

PAYNE COUNTY

HISTORICAL REVIEW

| VOLUME 2 | NUMBER 2 |
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Things Can Change In A Hurry

by Paula Waldowski

The day was sunny and rather warm for December, even in Stillwater, a small college town about 75 miles from both Tulsa and Oklahoma City. The paper said the high would be near 60 degrees. Hard to imagine that Christmas was less than three weeks away. But then, that's the way it is with Oklahoma weather. "If you don't like it, just wait," the old-timers would say.

It was the beginning of that lazy time of a Sunday afternoon. Fried chickens and pot roasts were in various stages of being consumed all over town, depending on how long-winded the preachers in various churches had been that morning. In this town of just over 10,000 souls, almost half claimed church membership in one of the sixteen congregations in town. Most were Protestant; there were only 300 Catholics in town. But even if they weren't church members, most of the people in town had spent the morning in church, the men in double-breasted suits, the ladies in hats and gloves.

For those who had stopped off to eat on the way home from church at the Service Cafe or McCoy's Eaterie or the Grand Hotel's coffee shop, the warm weather made it a pleasant day for doing a little

While a student at Oklahoma State University last spring, Paula Waldowski completed an oral history project entitled Stillwater: The War Years, 1941-1945. This article, "Things Can Change in a Hurry," is the introduction to that work.

holiday window shopping on the way home. As people strolled past the beauty shops and barber shops and shoe shops, past the newsstand and the bowling alley and the Piggly-Wiggly, they stopped and gazed into the windows of Katz' Department Store or J. C. Penney or Woolworth's. There were Lionel trains for the kids, models of big, black steam engines on yards of shiny track, expensive at \$6.98. More reasonable were the footballs; for 49¢, a seven-year-old could become an Aggie hero. For that special lady, the Parisian Style Shop offered the finest nylons for \$1.65, or, if she were really special, diamond rings were available for \$50 at any of the jewelry stores. Overhead, Main Street was festooned with two miles of evergreen rope, dotted with colored light bulbs, in anticipation of the Christmas season.

Over at the campus of Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, coeds were listening to Glenn Miller records and remembering the Christmas dances they had attended the night before. There had been three: The Chi Omega Dansant in the afternoon, the Murray Hall Christmas Dance, and the fabulous Sigma Phi Epsilon Costume Dance in Fiscus Hall. More serious students were finishing up papers and studying for exams; Christmas vacation was less than two weeks away.

The biggest event in campus history was coming up the next weekend, and preparations were being rushed along. The Golden Anniversary Celebration of Oklahoma A & M would draw notables from all over the state, as well as alumni, parents, and friends. Dances, a play, a banquet, an open house, even a turkey pull were being planned to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the college. Stillwater had always been proud of the college, and looked forward to showing it off to the entire state. The whole city had been cleaning up and getting ready for the big event.

But just now, it was time to relax, time to stretch

out on the living room floor and read the funny papers: "Tarzan" and "Boots and Her Buddies" and "Out Our Way." The ladies looked forward to finishing up the dishes and settling down to the next chapter in the serial, "Lady by Request" by Helen Woodward, which could be found every week in the middle of the editorial page. Men had removed coats and ties and eased into arm-chairs to read the latest news about the peace talks in Washington, or, on a happier note, the sports. Coach Iba's basketball team was getting ready to go on an extended tour of New York and the East Coast, while the basketball team was headed for Mexico for an off-season tournament. The high school kids glanced through the school page to see what was coming up: an assembly the next day, a reminder that the English lit class was studying Macbeth. A box and pie supper was planned for December 12th; the most popular girl would get a box of chocolates, while the boy with the biggest feet would get a jar of pickles.

It was a good time to plan what to do with the rest of the afternoon. There was a Christmas pageant over at the First Christian Church, and a singing convention at two o'clock at the Payne Center School. The theaters were getting ready for the matinee crowd. Downtown, the Aggie was showing Frederic March and Martha Scott in One Foot in Heaven. The Mecca was playing Zane Grey's Raiders of the Purple Sage, with George Montgomery and Mary Howard, plus a short feature called American Sea Power. Just up the street, the camera was showing I'll Wait for You, while the Campus offered a Jimmy Cagney-Bette Davis comedy, The Bridge Came C.O.D. For about the same price as a movie ticket, "hillbilly music" fans could wait and hear Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys, who were scheduled to appear in Stillwater on Monday night, fresh from the famous Cain's Ballroom in Tulsa. That was almost worth spending Sunday afternoon at home for some folks.

The merchants' association was sponsoring a best-decorated house contest to promote the holiday spirit, so the warm weather provided an excellent opportunity for stringing the Christmas lights outside. There were leaves to rake and burn, storm windows to put up, all those little chores that have to be done before winter sets in for good. The weather was nice for the moment, but as everyone in Oklahoma knows, things can change in a hurry, even on a quiet Sunday afternoon.

It was Pearl Harbor Day. December seventh, 1941. "A date which will live in infamy," President Roosevelt prophesied the next day, as he asked Congress for a declaration of war. He was right. Forty years later, the memories of that day, and the changes it brought to Stillwater, live on.

The news came first on the radio: "The Japanese have attacked the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, in the Hawaiian Islands." Within minutes, the word had spread all over Stillwater. Long before the paper came out with an extra, people had shared the news, discussed it, and tried to understand it. Neighbors ran outside to tell neighbors. Friends called friends. As always when the news is frightening, people grouped together to talk about it, as if their very closeness could ward off whatever evil might come.

The news of the Japanese attack came as a tremendous surprise to everyone, but the realization that the United States was, indeed, finally at war seemed to surprise no one. Since the late thirties, people had followed the war news in Europe and the Far East, and had watched it coming closer and closer. Even here in Stillwater, defense preparations had already been made.

The draft was already over a year old. By the end of October 1940, nearly 5,000 Payne County men, including college students, between the ages of 21 and

36 had registered with the local draft board. Some had already been called up. They had been fed breakfast by the Chamber of Commerce, and were seen off by veterans of the Civil War, the Spanish-American War. One group was even told goodbye by the Lieutenant-Governor himself. He kept the patriotic and political oratory to a minimum, and mostly dispensed good advice about getting along with the non-coms and avoiding blisters. Having seen service himself in the Great War, he knew what was important.

The Red Cross had already begun offering first aid classes, and volunteers for months had been knitting socks and rolling bandages. A junior fire brigade had been formed to put out any fires caused by incendiary bombs which might be dropped on Stillwater. The Rainbow girls had been donating money to the USO, the high school journalism class had sponsored a paper drive, and school children were buying defense stamps and bonds. Stillwater was ready to face whatever came.

The initial reaction of many citizens was one of sadness that the inevitable had finally come to pass. One coed wrote, "Tonight there is a shield of graveness over all our spirited ways. We are now women whose country is at war. Our prime thoughts are for those who will have to serve in battle."

The next morning, Monday, December eighth, young men lined up to enlist. Reservists were called back to active duty. The future of the college was apparent: enrollment would drop drastically, as both men and women, students and faculty, left to do their part for Uncle Sam. Reduced enrollment meant big trouble for the little town, whose only industry was producing college graduates. To forestall this calamity, a group of leading citizens, led by Dr. Henry Bennett, president of Oklahoma A & M, went to Washington to arrange for some type of military training schools to be located in Stillwater. This would give Stillwater an important part in the war effort, and would

keep the community from going bankrupt.

By the beginning of March, 1942, just three months after Pearl Harbor, the first servicemen arrived for training, 100 sailors who came to study communications and radar. By the end of 1942, there were 600 sailors on campus, as well as 650 WAVES, who came to Stillwater to be trained in clerical work so they could replace male clerks who were needed for combat duty. The Army was also represented, along with the Army Air Corps. Strange-sounding acronyms, like STARS and ASTPs, became familiar to the Oklahomans, as did the funny accents of people from New York and Georgia.

The town took on a military appearance. Uniforms were everywhere; even the civilian male students wore their ROTC uniforms every day. Army engineers prac-



Photo courtesy Stillwater Chamber of Commerce.

ticed building pontoon bridges across Theta Pond, that sacred spot for campus lovers. Tents and quonset huts were hurriedly put up to provide additional classroom space for the new students. Housing became so crowded that the civilian students were ordered to find living quarters off campus. The emptied fraternity houses were converted into dormitories for civilian women students. The little town seemed flooded with strangers. There were so many people trying to crowd into the movie theaters and restaurants on the weekends that an appeal went out for the Stillwater natives to stay home on Friday and Saturday nights and leave the town to the military.

Everything had changed. By 1943, the Stillwater newspaper reported, "There is scarcely a family in either the county or the city that is not represented in either the army, navy and marine corps." The draft had been expanded so that all men between the ages of 18 and 65 were required to register, with men between 18 and 45 designated for active service. Usually, though, men past 38 were not called.

The war touched everyone's lives, in the most intimate ways. Shortages were the order of the day. There were no new cars. Rubber tires were next to impossible to come by. New appliances became scarce. Nylon was needed for parachutes, so nylon stockings and fancy underwear disappeared from store shelves. Rationing had begun; food, clothing, and gasoline were controlled by the government. Paper, scrap metal, even grease was saved for the war effort. And far greater sacrifices were required, as telegrams began arriving in Stillwater, announcing that a husband was missing or a son had been killed.

The quiet little college town had been hit by winds worse than any Oklahoma twister, the winds of war. There would be no going back to the simple ways of yesterday. Nothing would ever be the same again.

* * * *

School Days

by Ralph Pearson

When I started this series of stories of my boy-hood days, I selected events and happenings that contrasted with present day customs and practices. My grandchildren, and the children and grandchildren of my brothers and sister, have been appreciative, with requests for more. This story is about my school days.

During Stillwater's first decade, (1889-1899) its school buildings were of wood. Generous portions of the building materials used at the time, were of local origin, for store-bought materials must be hauled in freighters wagons from Perry, Orlando or Mulhall. Since this was a prairie country, cottonwood trees were the main-stay of the local saw-mills. So many of the buildings of that era were of cottonwood frames. Sandstone for buildings, from local quarries, was also used. Several of the Main Street buildings of that time, still standing, contain foundations and trim from those quarries. Sandstone did not stay in place, and most of those buildings developed cracks in walls and base. It has been remarked that "our schools were not lighted by candles, as no candle would remain lighted when the prairie winds were on the move."

By the turn of the century, 1899-1900, progress was the watch-word. Plans were made and approved by the mamas and papas for better schools. Perhaps the product of the primitive equipment, the school boys

Ralph Pearson, 84 this month, is a life-time resident of Stillwater.

and girls gave promise of better things, and perhaps it was parental pride wishing for a better setting for their jewels. The Lincoln School was part of those plans.

It was of salt box architecture, two stories high, and containing four class-rooms, with connecting stairs and hallways. It was built of native sandstone to about breast high and the super structure was of very red brick. Not the firey-red of some of the present day product, but of a red that was almost purple. It had a sloping roof, two way, with a rock fire-wall around its perimeter. The

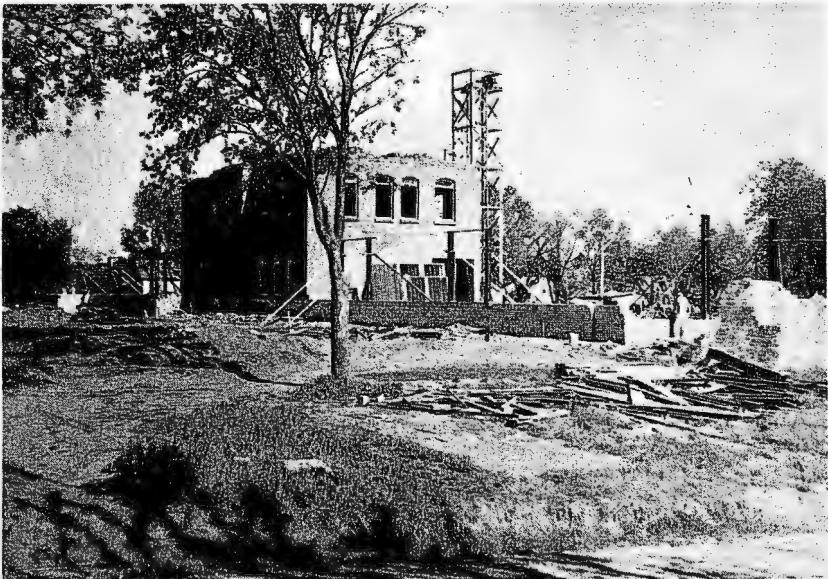


The original brick Lincoln School, on 12th Street between Lewis and Lowry, was built in 1900.

Photo courtesy of Stillwater Chamber of Commerce.

roof? Memory does not recall, but reason suggests that it was of shingles. The first tile roof I saw that of the new (?) Santa Fe Depot, and that came some twelve to fifteen years later.

The shape and color of the building of my school days has been altered over the years, with one story wings of W.P.A. brick added to the east and west. An auditorium of the same yellow hue, has been added to the southwest quadrant of the one block square playgrounds. The old wooden out buildings, privies, and coal house have been removed. Even the doubtful red-brick of the central building has been covered with a cement-gray stucco. The gingerbread trimmings of sandstone have been removed because of the modern fear of falling objects. The building's date? Was it 1900? Or was it 1901. The sandstone block, proudly prominent above the north entrance has also been covered with grey stucco.



The original brick Lincoln School underwent changes and additions.

Photo courtesy of Stillwater Chamber of Commerce.

Lincoln's arch rival of that time, the Jefferson, has been removed to make way for a school administration building or buildings.

Rivalry between the student body of the two schools were fostered by parents and faculty in those times, and contests were arranged between them. Not athletic prowess, but brain matters were contested, oratory, spelling, and arithmetic, with gold medals to the successful ones. Children of the college faculty went to the Jefferson, as well as those of the town's people who were striving for better things. Those of the Lincoln were born losers in such a lop-sided contest. It was hard to gather a superior team at our school, but there was a daughter of a town lawyer, Lowrey of Lowry Street, who had her father's gift of gab, and perhaps his personal instruction. She was always included in such teams. The rest of us, whose noses were wiped only when we had to breathe, and that on a sleeve, were not intellectual. My cousin, Harry Moore, who would be second in baiting the teacher, would not be considered when selecting a team.

At one time, each one of our class had to learn and recite "The Old Canoe." Harry, at its beginning would recite a whole line, without prompting, then the prompting became more frequent, until the teacher gave a cue word. Harry repeated and waited for the next word. The funny bone of the class was touched, and the performance cut short several verses of the poet's best, by the hoo-rahs of the young savages. Yet Harry became a ranch owner and the raiser of cattle, somewhere along the Oregon Trail, in old Wyoming.

Chunk Hagers was the No. 1 non-learner in that class and he became a radio technician repairing the instruments of those who looked down on him in his school days.

Others became automobile thieves, getting a state subsidy of free board and room at penal housing for

certain periods of their lives. The Lovell brothers who had a pet driving goat at home and who did not always leave the smell at home went into oil retail and became the purveyors of kerosene for the lamps of Stillwater and gasoline for its cars. Later they went into banking as a sideline.

I attended classes at the Lincoln three different years. I have related, in other stories, how Kate used me as a pupil to teach the lessons she had learned in school each day and of how I was greatly in advance of the average pupil. I started my formal education in the fall of 1903, just before my 6th birthday. Kate was in the fourth grade that year.

Kate has told me of that first morning. We were about one block from the school when the five minute bell rang. Thinking we were late, I began to run. Kate took in after me to catch me and explain. Her haste aroused my fears and I put on more speed so she did not catch me until we reached the front door of the building, where explanation was made. Definitely I was not tardy on my first day of school.

Since I had been reading since I was five, the use of scissors to cut out colored objects was not my idea of learning but I got through the first grade without difficulty.

The next year Kate went to the Alcott, a building located where Junior High (or Middle School) is now. It housed the grades above the fourth. So I was enrolled in the Alice Carey, a two room frame building on the Alcott grounds housing the first and second grades. My room was the second, at the east end of the building. I also attended the fifth grade in this same school, same room and same teacher. A Miss Morgan, a red head, who was not pleased with the efforts of the near 40 pupils under her care and urged them on (with a stick) to higher things.

But back to the Lincoln. The changing methods of "years ago" can best be marked in our drinking water supply. Stillwater had water mains at that time and a water tower on Lewis Street between 8th and 9th. But the Lincoln had its own water supply, the school pump. The well was conveniently located just south of the school building just east of the coal house with a board walk from the south door of the school which branched just south of the well to go to the two toilets (privies). The red iron pump was festooned with garlands of tin cups. You could pump and catch at the same time if needful, but most of the time there was some one to man the pumps. The declining calendar could be traced by the color of the cups. Shiny bright when the school year opened, they soon acquired a patina of rust and became rust colored as the school year drew to a close. During my fourth year here, public drinking cups were banned by law, and each pupil had to furnish his own. The most favored were the aluminum collapsible kind which did that often leaving its owner with fingers full of water and no place to put it.

Just south of the pump the board walk branched to go to the toilets, the rest of the grounds were called playgrounds. That name, at present, bears the idea of equipment, tennis nets, baseball diamonds, teeter toters and swings. But these playgrounds were devoid of store bought things. Well do I remember when I and another introvert introduced teeter tottering to the benighted campus.

Our janitor, Mr. Duck, had received school board permission to fix the sagging coal house roof and he had the necessary lumber piled at a nearby site. My inventive mind found a way to extract a two by four from the pile and place it crossways to the stack, and we were in business. But our success soon attracted the attention of the burly fourth graders. One piled on each end with us small fries, while the biggest of them stood at the fulcrum throwing his weight first one way and then the other. Our timber

being a crooked grain two by four, did not have the strength to take the abuse, and we found both ends down in the dust. Recess was over before we could appropriate another timber from the pile.

Mr. Duck soon found that his horde of boards was ruined. We were confronted with our crime and the punishment was left up to the school principal, Mrs. Ryno, who was also the fourth grade teacher. Her judgement was that we must pay for our misdeeds, five ways. The price of the broken board was divided amongst the culprits. The sum of 17 cents was demanded from each of us. The next morning each of us had to face questioning parents to obtain the fine and it was delivered to the school authorities. Then we made the appeal to Mrs. Ryno: "Since we have paid for the lumber, don't we get it." Mr. Duck said, "No." But Mrs. Ryno said, "Yes!" Mr. Duck was instructed to get his saw and cut the splintered beam into five pieces. I carried my seventeen cents worth home with me that evening, a tapered portion about four feet long. A new cross arm was needed for our clothes line pole and the stick was used there at the house on Adams Street, remaining in place for the next three or four years until the place was sold and we moved elsewhere.

The present methods of feeding the pupils with shiny kitchens and lunch counters contrasts sharply with policies in force at that time. The pupils went home to dinner as did also the teachers. My home was nearly a mile away so going home was out of question. I was fixed up with a jelly sandwich, a hard boiled egg, and a wisp of newspaper containing mixed salt and pepper. When the weather was warm our outdoor dining room was appreciated, but when winter laid its icy hangs on things we longed for a place by the big stove with its glowing embers. But we still ate our dinner huddled against the south side of the school building all the years I was there.

If we forgot to carry our lunch with us as we

marched out there was no return. The doors were locked until the time for afternoon class. In that event we ate our lunch on the way home from school. Mr. Duck janitored only for the whole school. No chores could be added by individual needs.

The Lincoln School did not have a belfry with a city wide tocsin. The Alcott had that. The class bell was a seven inch long which was triggered by a pull cord. It was located in the hall of the first floor and was heard in all the rooms. It was supposed to be heard on the grounds too, but this did not always happen. One cold winter morning the pupils were keeping warm by exercise. The many trees of the playgrounds had shed their crop of leaves which had been heaped into large piles. Cold weather was an invitation to huddle against the south side of the pile. Other kids piled leaves over me until they had me covered. It was warm in the pile and I was in no hurry to dig my way out, but when I did get out there was nobody around. The bell had rang and classes had taken up. I was marked tardy and told to bring an excuse from my parents. Such a mess was hard to explain but finally all were persuaded to let me continue my schooling. Me; I thought all adults were kind of teched and it is still my opinion.

Somewhere in its various classes during my years at the Lincoln, I had various relatives going there. Fred and Kate were in the fourth grade while I was in the first. My Moore cousins, Harry and Eddie, were in the same grade at times. Another cousin, Lucille Pearson, was a grade behind. Glen did not start until I had finished the fourth grade. Grandmother Agnes was also a member of that class, as was your Uncle Jack. Reminiscing of that time some years after we were married, we discovered that both of us had been performers in the same Christmas play. Neither of us remembered the other. She was a fairy and I was a brownie. Both were rather fey.

Fire drills were not a part of the agenda when I went to school, but Glen told of its introduction. The janitor ringing the gong and yelling "Fire!" The kids tumbling over each other in getting out and the boys upstairs sliding down the banister. Something that everybody in my class would have liked to do. No one was seriously hurt so they reassembled, but not until the children had the object lesson did the teachers give instruction on how to make an orderly escape. While, in after years, the Jefferson was provided with big tubes for fire escapes from the upper floor, the Lincoln had none. It merely quit having classes on the second floor.

My favorite of the five teachers that shaped my learning was the fourth grade one, Mrs. Ryno. She had daughters older than those of my class although one of them married one who had been in my class. Our teacher was mature and had the mental ability to out think her pupils rather than punish them afterwards. Most of the teachers were young, planning either to attend the College or to get married.

The youngest that I went to was Martha Duck, who was the glorified babysitter of near 40 pupils. And she used her wages to obtain more college learning. As Martha Kenworthy, she taught many years in the Stillwater school system. Both I and your mother went to her. It was toward the end of the school term, under this teacher that my formal education came to an end. I came down with the second attack of inflammatory rheumatism. For several years I was an invalid. What ever knowlege I have acquired was the result of self-teaching. My mortar board held mortar, to be dished out with a trowel.

The Lincoln School is still a part of the Stillwater school system and from our town house we can see the inmates going and coming during school season. Its arch rival, the Jefferson, has been torn down and no classrooms are in the building that took its place.

Newer schools have sprouted east, north and west for those living in those areas, cow pasture in my school days. The Lincoln still accommodates those whose parentage is second class. The south side of Stillwater is where urban renewal flourishes, and the workers reside.

The brain trust still flourishes in the more northern climes. The college which had less than 500 denizens in my school days, now has 16,000. The university tail now wags the dog and tells official Stillwater what they want done and when to do it.

Epitath 1900-1976

The School Year of 1975-76 has brought great changes to the Lincoln School. No longer will it be a part of the educational processes of the Stillwater school system. Plans have been announced to use the grounds as a paved parking lot for the many school buses that belong to the district with the school's detached auditorium to house a motor shop. At this date, black-top covers the grounds south of the building. The rooms will house administrative personnel to keep the many records that are necessary.

R.I.P. April 28, 1976

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Dr. Berlin B. Chapman's
Early History of Stillwater and Vicinity

by Mary Jane Warde

In the Special Collections and Map Room at the Oklahoma State University library, the researcher interested in Payne County history will find a valuable collection of photostats that may save him or her a trip to the National Archives in Washington, D. C. Dr. Berlin B. Chapman photostated a number of original documents having to do with the founding of Stillwater and Payne County and deposited copies with both the OSU library and the Oklahoma Historical Society. Below is a listing of the documents in this collection called Early History of Stillwater and Vicinity.

1. Report of Lieut. M. W. Day, Dec. 25, 1884, giving first recorded mention of Stillwater.
2. Two letters of Lieut. M. W. Day, Jan. 1, 1885, describing conditions at Stillwater, and reporting the refusal of Boomers there to surrender.
3. Gen. P. H. Sheridan, notification of Jan. 8, 1885, submitting paper of Lieut. M. W. Day to Secretary of War.

Mary Jane Warde is a graduate student in history at Oklahoma State University, past editor of the REVIEW, and charter member of the Payne County Historical Society.

4. Major Thomas B. Dewees, notification of Dec. 27, 1884, relative to removing William L. Couch and his colony of intruders from Stillwater.
5. Telegram transmitted by Gen. C. C. Augur, Jan. 23, 1885, saying that at Stillwater 400 Boomers were digging rifle pits and "troops are moving into position."
6. Signatures of 154 Boomers at Stillwater, about January 1, 1885.
7. Telegram of Jan. 23, 1885, repeating W. L. Couch's notification "that he will fight."
8. Report of Col. Edward Hatch that he would "turn the boomers over the [Kansas] line today" (Jan. 30, 1885).
9. Report of Col. Edward Hatch, Jan. 30, 1885, concerning the return of Boomers from Stillwater to Arkansas City.
10. Report of Col. Edward Hatch, Feb. 7, 1885, reviewing the entire Stillwater expedition.
11. Paper circulated in Stillwater on the evening of Jan. 19 or 20, 1885, by order of Col. Edward Hatch.
12. Boomers at Stillwater, reported in Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, March 28 and April 4, 1885.
13. Receipt for taxes, Aug. 7, 1889, given under the provisional government of Stillwater.
14. Entries for homesteads in the Stillwater vicinity,

made at the Guthrie Land Office.

The pages are from Oklahoma Tract Book, Vol. 6, in the General Land Office, Washington, D.C. By use of the tract book, one can readily determine from the location of a tract of land whether it was homesteaded, and if so, by whom. Recorded are the dates when homesteaders made entry, and the dates when they proved up.

15. Stillwater townsite application, Aug. 17, 1889, filed at Guthrie Land Office by Acting Mayor Robert A. Lowry et al.
16. Signatures of 110 Stillwater "residents" filed with the townsite application of Aug. 17, 1889, as "Exhibit B."
17. Request (Sept. 7, 1889) of John F. Stone, attorney for the City of Stillwater, for a hearing in the Garnett Burks Case.
18. Review of certain homestead entries and relinquishments made at Stillwater prior to Sept. 11, 1889.
19. Stillwater townsite patent issued by President Benjamin Harrison, Nov. 1. 1890.
20. Printed form used by John H. Barnes in making application for a deed to Board No. one of Townsite Trustees, Nov. 3, 1890.
21. Two pages from Stillwater Cash Book, kept by Board No. One of Townsite Trustees in allotting the Stillwater site.

22. Three pages from the Stillwater Minute Book, kept by Board No. One of Townsite Trustees.
23. Coupons issued by Stillwater, June 8, 1891, in a bond issue for \$10,000 for the purpose of securing the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College.

The bonds did not comply with a certain legal requirement. They were burned in the presence of the Stillwater Board of Trustees, Jan. 19, 1893, and new bonds were issued.
24. Minutes of the Stillwater School Board, Aug. 3, 1891.
25. Letter (March 18, 1892) of R. J. Barker, first president of Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, concerning college lands in the Cherokee Outlet.
26. Decision of Board No. One of Townsite Trustees in Case of Hagar, Bourdette, and Stallard, July, 1891.
27. Letters of March 23, April 17, May 9, 1891, by Governor George W. Steele concerning county boundaries.

Boundaries of Payne County were so arranged as to keep Stillwater in a good geographical location for the county seat.
28. Alternate Certificate, Camp No. 1010, United Confederate Veterans, Stillwater, April 23, 1900.

29. Affidavit of publication and notice for publication of William R. Little, Jan. 28, 1892, concerning his homestead at site of present Cushing.
30. Cash Entry No. 910, Aug. 9, 1892, made by William R. Little for his homestead at the site of present Cushing.
31. Homestead proof made by William R. Little, March 12, 1892, for homestead at the site of present Cushing.
32. Map of the City of Payne, Payne County, Oklahoma.

The Guthrie Land Office received the map for filing, June 25, 1890.

33. Minutes of Proceedings at Perkins kept by Board No. One of Townsite Trustees, Feb. 26, to June 25, 1891.
34. Census of "Stillwater City," June, 1890.
25. Special census of surviving Union soldiers, sailors, and marines (and widows of same) who served during the War of the Rebellion.

The census was taken in the "County of Stillwater," "Minor Civil Division: Stillwater," or "Minor Civil Division: Oklahoma," June, 1890.

* * * * *

Reminiscence of Early School Days in Stillwater

by J. H. Donart

On April the 22nd 1889, one of the greatest races was run, that had been known in the history of the United States. The prizes were homes, for the winners, in this newly organized territory, of Oklahoma. Participants of this history making race, came from all of the different states. In less than one day, the original five counties of this territory became well populated, having one to three or four claimants for every quarter section of land. In arranging for this great race our Congress forgot to establish, law by which we might be governed until such time as we could become organized and select our own officers, to maintain law and order. Through this mistake our people were a law unto themselves.

On June 12th, 1889, a number of the settlers, being convinced that this was a beautiful site for a city, proceeded to lay out and plat the original portion of the town of Stillwater, named for the creek by that name which meanders south of the proposed city.

It was but a short time until the inhabitants of the little village locating here and bringing their

The original Payne County Historical Society organized in 1940 has left us with several signed testimonies of those first settlers of Payne County. This statement by J. H. Donart is one of those testimonies.

families with them, saw the need of educational facilities for their children. A Mr. Edward Clark, who had previously been a school teacher before coming here, started a subscription school for the older children, as I remember there were approximately fifteen to twenty pupils. A very few of whose names I remember, Lilly Keller later Mrs. Harry Swope, Carrie DuPree (Mrs. Carrie Tucker) Mary Duck (Mary Eyler) others I cannot recall for sure. After organizing and teaching this subscription school for a short time Mr. Clark took sick and I was asked to take it over. This was the very first school held in Stillwater, on the East side of Main street in the 800 block.

The next year, 1890, I believe, Stillwater having grown in population, our people decided they wanted a free public school, although we had no law to govern that action, they proceeded to organize a school district, electing three trustees, who as I remember were, O. M. Eyler, W. A. Swiler and W. A. Swope. Mr. Swope acted as treasurer for the school district, and by mutual agreement Mr. Hays Hamilton was appointed assessor to list the property values of the district and an assessment was made to raise funds for the school. The Board then proceeded to employ two teachers for a three months school. John R. Holiday was employed for the grades from the fifth up inclusive, and I, for the primary to fourth inclusive. Mr. Holiday's school was located in the upstairs floor of a building where Cooksey's Grocery now is, 824½ Main St. My school room was on the south side of 9th Avenue in a cottonwood building belonging to Mr. P. Milligan, at what would be about 119 West 9th, where the Goodholm Flour and Feed store now stands. I do not remember Mr. Holiday's number of enrollment, but my total enrollment was 66 pupils. I can assure you that it was no picnic for the teachers of that first school. No text books were adopted for our use, each child brought to school whatever books they had been using in their former schools if

any. There appeared almost as many different texts as there were pupils. To co-ordinate these was a colossal task. For equipment, we had none. Our directors had a carpenter nail two boards together, painted them black for our board. The seats were rude benches with straight backs set at right angles to the seats, too high from the floor so the little ones could not touch the floor with their feet, an instrument of torture instead of comfort. To overcome their restlessness in a degree, I permitted them to sit on the floor much of the time, consequently if a patron of the school had chanced to pass during school hours and looked through the window, there was only one, he would probably have seen no one but the teacher.

I cut up old readers pasting the simple words on cardboard, each word on a strip, these were piled at random in a box. Each child was handed a small pile of these strips, then I both wrote and printed a word on the board and they were to find that word in their strips, thus they were taught reading and spelling. A large number of sticks of different lengths from which we built rail fences and pig pens taught them numbers. For language and composition I assembled a variety of interesting pictures also pasted on cardboard, about which they constructed stories to be recited in class. These proved so fascinating that some of Mr. Holiday's pupils would ask to be allowed to write stories also.

Many odd incidents happened that would be foreign to the present day school system. Once I recall a pupil we called Babe had a large marble in his mouth and choked on it, one of the others called it to my attention, I hurried to him had him put his thumb and finger on his throat below the marble and told him to run to the doctor's office as fast as he could, holding on tight. The doctor's office was diagonally across the street, about 75 to 100 feet away. I told the children to be good and quiet

while I followed him. The dirt street was rough, Babe stumbled and fell out popped the marble, he was unhurt, picked up the marble and came back to me smiling sheepishly and said "Teacher its out."

Although our methods were very primitive one of my pupils, in her first school, is now a member of the Stillwater teaching staff and has been for many years. Mrs. Martha Kenworthy formerly Martha Duck. Another Chester Lowry, a prominent attorney now deceased. My rolls were of course turned in with the school records and my memory fails me.

From these small beginnings I have watched the school system grow into the modern and scientific schools of which we are all so proud, and to which I have sent eight children all grown and gone from home. May this proud record go on and on into the future as it has in the past.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. H. Donart". The signature is written in dark ink and is centered on the page.

* * * * *

Veterans of '04 OU-Aggie Game will Rally Saturday

From The Stillwater News-Press

November 20, 1954

by Otis Wile

Stillwater, Nov. 20-The boys who started all this Aggie-Sooners football business back in '04 are going to rally once again.

Next Saturday morning while the lads of '54 are getting ready to tie on their helmets and play the 49th OU-A&M game on Lewis field at Stillwater, the 1904 survivors of the two teams will meet at A&M's student union for a luncheon together, then attend the game.

The rally will be at 11 a.m. in the small dining room off the Union coffee shop and the only sad note, of course, will be the knowledge that many of those who fought it out 50 years ago have died or are living so far distant they can't attend.

Missing will be O. P. Callahan, one-time mayor of Ponca City, whose ill-fated punt blew back over his head and over the Aggie goal to be at last recovered in Cottonwood river for the first touchdown ever scored in an Aggie-Sooners game. His death occurred over a year ago in Oklahoma City where he was making his home.

Otis Wile was a Daily Oklahoman Special Correspondent when he wrote this article that was published in the Stillwater News Press on November 20, 1954.

But the player who recovered that punt, after a brisk swim, Ed Cook, now of Arcadia, California, has telephoned that he will be on hand. He was playing with OU in '04 but later finished his education and playing career with A&M, desiring training in subjects OU didn't offer before statehood.

Dr. Roy E. Waggoner, also a letterman of both schools, will be chairman of this historic rally. He played tackle for OU in 1904 and took his degree in medicine at Norman. He has practiced for years in Stillwater and for many of those years was A&M team physician for which he owns the honorary "O" of the Aggies.

Doctor Waggoner, still in active practice and an avid sports follower, conceived the idea for the reunion. He has heard from five 1904 Sooners who definitely are going to be present. They are Cook, Byron L. McCreary of Kansas City, and Bill Cross, Hugh Roberts and Frank Long, all of Norman. He hopes to add to the list before Saturday.

Pledged to be present for A&M are Bob Bilyeu, long time extension service worker at Antlers but now living in Tulsa; Roy Abernathy, who has operated a movie house in Fairview since 1917; Bill English, Tulsa, longtime agricultural agent for the Frisco, and Walter "Buck" Herrick, of Tulsa, who relates that he didn't get into the game in '04 but, as an ardent Aggie student "I lost five bucks on the ball game."

There was no movement to replace the coach after the Aggies dropped that first one 75-0. The Aggies didn't have any coach, Herrick, who formerly lived in Guthrie, recalls. In fact, the Pokes had just barely started playing the game and the Sooners already were proficient.

That first game was played at old Island park, Guthrie, then the capital of the territory, and John Coyle, early-day Guthrie industrialist, gave the Aggie team a seven-course dinner after the game.

"We had been whipping OU pretty good in track, oratory and debate," Herrick says, so I figured we'd take them in football and John Coyle's dinner was to have been a victory dinner. It was enjoyed anyway."

John Spaulding, Muskogee; Rex Shively, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, and W. L. Burleson, Urbana, Illinois, were on the Aggie club but it is doubtful if they can attend. Spaulding, an auditor, formerly operated a bank at Enid; Burleson is the retired dean of agriculture at the University of Illinois, and Shively the retired vice-president of Drakenfeld Company (ceramics colors) in Pittsburg. All have written.

There doubtless are others from OU or A&M and if so, they are asked to contact Dutch Gay, former students association, A&M.

* * * * *

Shotgun Houses in Payne County

By Dr. George O. Carney

A distinctive folk architectural style located in several Payne County communities in the shotgun house. Quite common in oil, lumber, and railroad towns in Oklahoma, it is found most frequently in the Payne County community of Cushing, although Stillwater and Yale can boast of a few. Eastern Payne County's association with the Cushing Oil Field and the early entrance of railroads (Santa Fe and Katy) into the area are the most likely reasons for the appearance of the shotgun house as a part of the early housing market. Both oil and railroad companies found the shotgun well suited to their needs. A surplus of people called immediate attention to the problem of inadequate housing, e.g., Cushing's population increased ten-fold from approximately 700 to over 7,000 within a three year period, 1912-1915. The shotgun house was adopted to help close the gap between housing demand and supply for several reasons: (1) quick and easy construction; (2) use of locally available and inexpensive construction materials, (3) neither architectural plans nor skilled carpenters were necessary, and (4) its adaptability and mobility.

Origin of the shotgun is somewhat unclear in terms of time and place. Fred B. Kniffen, a cultural geographer, theorized in 1936 that it was a derivation of the thatched houses of Haitian slaves or Indian huts of coastal Louisiana. His extensive survey of Louisiana folk housing indicated the shotgun was

Dr. George Carney is Professor of Geography, Oklahoma State University, and a charter member of the Payne County Historical Society.

strongly associated with the waterways of the state. Significant concentrations of the shotgun, according to Kniffen, existed northward along the Quachita and Red Rivers. Folklorist Henry Glassie's 1968 research on the material folk culture of the eastern United States concluded that the shotgun was found throughout the Gulf Coast region and its origin was certainly not a part of the European folk architectural legacy.

John Vlach, an anthropologist, has conducted the most exhaustive work on shotgun origins. His 1975 dissertation traced the shotgun to sixteenth century West African origins. It was subsequently diffused to the West Indies and the United States via the triangular trade route which brought Haitian slaves to the Deep South. There it took root in and around New Orleans in the early part of the nineteenth century.

Although no formal study has been completed as to when and where the shotgun was introduced to Oklahoma, several possibilities exist based on the preceding research: (1) migration into southern Oklahoma along the Red River route suggested by Kniffen, (2) black slaves of the Five Civilized Tribes carried the idea to Indian Territory from the southeastern United States, (3) direct railroad contact between Louisiana and Oklahoma, especially in the lumber and petroleum industries, or (4) transient oil field workers such as "wildcatters" and rig builders spread the shotgun plan as they followed the "booms" from site to site. Once the shotgun appeared in Oklahoma, there is substantive evidence to suggest that "boomchasers" carried the idea from field to field within the state (Figure 1).

Although there is disagreement over the origin of the shotgun, most scholars agree on its definition. Kniffen's 1936 description of the basic shotgun was "a long, narrow house consisting of one room wide, one to three rooms deep, and a frontward-facing gable." Glassie's 1968 analysis was similar: "a one story,



Figure No. 1 - Shotguns on Wheeler Camp Site - Photo courtesy of the Drumright Oil Field Museum.

one-room wide house with its front door in the gable end." Basic shotguns, according to Vlach, were "small, usually rectangular buildings, one room wide; three rooms deep, all connected to each other; and with doors at each end." In most cases, the dimension of the house was twice as long as it was wide, e.g., 10' x 20', 12' x 24', or 14' x 28', although Vlach maintained it should be no more than 12' across (Figure 2).

The term "shotgun" is of unknown origin, however, it has become as much a part of folk culture as the house itself. The name is taken from the belief that pellets from a shotgun fired through one of the outside doorways (front or back) could pass through the entire building without doing any damage to the interior. A long-time Cushing resident described it in this fashion: "if you fire a shotgun through the front door it'll go straight through and out the back." Contrary to this popular belief, the front and back

doors of the shotgun were usually offset, although one or the other was often aligned with one of the inner partition doors.

Variations to the basic shotgun occurred within the urban setting primarily as a response to situations not anticipated when the original shape was created. Major variations included: (1) double shotgun (composed of two single shotguns built side-by-side under one roof), (2) camelback or humpback shotguns (the last room or rooms were two stories high producing a hump), (3) North Shore shotguns (constructed wide

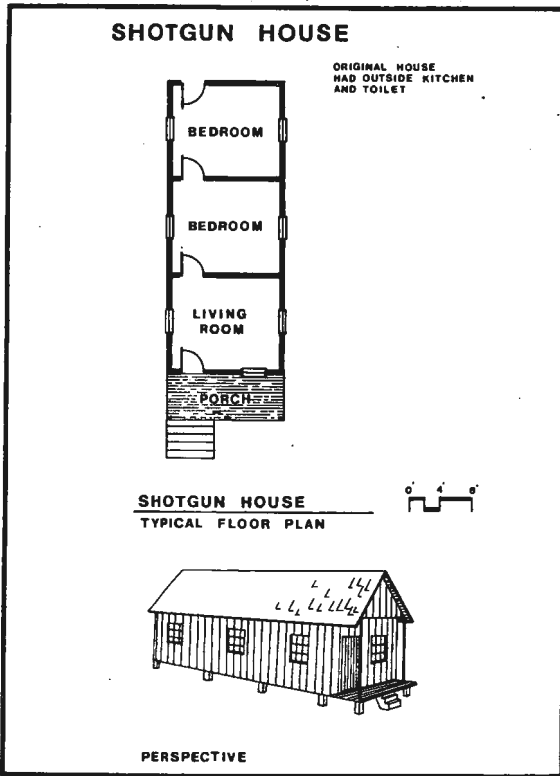


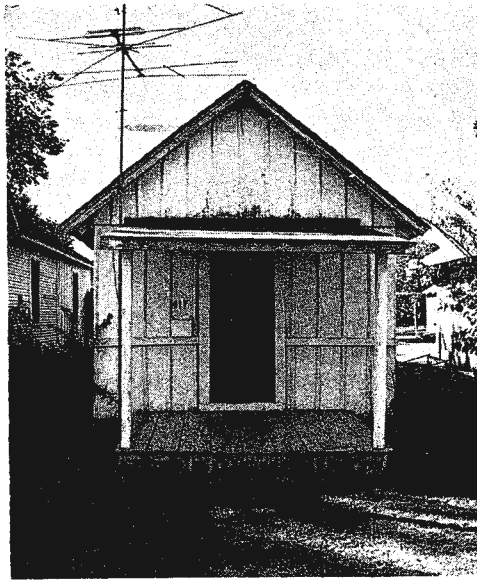
Figure No. 2 - Shotgun House Floor Plan and Perspective - O.S.U. Cartography.

verandas on three sides--so named because they were constructed along the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain), (4) stacked shotguns (those which were a full two stories high or single shotguns stacked one upon the other), and (5) organic shotguns (those with addition after addition attached to either their side or rear).

Additional variations focused on porch placement, roof type, construction materials, and decorative features. Front porches were usually present on rural shotguns, and they were generally attached rather than built-in. Urban shotguns often lost the front porch in the rural to urban migration as steps led directly from the front door to the sidewalk. Two basic roof types dominated shotgun houses: hip (slopes to all four corners creating a pyramidal effect) and saddle or gable (roof ridge running full length of house).

The majority of shotguns were constructed of milled dimension lumber. Siding was generally 1" x 12" vertical boards spliced by a narrow board, usually a 1" x 4", to cover the cracks. This type of construction, commonly referred to as "board-and-batten," was used most frequently, however, "clapboard" (horizontal and lapped boards of narrow width) shotguns were quite common in Payne County. Shotguns were generally framed with green lumber, required a minimum of interior support and needed no interior wall. They could be loaded intact in flatcars for removal to a new location; whereas others could be quickly disassembled to six or eight pieces (walls, floor, roof, and room partitions) and rebuilt on a new site. The only tools needed for construction were an axe and a hammer. Blueprints or drawings were unnecessary because shotguns were always built "by ear" according to a former oil field worker living in Cushing.

The floor plan of the shotgun was relatively simple (Figure 2). The front room was a living/sitting area and the back room or rooms were for sleeping. Shotguns constructed on oil leases were used primarily for



Figures No. 3 & 4 - Payne County Shotguns of Today -
Photos by Claudia Craig.

sleeping, normally in eight-hour shifts, because the wells were worked around the clock. The original shotgun floor plan contained neither kitchens nor bathrooms which created sanitation and health problems on lease sites and in boom town communities.

Payne County shotguns are located in the small town environment. The largest number and best remaining examples are found in Cushing, although they are not concentrated in any one section of the city. While a thorough study of Cushing has never been undertaken, results of preliminary surveys conducted by Oklahoma State University indicate that shotguns persist along East Cherry, East Maple, East Walnut, North and South Central, North Cleveland, and South Noble Streets. Stillwater's shotguns are fewer in number and less concentrated along particular streets. Notable examples are located at 309 West Ninth, 314 East Fifteenth, 1310 South Husband, and 214 West Twelfth Streets.

The majority of Payne County shotguns thus far surveyed have held to the basic pattern through the eventual need of space for kitchen and bathroom facilities has resulted in the "organic" variation being quite common. Saddle-type roofs and attached porches are characteristic of those found in Cushing and Stillwater, however, "clapboard" construction appears more frequently than the typical "board-and-batten". Those shotguns which have been identified are in excellent condition and inhabited. Both "clapboard" and "board-and-batten" types have been painted, usually white. Asbestos shingles have been applied to the exterior of a few (Figures 3 and 4).

At the time of construction, shotguns were designed as semipermanent structures. They developed as a part of the housing evolution in Oklahoma boom towns following the "tent city" and "boxcar" house (two room shacks with a flat room resembling a railroad boxcar) stages. Most people who lived in shotguns

during boom periods moved into more decent housing as soon as time, money, and materials were available to build them. As the first wave of inhabitants moved up the housing hierarchy, shotguns were occupied by the next group of transients seeking cheap housing. Shotguns, therefore, became part of the lower echelon of the real estate market. Today, shotguns serve a valuable role in helping to ease the housing shortage in rejuvenated boom towns such as Cushing.

The shotgun house in Payne County has remained remarkably durable. Many have existed for at least fifty years and some for as long as seventy years. The size and construction may have affected this unexpected longevity. The single uninsulated walls provide no dead air space for trapping moisture. The box-like construction allows for equal stress on the four corners so the walls do not lean or sag. They are small and low to the ground which has prevented them from being affected by the high winds and tornadoes so common in Oklahoma.

When it was constructed, the shotgun house was considered as temporary housing and would not stand the test of time. It has, however, defied both historical circumstances and Mother Nature to serve the practical needs of the small town housing market and to become a significant element in the architectural history of Payne County.

* * * * *

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Several discussions with Roy Schmaltz of Cushing provided me with a great deal of insight on the role of the shotgun house during the Cushing oil field boom period.

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News and Notes

JARDOT OPERA HOUSE

Carol Bormann and Doris Dellinger will present a program on the Jardot Opera House at the next meeting of the Payne County Historical Society on Thursday, December 10, 1981, at 7:30 p.m. at the Citizen's Bank Building on 9th Street. All interested persons are invited to come.

OLD PHOTOGRAPH CONTEST

Begin looking through your family photograph collection now for those special pictures of Oklahoma's past. In April, 1982, the Payne County Historical Society will sponsor a contest and exhibit in connection with Oklahoma's 75th Anniversary celebration. Exact details as to categories and judging will be publicized later, but for now look for shots of Oklahoma subjects before 1940. Concise but complete information (as much as possible) should accompany each picture. Cash prizes will go to the winners. Anyone interested in helping organize or in judging the contest should contact Mary Jane Warde.

OKLAHOMA FOLK ART

The Sheerar Museum, Seventh and Duncan will present an exhibition of Oklahoma Folk Art during the month of October. Paintings, carvings, metal sculpture, tapestires, quilts and clothing will be on display. The public is cordially invited to attend the Open House, Sunday, October 4, 1:30 - 4:00 p.m. The artists, some of whom have been in Oklahoma since territorial days, will be present.

MINUTES

September 10, 1981

The regular meeting of the Society was held at 7:30 p.m. in Old Central on the OSU campus.

The minutes of the June 4th meeting were read and amended. In the absence of Ray Burley, David Baird reported we have \$475 in the savings account and \$100 in checking with 127 members.

Ann Carlson reported on work in progress on the Journal. David Baird reported we can use the Old Bank Building as a meeting place for \$25 per month. Also an "old photo" contest is planned for spring, which Mary Jane Warde volunteered to coordinate. The Lahoma exhibit table will be handled by Doris Scott.

A proposed change in the ByLaws was read to the membership and will be voted on in December. It was proposed to add a membership category, "Family Active" at \$15 a year and to raise the individual membership from \$5 to \$10.

The program was a descriptive tour of Old Central by Jimm Showalter. He also offered Old Central as a meeting place for the Society.

The December 10th meeting will be at the Citizen's Bank Building on the history of the Jardot Opera House.

Submitted by
Alvena Bieri
Secretary

Payne County Historical Society

Payne County Historical Society is organized in order to bring together people interested in history, and especially in the history of Payne County, Oklahoma. The Society's major function is to discover and collect any materials which may help to establish or illustrate the history of the area.

Membership in the Payne County Historical Society is open to anyone interested in the collection and preservation of Payne County history. Dues are payable on a calendar basis, and are \$5.00.

All members receive copies of the REVIEW free. In addition, the Society sponsors informative meetings four times a year, the second Thursday in March, June, September, and December. Two outings; one in the fall and the other in the spring, are taken to historical sites in the area.

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