

One hundred years ago the major news stories were about community improvement and local politics.

Dixon and Crocker continued to have problems with their electric light plants, while Richland's electric service was more dependable. However, Bennett Skaggs from Iberia finally brought dependable electric service to Dixon. While the northern part of the county was often bathed in electric light at night, Waynesville, the county seat, still remained in the dark.

Road improvement continued to gain momentum as automobile ownership continued to grow.

This year's news feature has a different structure than in years past. In addition to centennial news, we will for the next several years feature "news and views" from 75 years ago. The construction and operation of Fort Leonard Wood in the first half of the decade of the Forties brought profound changes to Pulaski County.

## 1920

January 1

*Crocker News*

### Rural Route No. 1

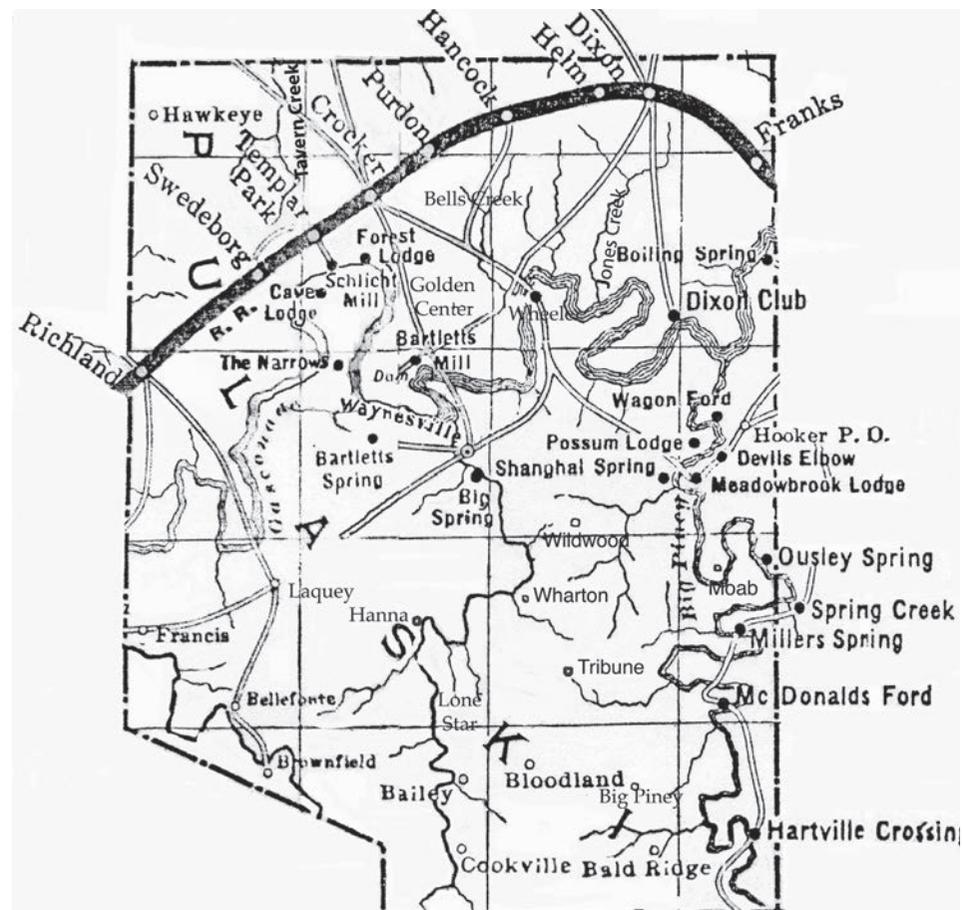
The first rural free delivery service out of Crocker begins tomorrow over Route 1 with Riley Smith as temporary carrier. The route is about 24 miles long and runs from Crocker to Templar Park, Schlicht, back over Bald Knob to Antioch Church from there to Mitchell Chapel then back to Crocker over the Bells Creek road.

January 8

### Road Bonds Sold

The road bonds recently voted in Pulaski county have been sold at par the purchaser to do all the underwriting, which means that the entire amount of \$250,000 will be available for expenditure on Pulaski county roads.

# Pulaski News



## News and Views of 100 Years Ago 75 Years Ago

The newspapers of Pulaski County had no changes in ownership from 1919. Charles Iden was Editor and Publisher and Josie M. Iden the Local Editor of the *Crocker News*. The *Dixon Pilot* continued in the capable hands of Arundel Goforth. To supplement his income, Editor Goforth was also selling Evinrude rowboat motors. In December of 1917, R. T. Lemons bought the *Richland Mirror* and became Proprietor and Publisher and remained so during 1920. V. V. Long, who took over the *Pulaski County Democrat* in 1914, continued at the helm of the county seat publication. However, a fire incinerated the newspapers from 1918 to late 1940 so none survive on microfilm.

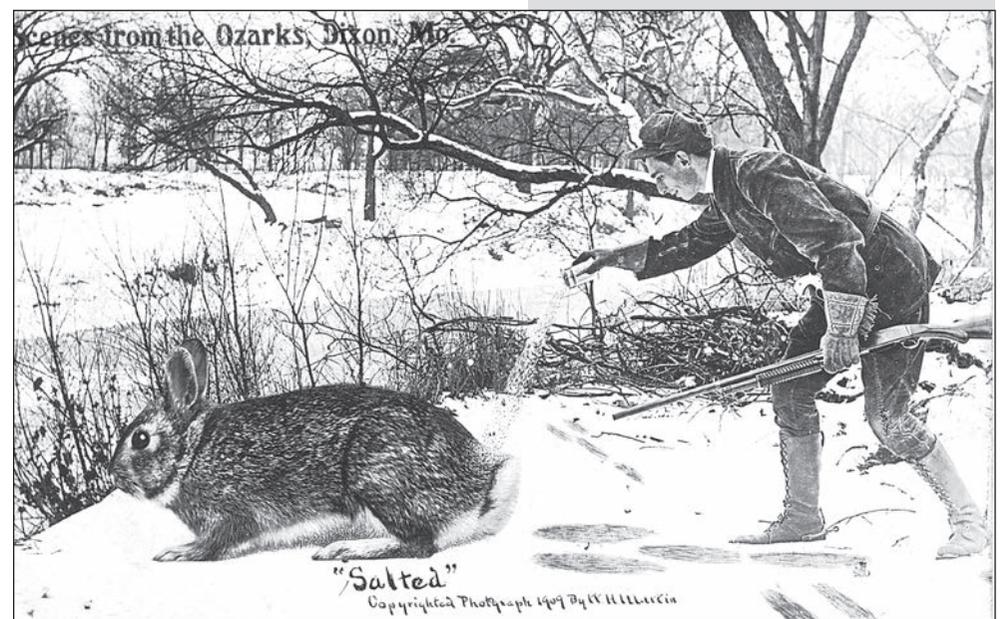
News compilation by Terry Primas.

### January 22 Hunting Rabbits

A party of five sportsmen from St. Louis spent four days of last week at Cave Lodge, a beautiful spot on the Gasconade river south of Crocker and were well pleased with the results of their stay among the hills of Pulaski county. They speak highly of Mr. English, the proprietor of Cave Lodge and succeeded in bagging 107 rabbits, 6 coons, 6 possums, 2 mink and 3 skunks during their stay and report game quite plentiful. They carried a good portion of their kill back to the city with them when they left here.

The party was composed of Game Warden Chas. Albright, Chas. McGann, Johnny Strikes, Wm Hempstead and Sam Medalie.

Mr. Albright informs the News that his party comes out three times a year—once for fish, once for squirrels and once for rabbits—and get what they come after for it is here to get.



There were still rabbits to hunt, although not quite this big. Dru Pippin related that "Before we had too many pure food laws, all of the stores in the rural areas bought rabbits if they were dressed with the skins left on and they were placed in sacks and shipped to the cities for consumption. Well, it wasn't anything uncommon for boys on the way to school to carry a pet throwing rock in their pockets, usually a round waterworn rock, the right size to fit their hand, and if the snow was on the ground, they'd walk along the road, look under the grass with snow over it, and they'd find a rabbit hid to keep away from the cold. They'd back off a few feet, throw the rock, and usually that meant a dead rabbit. They'd dress the rabbit immediately and take the rabbit to the store on their way to school. Instead of using money, they'd say 'Give me a rabbit's worth of candy.'"



Cave Lodge offered excellent accommodations for sportsmen. It was located on the Gasconade River a short distance upstream from Schlicht Mill. The original 12-room hotel was built by Joel Lane in 1912. A small cave is in the bluff at the end of the wooden walk near the river. Marion J. Laws of Swedeborg bought the hotel in 1913 and sold it to George Ebersole of St. Louis that same year. Ebersole made a number of improvements to the resort and sold it to Harry V. English and Lona English in 1918. They operated the resort until 1948. For a detailed history of the resort, see "Cave Lodge on the Gasconade" by Terry Primas in the 2013 *Old Settlers Gazette*.

March 5  
*Richland Mirror*

Just how fast the country is turning to motor vehicles and machinery can hardly be appreciated unless we stop to note how many such vehicles are being purchased. The Parson Garage, the only sale agency in Richland, cannot secure cars and trucks to meet the demand. A score or more have contracted for cars which cannot be secured as yet. In the past ten days they have received four car loads of Ford cars, trucks, and tractors. In the past few days the following have purchased Ford machines: Trucks: C. L. Vaughn, R. L. Christeson, R. A. Bell, and Waynesville Produce Co.; Wayman Bros. of Hooker; F. H. Wright, Richland. All of these trucks were delivered last Saturday. Fordson tractors: Farmer Honsinger & Sons and J. W. Armstrong of

Richland; and J. A. Wyrick and Robert Brownfield of Brownfield. Touring cars: Elmer Page of Bloodland, W. B. Rowden and Mattie Thornsberry of Crocker; Dr. Crider of Dixon; J. W. Davis of Hanna; E. A. Steckel of Richland; and Earl Clark and Dr. Talbot of Waynesville. [Warren's and other stores were still selling wagons, too.]

[A list of assessed valuation of Pulaski county by school districts was published. Below are the largest assessed valuations.]

Richland	\$355,841
Dixon	352,377
Crocker	252,930
Bloodland	211,340
Waynesville	201,001
Swedeborg	91,289

March 19  
*Dixon Pilot*

The Dixon Light and Power Co.



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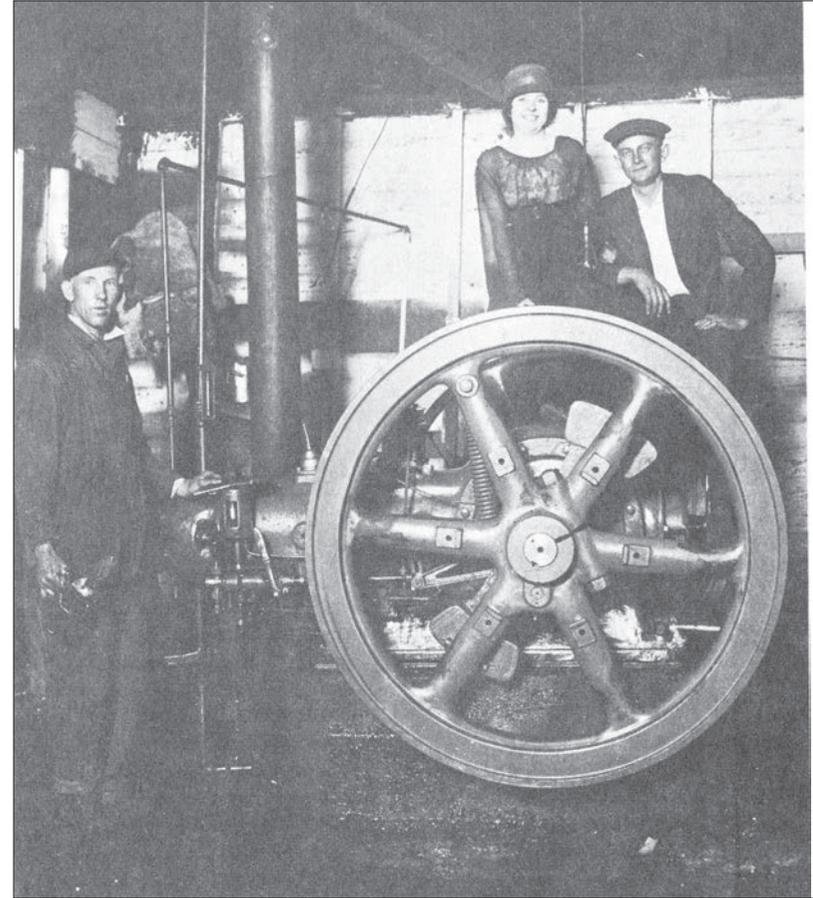


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**Left** Bennett Skaggs in the Iberia flour mill owned by his father, Jefferson Davis Skaggs. Bennett later operated the mill. His father built the first electric plant in Iberia. Courtesy of Lynn Morrow.

**Right** In December of 1918, D. A. McMullen from Hancock bought the bankrupt light plant in Dixon, which had been inoperable for more than two years. McMullen was unsuccessful and Bennett Skaggs bought the plant in October of 1919. He installed the 25 h.p. Fairbanks-Morse engine at right and turned on the lights in Dixon again after an absence of more than two years. Lester Loveall, engineer, is at left and Myrtle and Bennett Skaggs are pictured on the right. Skaggs sold the plant to Missouri Light and Power Co. in 1925. He then built the Dixon Ice Plant in 1926. Skaggs later moved to Eldorado Springs and operated a plant there. Courtesy of the Jessie McCully Library, Dixon.



announce that hereafter they will furnish service for ironing from 8 a.m. till 12 n. each Thursday. ...Bennett Skaggs who runs the Dixon light plant lives in Iberia and owns the Iberia Roller Mills.

June 25

Bennett Skaggs has purchased the Iberia electric plant.

April 2

*Richland Mirror*  
Mayor Steckel and City Clerk

George McDonald are earning their "salaries" this week, being obliged to assist with the roofing of the city hall because of a shortage of workmen. Mashed fingers will be in evidence soon.

April 9

Old shingles for sale at \$1 per load. These make extra fine kindling. See E. A. Steckel at City Hall. *[The City Hall wood shingles were replaced with the new fireproof asbestos shingles. Steckel doesn't miss a chance for a buck.]*

April 22

*Houston Herald*

Chester Parker closed his term of school at Bucyrus last Friday and the patrons speak highly of his work. Chester does not expect to teach the coming year. *[See sidebar at right.]*

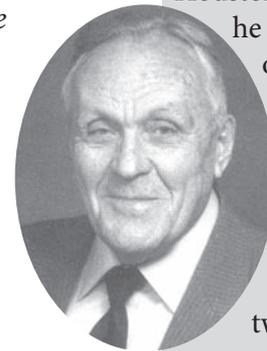
July 2

*Richland Mirror*

Say, Republicans, why not nominate Edmund A. Steckel for State Senator and have a man on the ticket with whom you can win in November? He's energetic, enterprising and "one of the regular boys."

Edmund A. Steckel has always given liberally both of his time and money and of his ability to the advancement of Richland as mayor of the town, and if nominated and elected, will do as much for the interests of the 27<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District of Missouri.

A record of many worthy things actually accomplished is a far better recommendation for public office than a multitude of promises. Edmund A. Steckel, Republican

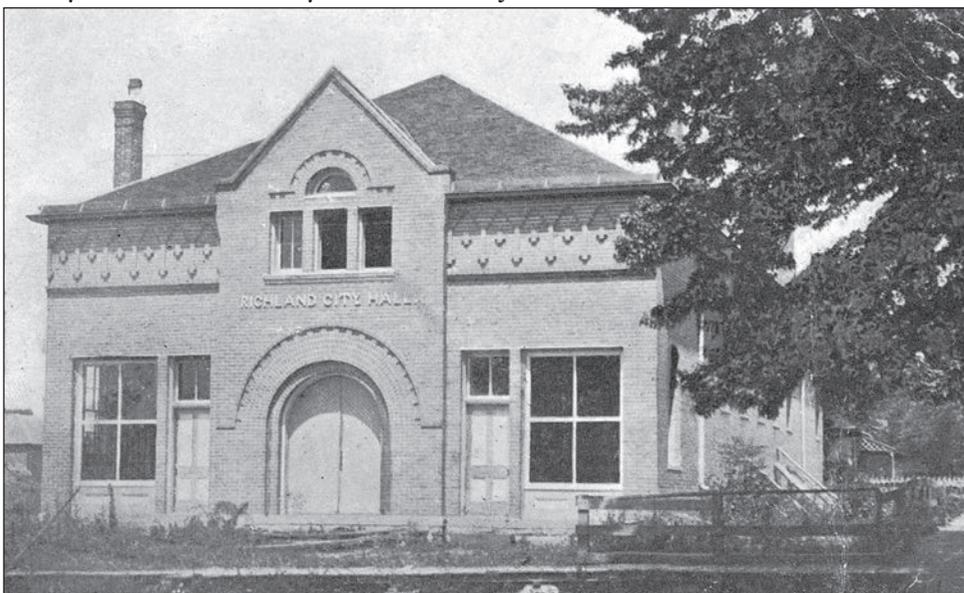


**Chester West Parker**, often addressed as C. W., was an exceptional man. Growing up in Houston, Missouri, he taught in the one-room school at Bucyrus, just west of Houston, at age 17. After that year, he enrolled at the University of Missouri-Columbia. In 1921, at the age of 19, he was an elementary school principal in Picher, Oklahoma. He then served as high school principal in Licking, Missouri, for two years. After another

year in a one-room school in Nagle, Missouri, C. W. embarked on a 44 year career as a superintendent of schools: two at Conway, 11 at Ozark, 17 at Ava, and 14 in Waynesville, all in Missouri. After retirement, C. W. served six years as mayor of Waynesville.

Mr. Parker lived life to the fullest and he never stopped learning. In his eighties, he took a creative writing course at Drury College. In 1985 he published a book of personal anecdotes and memories titled *Wouldn't a-Missed It: Stories from the Grassroots*.

Chester Parker died October 1, 1998.



The Richland City Hall, pictured here in 1910, had wooden shingle roofing which was replaced with asbestos shingles in 1920. Motion pictures were shown in the building until a town movie theater was outfitted.

candidate for State Senator has “delivered the goods” in the matter of real accomplishments.

Richland in large measure owes its fair grounds and ball park to the enterprise of E. A. Steckel of this city, Republican candidate for State Senator for the 27<sup>th</sup> district of Missouri. Mr. Steckel is public spirited not only in word but in fact. He built and for three years maintained at his own expense the beautiful ball park in this town.

November 5

[Steckel lost his second bid for state senator.]

July 18

Crocker News

NEWS FROM CASTLE BLUFF

Franz Waldstein and Mrs. Webber, of St. Louis, are visiting at Dr. Krapf’s club house on the Roubidoux.

Miss Lillian Krapf is the proud

possessor of a 17 foot Old Town Canoe, which she is sporting out on the river.

Franz Waldstein and Mrs. Webber returned to St. Louis Wednesday night after spending a few days at the Pike’s Peak club house.

Misses Marguerite and Lillian Krapf gave a dance Saturday evening for the Crocker and Waynesville young folks. A very enjoyable time was had by all present.

Dr. and Mrs. W. H. Adams, of Waynesville, gave a dance last Wednesday night for the Misses Marguerite and Lillian Krapf. A number of the young folks of Waynesville attended and all had a wonderful time.

The house which Dr. Krapf has been building next to the club house was completed this week, with the exception of the Delco Lighting System, which will be installed in another week. Mr. and Mrs. R. W.

Enk [of Chicago] will make their home there.

September 9

NEWS FROM CASTLE BLUFF

Miss Lillian Krapf sent a twelve foot sail to the Club House, which



The Pike’s Peak Club House was built in the first decade of the 1900s by B. F. “Sam” Scott on Roubidoux Creek near its confluence with the Gasconade River and below a large cave in a bluff called Pike’s Peak. Dr. Krapf of St. Louis first leased it in 1916 so that his family could escape the summer heat in the city and enjoy the clear ozone of the Ozarks.

Courtesy of John Bradbury.



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she intends attaching to her canoe for some real river sport.

Dr. and Mrs. W. H. Adams of Waynesville are now living in the new bungalow which Dr. Krapf built this spring.

September 24

[Ownership of the Richland Mirror passes from R. T. Lemons to H. T. McClure.]

October 8

Richland Mirror

POPULATION OF PULASKI COUNTY

Following is the 1920 census figures for Pulaski county as recently made public by the Census Bureau. Also the figures for 1910 by way of comparison:

	1920	1910
Whole county	10,490	11,438
Cullen township including Waynesville	1,840	2,091
Liberty township including Richland	2,752	2,719
Piney township	880	1,040
Roubidoux township	853	980
Tavern township including Crocker	2,132	2,148
Union township including Dixon	2,033	2,465
Crocker city	506	
Dixon city	810	715
Richland city	955	884
Waynesville village	293	257

From the above figures it will be noted that Liberty is the only township in the county which has gained in population in the last decade.

October 21

Crocker News

Dr. Krapf is having a well dug which will supply running water to both of his houses. A gasoline engine will be installed as soon as the well is completed.

October 22

Dixon Pilot

The Dixon Light & Power Co. is preparing to install another engine soon at the power plant to facilitate the proper handling of the steadily increasing demand for lights. The

Company is to be commended for being ever alert to the wants and interests of the patrons.

October 29

Richland Mirror

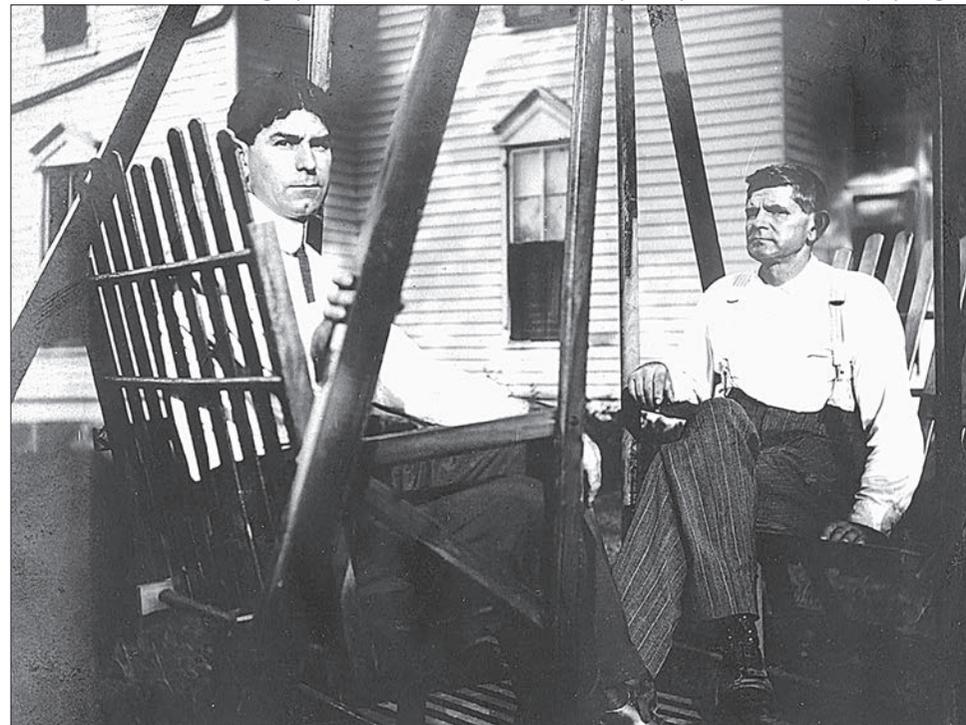
A Halloween party at Bartlett Springs where 85 guests gathered for a party that featured dancing and playing games and dainty refreshments. Bartlett Springs Lodge is by far the most splendid building on the Gasconade River. In architecture and artistic design, it is unexcelled in South Missouri.

November 12

[Price of the Mirror went from \$1.00/yr to \$1.25/yr.]

November 19

The decorating of the City Hall, for which funds were raised through the auction sale last Saturday, is already in progress. A piano will be installed immediately, and the balance, if any will be diverted to a fund to re-seat the hall. It is hoped that in the near future a heating system will be



Dr. Bland Pippin (left) is seated in a double swing (ca. 1920) with his older brother, George W. Pippin (1856-1932). The brothers were two of eleven children born to William Carroll and Nancy Jane Tilley Pippin. William and Nancy died, 1879 and 1881 respectively, leaving seven minor children who went to live with various relatives. George was 25 years old and Bland was only seven. Bland lived with his mother's sister, Missiniah Tilley Bradford, and her husband William. George lived in Richland and worked in the lumber yard. Courtesy of William Eckert.

furnished and the hall seated with opera chairs. Then we shall have one of the prettiest and best equipped theaters on the Frisco between St. Louis and Springfield. [They showed movies in the City Hall.]

December 3

Dixon Pilot

Bennett Skaggs came over from Iberia Monday and has been looking after the wiring of residences for light and other interests of the light and power plant.

The most wonderful smile that ever graced the face of man played from ear to ear on our Deputy County Clerk, Thos. A. Shockley, as he marched triumphantly down the main street of Waynesville early Monday morning with a wild turkey across his shoulder that he had killed in the outskirts of our little village on the ridge south of the old Fort.

Mrs. Shockley prepared it in the most palatable manner, and they were very ably assisted in enjoying

the turkey dinner by their friends, Judge Chris Veasman, Walter Rugg and Chas. Leck of Dixon.

— reprinted from the *Pulaski County Democrat*. [A wild turkey was a rare bird in 1920.]

H. G. Brittan is distributing a car load of fine grade of coal here, at \$8.50 a ton, which is considerably cheaper than wood at \$3 per load or \$6 per cord.

December 17

Laclede County Republican

Dr. Virgil Wheeler Dead

Dr. Virgil Wheeler, a former Pulaskian, died Friday evening, Dec. 3, of tuberculosis at his home in Springfield after a lingering illness of several years' duration at the age of 31. The deceased was born in Pulaski county and grew to young manhood there, where he has many friends who were grieved to learn of his untimely death. He was at one time associated with the Waynesville Democrat as editor and publisher. He graduated in dentistry in 1910 at Washington university, St. Louis, and was practicing his profession in Springfield at the time of his death. [Virgil was the son of Nathan and Mary Wheeler, who purchased the *Pulaski County Democrat* in December of 1898. In 1906, Nathan was suffering from tuberculosis and went to New Mexico to recuperate. Nathan returned the following year and died in April from the disease. Virgil interrupted his dentistry studies in April of 1908 to become editor of the Democrat. His mother was publisher. In September of that year, they sold a half interest to O. O. Ragsdale and Virgil finished his degree. Mary Wheeler and Ragsdale sold the newspaper to George Lane in June 1912. Mrs. Wheeler moved to Springfield where Virgil had his dental practice. She died in 1945 from heart disease.]

December 25

Laclede County Republican

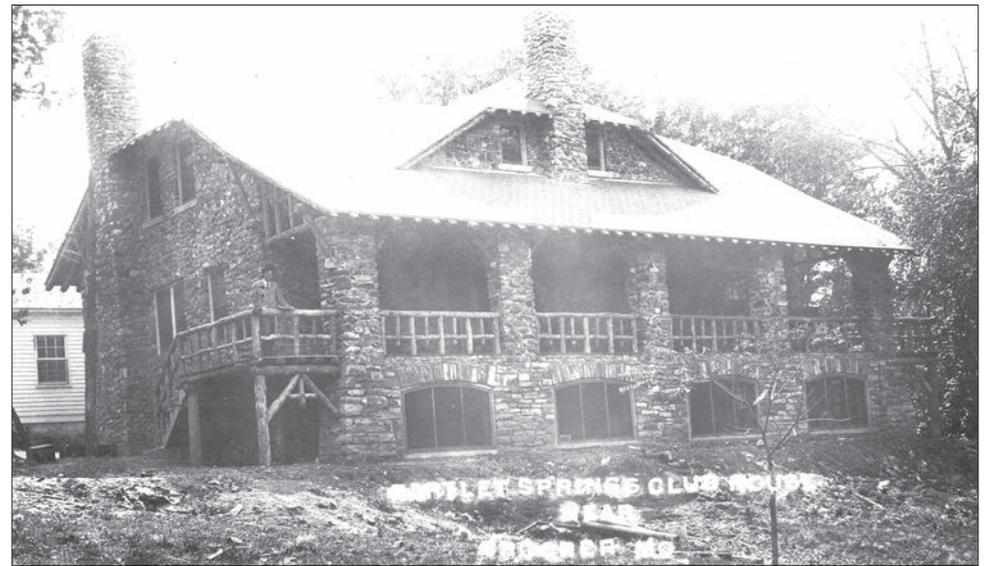
Dr. W. Sell of Waynesville has

purchased the Rayl drug store at Crocker and he and his family will move to that place soon. They are former residents of Conway. [Dr. Wilmer J. Sell had been in Waynesville at least since 1906. In September of 1917, he rented the Black Hotel property (Old Stagecoach Stop) for a residence and office for his medical practice. He had been in the drug store business with partner George Lane beginning in 1911. Business must have looked better in the larger railroad town of Crocker.]

**WAYNESVILLE TO HAVE THEM**

The Waynesville Democrat says that the prospects for electric lights for Waynesville are now very favorable. Dr. B. N. Pippin, one of the largest shareholders of the Big Spring Development company, called a meeting of the shareholders at the court house last week and

after discussing the proposition of damming the spring for power to run a dynamo to light the town it was agreed that a corporation be organized with a capital stock of \$10,000 to dam the spring and install the lighting plant. Dr. Pippin agreed to take \$5,100 of the stock and go ahead with the work. Owing to weather conditions it will probably be late next summer before the work can be started. [This is the first we have heard of the Big Spring Development Company and have yet to find out any more details. Dr. Pippin had success with a small dam and dynamo on the Bartlett Spring branch (1.1 million gals./day) but damming Roubidoux Spring/Creek (37.7 million gals./day) was considerably more ambitious. The project was not completed as Waynesville was not electrified until the end of the decade.]



Dr. Bland N. Pippin bought Solomon Bartlett's antebellum flour mill and 40 acres in 1911. He employed local workmen to build a native stone club house, which was completed in 1914. It became known as Pippin Place, a well-known resort. Bland was a Pulaski County native who graduated from the Dental College at Washington University in St. Louis in 1900 and where he stayed to teach. The club house was a summer getaway to the Ozarks he loved. Pippin dammed the modest Bartlett Spring branch and installed a turbine with a 5-kilowatt generator that provided electricity to the resort. The postcard is labeled "near Crocker," which was the closest railroad depot. Travel by train and then livery to the resort was the preferred transportation mode until the paving of Route 66 in 1930.

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# RAISING the ROOF

Matthew Dean Ralston, MD *retired*

*Waynesville and the Mother Road continue to yield little secrets. The following hidden gem was disclosed to us in a series of emails in April of 2019 by retired physician Matt Ralston, who lives in Maine. I have lightly edited the content of his emails for continuity.*

The Deans lived in the Wharton/Bloodland area, near the Roubidoux Creek. My grandfather, Chester Dean, moved to Waynesville in about 1927. He fancied himself a car dealer (sold Whippet cars and GMC trucks) and needed a garage. He also wanted to have a gas station there on Route 66, near “downtown” Waynesville.

The family story is that he could not find a suitable building, so he bought an existing house and “jacked it up” to make a two-story building. His family lived on the second floor. The ground floor was the garage. On the street side

of the building, he added a gas station.

It took me years to find the place, but it is still there. You have probably driven by it a hundred times. It is now converted to the Spanish Christian Lighthouse. I visited the church and talked to the pastor briefly. He converted a whole row of “storefronts” into his church. Only the two-story building on the right was my Grandfather’s. The pastor, Benito V. Perez, confirmed that there are steel beams in the structure, holding up the house.

The house butts into the “bluff” or hill there so that both the street end and the back end have outside doors that exit to solid ground. I showed a picture to my 94-year-old mother, who lived there for five years. She does not remember everything these days, but, when she saw the photo, she immediately said “I lived there.”

There is one more part to the

story. Chester Dean drove to St. Louis on a regular basis to deliver goods he had bought or collected from rural folks, like eggs and pelts, and to buy supplies he could resell in Waynesville. He discovered that in the “big city” you could find flush toilets available to the public at larger gas stations. Nothing like that existed in Pulaski County.

Of course, today you cannot have a flush toilet unless you have access to plumbing and running water. I don’t know when or how Waynesville got running water to the homes but in the late 1920’s, people were still doing their business in outhouses.

*[Waynesville did not have water and sewage disposal plants until November of 1942, with considerable help from the WPA.]*

Anyway, Chester wanted a flush toilet for his service station and did not have running water. His solution was to get his boys to fill a holding tank. They would pump water into the holding tank on the second floor of the house. A pipe ran from the holding tank down

to the toilet located on the ground floor. Voila! Flush toilet.

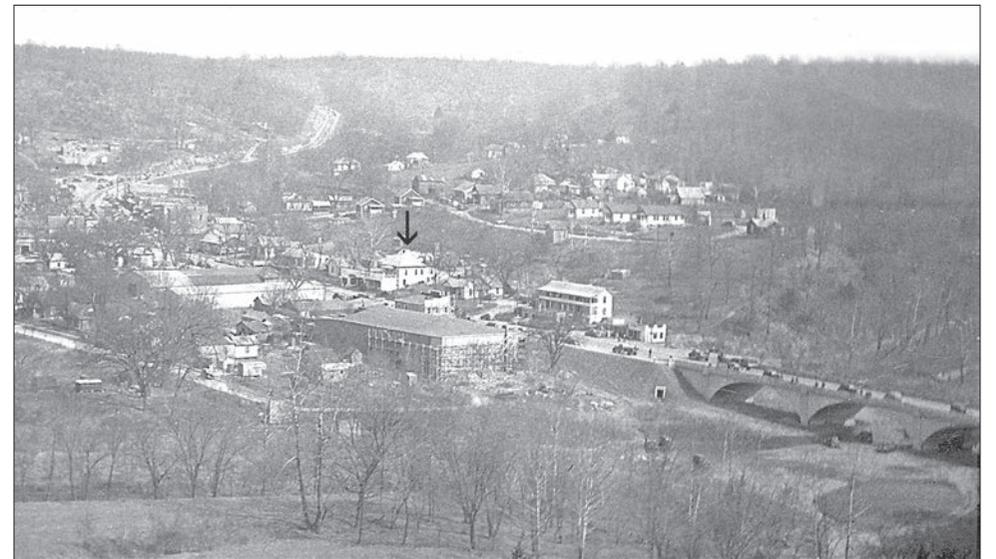
They were to pump the water from the well, but they deliberately pumped too fast so that the well lost its prime and would not work, then they ran off to play baseball because the pump did not work.

Chester made them carry water from Roubidoux Creek as punishment. They commandeered their baseball buddies to help carry the water. When Chester found out, he dumped out the water and made sons Lester and Warren draw the water by themselves. They drew water late into the night.

Chester Dean was a colorful character. After working and succeeding in Waynesville, he moved the family in 1931 *[the year the Whippet was discontinued]* to a farm house near what was called Hazelgreen. After a few years there, he moved the family to Lebanon, both to start a produce market and to allow his teen children the opportunity to attend high school.



These two pictures were taken from atop Bell Bluff, across Roubidoux Creek, looking down on Waynesville. The one above was taken in 1915 when the road, Highway 14, crossed Roubidoux Creek on the old steel bridge built in 1911, a block north or downstream from where the concrete arch bridge crosses the creek today. The concrete bridge was built in 1923 and State Highway 14, which was relocated one block south to Commercial Street, became Federal Highway 66 in 1926. There is an arrow pointing to the house Chester Dean bought. It is a white hipped-roof house.



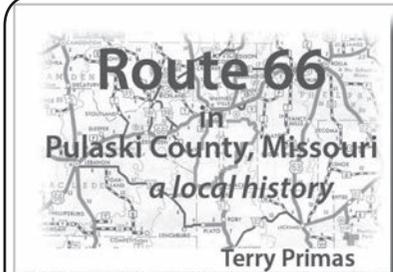
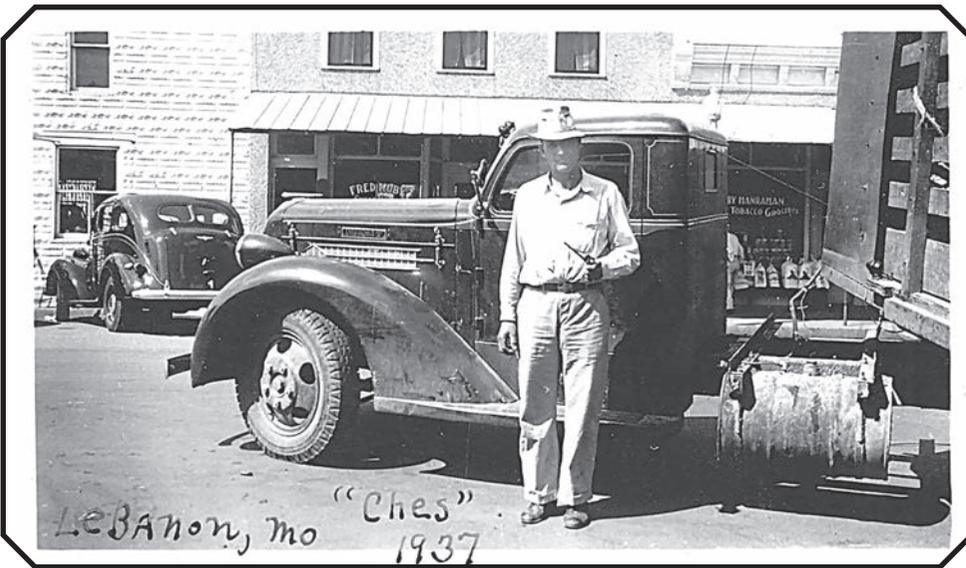
This picture was taken in 1941. The road here crosses Roubidoux Creek on the 1923 concrete arch bridge and is Route 66. The arrow in this picture is pointing to the same house but it is now two stories and has been lengthened. There is an additional structure on the front of the building, probably a filling station and/or showroom. The resolution is not great enough to tell its exact use. The two-story white building to the right of Dean’s garage was the Waynesville Hotel, which resembled the Old Stagecoach Stop. It was operated by Steve and Flora Dean Gounis. Flora was Chester Dean’s sister.



Above left The building under discussion began as a house before Chester Dean raised the roof. It may have served as a bar and in the 1960s served as a church, as pictured. Charlie Nickels owned it. The building became vacant and deteriorated in subsequent years. Courtesy of Larry Lercher.

Left Chester Dean and his family (wife Pearl and children Lester, Warren, and Virginia) moved to Lebanon in 1931 where he opened a produce business. He posed in front of his favorite truck for this photo in 1937. Courtesy of Matt Ralston.

Above right The building is now a church again—the Spanish Christian Lighthouse. The adjacent smaller one-story storefronts are being remodeled for additional activity rooms for the church.



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Pulaski County has 33 miles of Route 66 and a rich road history to go with it. Spanning the years 1926 to 1980, this narrative includes the people, roadside development, and the changes to the road itself. Using a variety of sources and over 400 images and maps, this book records much of the local history adjacent to the famous highway.



## Elect Clarence Liberty Sheriff of Pulaski County

Retired US Army, First Sergeant  
 Retired Assistant Chief of Police,  
 Waynesville Police Department  
 City Councilman, City of Waynesville  
 33 Years Leadership Experience  
 The Sheriff For The People