.

The origin of the gold coins still remains a mystery.

150 YEARS OLD (1874) 124 Reed Street (Moberly Cleaners)



2024

THAT WAS A LAW?

In 1893, Brack Stevens was fined \$7.80 for walking two bears cubs through the streets of downtown Moberly.

(\$7.80 in 1893 is about \$270 today)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

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