

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

Crocker continued to have problems with its electric light plant, while Richland's electric service was more dependable. 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.

There was intense interest, at least among town leaders, as to the route of the primary road across the state. The 60 million dollar bond issue okayed by voters in 1921 was aimed at getting (most) of Missouri "out of the mud."

Radio entertainment began to attract listeners, particularly in the county's largest and most progressive town of Richland, population 995 in 1920.

1922

January 5
Crocker News
First Class

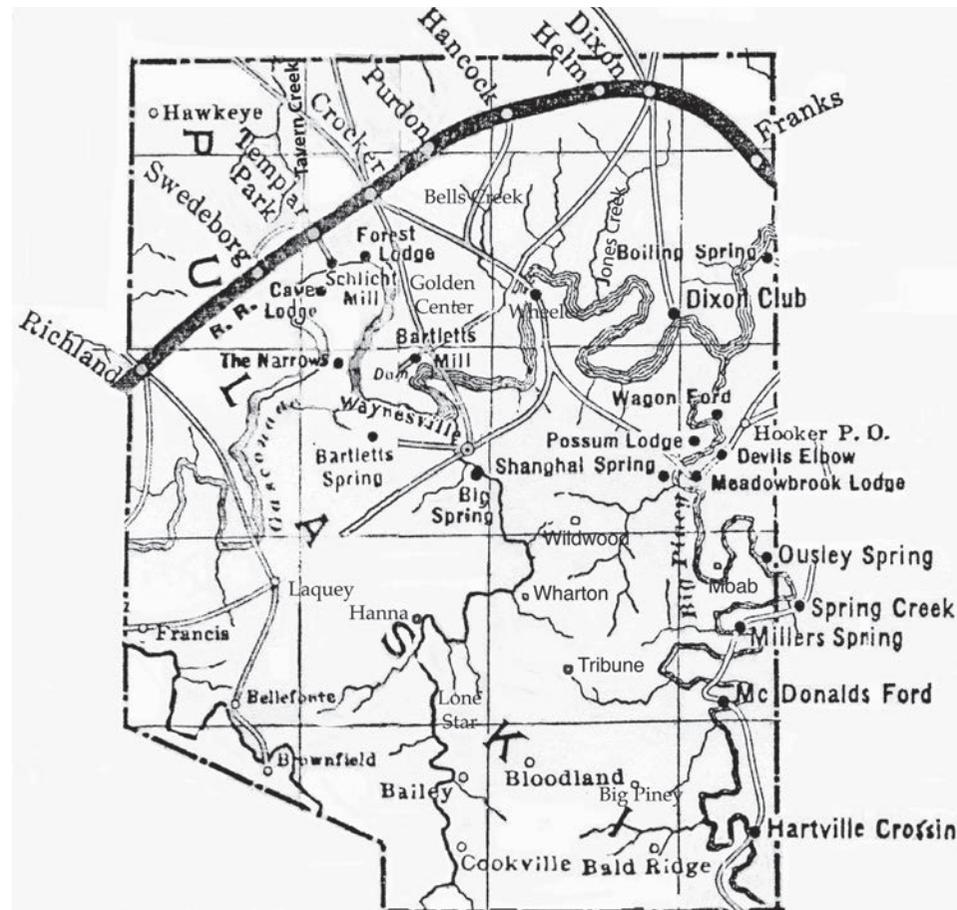
The Crocker High School has just received new books to the value of \$170 for the school library and a letter received by the clerk of the school board from State Supt. Baker concerning this additional equipment states that he has placed the Crocker High School on the first classification.

January 12

Electric Light Plant, Freight Depot and Residence Burned Saturday A. M.

Crocker experienced another disastrous fire early Saturday morning when the electric light plant and bottling works, the Frisco freight depot and dwelling owned by Mrs. J. W. Kelso were destroyed, the loss totaling from \$12,000 to \$15,000 with no insurance. The fire originated in the engine room at the

Pulaski News



light plant shortly after five o'clock, when a gasoline can exploded. The engineer, Curtis Forbes, a young man about 19 years of age, had gone to the plant to start the engine and claims that the engine backfired and ignited a can of gasoline with which he had been priming the engine. The room burst into flames at once and Forbes was painfully, but not

seriously burned about the face and neck.

The flames soon spread to the Kelso property just north of the light plant, a portion of the contents being saved. The freight depot just west of the light plant was the last to catch fire and was also burned to the ground, but the contents had been removed to a place of safety before



Tom Turpin and F. W. Copp installed a light plant in their ice works and bottling plant building in 1916. It became the Electric Ice and Bottling Co. Courtesy of Brett Kinsley.

News and Views of 100 Years Ago 75 Years Ago

The newspapers of Pulaski County had one change of ownership in 1922. W. H. Woodhouse became Owner and Editor of the *Richland Mirror*, taking over from R. T. Lemons, who bought the paper in 1917. 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 Arandall Goforth, who billed the *Pilot* as the "Only Republican paper in Pulaski County". V. V. Long, who took over the *Pulaski County Democrat* in 1914, continued at the helm of the county seat publication. However, a 1940 fire incinerated the newspaper issues from 1918 to late 1940, so none survive on microfilm.

News compilation by Terry Primas.

it was ignited. The passenger depot which stands just across the tracks was thought to be doomed but with the aid of fire extinguishers and a bucket brigade it was saved from destruction though the fire brands rained upon the roof.

The Western Union and railroad telegraphs' lines were burned and broken by the blaze until communication was cut off. Fortunately there was little wind else other buildings must surely have burned since everything was dry and fire fighting facilities are very limited.

The heaviest loss falls on the Electric Ice and Bottling Co., of which F. W. Copp is the principal owner, and our town is without electric lights again.

Whether early steps will be taken to secure a new lighting system or not we cannot say at this time but we sincerely hope that we will not be in the dark indefinitely.

advanced when discovered, at about 2 a.m., that it was impossible to save anything. The drug store of Dr. L. Tice, which adjoined the Christeson store, was saved by hard work on the part of a large and efficient corps of volunteer fire fighters.

April 6

Richland Mirror

Workmen Make Grewsome Find

The discovery of portions of three human skeletons, fragments of antiquated pottery and a crudely manufactured bead in a dry cave by the Gasconade, below the Mays ford, has developed an unusual measure of interest and comment, as well as much speculation concerning the identity of the individuals. The bones and other articles were found about eighteen inches below the surface, adjacent to "fire holes" and are believed to have been buried from 100 to 200 years. The skulls would indicate that one of the individuals was quite old, perhaps from 65 to 70 years of age, while the others were children, one about 2 or 3 and the other 5 or 6. All are supposed to have been Osage Indians.

Last Friday, a party including Dr. F. A. Oliver, Dr. T. J. Tayman, Prof. C. H. Gove, C. C. Keller and others motored to the cave for the purpose of investigation and the identity of the skeletons, as well as the probable date of interment, was quite well established. The bones of the skulls have fallen apart and their condition bears out the thought that they have been buried a long time. Four or five stratas of earth composing the walls of the excavation where the skeletons were found adding further evidence to the suggestion of age.

Prof. Gove, who is an enthusiastic student of Indian history, traditions and practices, is confident that the skeletons are of Osage Indians, who were driven from the north many years ago by the Dakotas. The Osages lived much of the time in caves and their dead were usually buried there. Pottery last used by the

deceased, as well as beads and other ornaments, were buried with the bodies.

Mr. Keller, on the other hand, believes the skeletons to be those of aborigines, by many years antedating the Indian. In support of his position he refers to the shape of the skulls, the cave-dwelling habits of the aborigines and the character and depth of the soil covering the bodies. He believes this soil to be residual in nature and argues that it would have required much more than two hundred years to produce this quality of soil by the natural process of erosion or decomposition of the rock roofing in the cave.

The cave in which the skeletons were found is set well up in the cliff at the Ozark Springs, overlooking the Gasconade, and is perhaps 200 yards north of the Mays ford. Recently, E. A. Steckel has been cleaning out and widening the cave for use in connection with summer resort activities and it was while his men were engaged in this work that the discovery was made. It is expected that further discoveries will be made as the work progresses.

April 7

Dixon Pilot

Stop the Racket

From the general hell-raising taking place on our streets o' nights—last night in particular—it would seem that the kids have a death grip and a down-hill pull on Dixon. There is ample room for much missionary work on the part of the parents, churches and city officialdom. Perhaps some parents go to church while their little boys are going to hell—growing up on the streets with satan.

Such cursing, calling loudly of vilest names speakable, scrapping, etc., as was taking place slightly after 9 P. M. yesterday on a part of the boys about nine to twelve years old ought to be tough to sham the old devil out of the business.

The Marshal being approached on the subject, seemed to know nothing

about the curfew law and said he had no instructions about that time. Of course he is new in the business and we think a well meaning man, but the City Council or whoever's business it is to give the office his bearings, should get busy, and see that a most decided change is made at once.

This thing has been growing for quite a while and certainly has gone far enough—a plenty.

This congregating in masses of little boys on the streets at any time after dark should be stopped. They start trouble over trivial matters and older ones are drawn into their brawls. They should be taught to behave whether the Marshal is in their sight or presence or not.

Pilot a Year Free - -Purt Near

Pilot wants to inspire someone to contribute a good article or poem to be based on the old hitchracks in front of the Pilot office (which we expect the new City Council

or Street Committee to be looking over soon), and will give a year's subscription to anybody in the greater U.S.A. for same. The article or poem must make not over twenty-four lines in type, and we prefer, but do not require, that it be written to the tune of "The Old Oaken Bucket."

April 20

Richland Mirror

May Establish Radio Service

E. E. Noe and son Walter, Robert Ellis and Clair Chalfant went to Lebanon recently to inspect the radiophone station at that place and announce that while there they "listened in" on Pittsburg, Pa., Schenectady, N. Y. and other places.

Mr. Noe and others may possibly decide to establish a station here to be used in conjunction with the telephone service and for the convenience of telephone patrons.

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April 21

Dixon Pilot

[Editor Goforth had been railing against the hitch rack in front of the newspaper office for quite some time. The "Horace" referred to in the following fourth stanza was Horace Greeley Brittain. In July of 1921, his truck was parked unattended on an incline. Apparently, the brakes loosened and it rolled into the "shack" or pagoda that surrounded the town well, knocking it over. The poem elicited a few letters to the newspaper in support of removing the hitch rack so that Dixon wouldn't be seen as a "hick" town like Rolla.]

The Old Hitch Racks

Contributed by J. E. Hughes of west of town, and which shows how the damnable old hitch racks are viewed by a farmer.

It's right in front of the Pilot office,
And beside the Peoples Bank,
The rack where they hitch their horses
The smell is very rank.

The Modern [Mercantile] also is in line
To catch the muss and litter
That blows from around the hitch rack
Of the horse and other "critter."

And all of the business people
Around the public square
Have probably taken notice
That the old hitch rack is there.

Horace butted down the shack
That adorned the public well;
Here's hoping he will smash the rack
That causes such a smell.

Unless the new town board shall act,
Upon the golden rule,
And remove this offending hitch rack
Of the lowly horse and mule.

May 25

Crocker News

Whiskey Captured

F. C. York, of the south part of the county, was arrested early Monday morning by City Marshal

W. D. Long as he stepped from Frisco train No. 7 and he was taken before Squire J. H. Johnson and charged with having whiskey in his possession. He demanded immediate trial and the case was tried before a jury in Justice of the

Peace Johnson's court Monday afternoon, the jury finding him guilty and assessing a fine of \$100 and costs which was commuted to imprisonment in the county jail for 30 days.

Marshal Long had suspicioned the



The two-story "shack" that adorned the public well in Dixon is pictured in the background in the middle of the street. The large brick building on the right is the Masonic Hall. Courtesy of John Bradbury.



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young man and when he arrived Monday morning escorted him to the Pulaski hotel and searched his suit case which was found to contain ten quarts of whiskey in three half gallon, three quart and two pint fruit jars. The young man claimed the suit case was given to him in Jerome by a stranger who gave him a dollar to carry it to Crocker and leave it at the Stewart Hotel to be called for and denied that he knew the nature of its contents.

No one who attended the trial doubts that the stuff was whiskey. A half gallon jar was broken in the court room and the odor was unmistakable. At the close of the trial the liquor was poured out on the street by Mr. Long at the order of Prosecuting Attorney Eldredge. Two charges were preferred against York and he was tried and convicted on the charge of having whiskey in his possession—the other charge, of transporting whiskey, still stands against him.

This was quick action and we hope that all those who are engaged in making, selling or possessing the stuff meet with as prompt punishment.

May 26
Dixon Pilot

If Dixon had a real board of health the damnable old stinking hitch racks which constantly endanger

the people's health would not be permitted to disgrace our principal streets, and if the street committee had been doing its duty they would have been removed long ago. Of course hitch racks are needed, many of them, but our main streets is no place for them. If the city appreciates the farmers' business, let them buy a lot and erect thereon hitch racks in some proper place.

July 7
Dixon Pilot

Nothing ever disturbs Dixon's nasty old hitch racks. They are fire-proof and law-proof, beneath the notice of health boards, and, if the "czar" remains at the helm, will no doubt stand till the end of time.

Of all the violations of game and fish laws, dynamiting is the most outrageous and unreasonable, and if the almost nightly and sometimes daily dynamiting of fish along the Gasconade is allowed to continue, it will not be worth while to fish with hooks, saying nothing about paying for a license for the privilege. Who and where is our Deputy Warden, and what is he doing?

July 27
Crocker News

To Inspect Crocker Route
State engineers will go over the

route running through Dixon, Crocker and Richland within the next two weeks to determine whether it is feasible as a route for the high type primary road to be built through this section. At a meeting of delegates and boosters held at Jefferson City Tuesday for the purpose of presenting claims for the various proposed routes it was made practically certain that the road will be routed through Pulaski County and an effort is being made to bring it through Crocker. Nearly 100 autos loaded with boosters from all points south and west passed through Crocker Monday enroute to Jefferson City to meet the state highway commissioners.

[There were several groups vying for the "high type" (concrete) road route that would traverse the state from St. Louis through Springfield to Joplin. The Ozark Trails Association, convening a convention at Rolla in January, endorsed a route from St. Louis to Rolla through Houston to Cabool, then west to Springfield. Another group, with members from northern Pulaski County and Maries County lobbied for a route through Vienna, Dixon, Crocker, and Richland. A third group, the St. Louis-Springfield-Joplin Highway Association, touted what it called the "Direct Route," which passed through Rolla, Hooker, Waynesville, Lebanon,

and Springfield on its way to Joplin.

The panorama at the bottom of this page and the next is of traffic on Crocker's Main Street. The date is unknown but it might be returning traffic from Jefferson City where citizens lobbied the state highway commissioners for the paved highway through Crocker. Pinch the pages together to get the panorama look.

August 11
Dixon Pilot

Waynesville Robbery

The postoffice safe here was blown and robbed last Thursday night, about \$125 in cash, several hundred dollars worth of money orders and stamps were taken. The robbers made their entrance by breaking through one of the back windows. The next morning when the office was opened for business by Post Master A. L. Wilson, was the first knowledge anyone had of what had happened. Numerous parties over town heard the muffled explosion and were awake for some time afterwards, and state that they heard no car leave town or any other disturbance.

A drill and two or three chisels were found on the floor of the post office the next morning that had been stolen from the Doolin blacksmith shop.—reprinted from *Pulaski County Democrat*



September 7
Richland Mirror

High School Shows Big Gain

The Richland schools opened Monday morning with a heavy enrollment and with prospects for a successful year. The number of high school pupils is especially large this year, standing at 87 on Tuesday evening, as compared to 67 the same date last year. The number of non-resident high school pupils is especially large. Students are in attendance from a number of the outlying towns, four being enrolled from Stoutland, four from Bloodland, two from Waynesville and others from Montreal, Swedeborg, Hazlegreen and other outlying points. The high school enrollment is distributed as follows: Freshmen 27, Sophomores 28, Juniors 16 and Seniors 16. 188 were enrolled in the grades up to Tuesday evening, the attendance being pretty evenly divided between the four rooms.

There has been one change in the high school course of study this year. Sociology and Economics having been substituted for commercial Geography and Advanced Arithmetic.

September 15
Dixon Pilot
School Notes

Hurrah, school's begun. We are crowding the old 300 mark clear out of his place.

There are 79 enrolled in the high school department at present. Enrollment of the classes is: Freshmen, 42; Sophomores, 12; Juniors, 12; Seniors, 13. [*Largest high school enrollment to date.*]

At a glance, the school board realized the crowded situation of the school and immediately took action by ordering 36 new seats. This will accommodate 72 people and greatly relieve such conditions as three occupying one seat.

Miss Dorothy Houck very kindly substituted in the high school department until Prof. Wm. Page of Marshfield was employed to teach in the Latin and English departments. Mr. Page comes to us with the best of recommendation, and we extend to him a hearty welcome.

The old finger prints and spots of ink on the wall have been covered by a coat of paint that is very pleasing to look upon. May we all take pride in them now and refrain from staining them in the future.

September 14
Richland Mirror

Chas. J. Seeburger and C. M. Evington, two of Richland's progressive business men, have oiled the street in front of their places of

Pulaski County Officers

Presiding Judge
Judge-E. Dist
Judge-W. Dist.
Probate Judge
Circuit Clerk and Recorder Deeds
County Clerk
Prosecuting Attorney
Sheriff
Collector of Revenue
Assessor
Treasurer
Coroner
Surveyor
Highway Engineer
Superintendent of Schools
County Farm Agent

Orville A. Nickels, D
Chris Veasman, D
J. W. Armstrong, D
S. N. Page, D
Frank Manes, D
L. A. Carmack, D
Harry O. Eldredge, D
Harry L. Mitchell, D
Joseph J. Dake, D
Robt. T. Hendricks, D
Vivian M. Christeson, D
W. H. Jones, D
W. A. Mitchell, D
George M. Reed, R
J. C. Underwood, D
C. C. Keller, Richland

business and have no dust to bother with in their quarters. This is the second application of oil in front of the drug store. (See next page.) Oiling of the streets lays the dust and also turns the water during rains, so that there is very little after rain cutting up of the road surface. The cost is not large and the benefit is surprising.

The box and pie supper at the Moro schoolhouse last Friday night was well attended and the proceeds amounted to \$24.31. The following prizes were awarded: Prettiest girl, Dorothea Miller, box of chocolates. Couple to wed first, Florence Harris and Omar Roam, rolling pin.

Spooniest couple, Florence Harris and Omar Roam, spoon. Most lovesick couple, Hazel Lahman and Dave Davenport. Nicest looking young man, Paul Anderson.

September 21, 1922
Crocker News

What About Lights

Is Crocker going to have to go through the winter in darkness? The short days are at hand and so far as we know there has been no definite move made to obtain lights for our little city. Crocker has been in darkness since last January when the light plant was destroyed by fire and the people have been getting



along as best they could hoping that something would be done about the matter, but so far we are still in the dark. Crocker is too good a town to be without an electric lighting system and there is an opening here for someone. The people want lights— isn't there some way we can get them? At present Crocker is only a dark spot in the road.

October 5

Richland Mirror

More Power at Light Plant

E. R. Woodward has purchased a new 60-horsepower engine, which he will install at the light plant immediately. This engine will provide sufficient power to operate the plant efficiently and it is expected that the light service will be considerably improved as a result. We might also add, that there are a number of residences which have been wired for several months which have never been connected up and which now expect to have electric current at an early date. The Mirror-man is one of the number. *[Woodward visited Crocker in August exploring the possibility of also taking over the Crocker electric plant and restoring electricity to that town but nothing has come of it so far.]*

Bass for Glaize and Gasconade
Secretary A. C. Christeson, of the local "Anglers Alliance," has just been informed that a shipment of Black Bass is being sent to Richland for the re-stocking of the Gasconade and Glaize creek. Four ten-gallon vessels containing these fish will arrive by express this afternoon, an equal number of fish for each stream.

The pie supper at Buzzard Roost schoolhouse netted \$89.55. Miss Edna Lahman received the toilet set for being the most popular young lady present. *[Buzzard Roost school was originally named Mt. Olive, located 5 miles south of Richland on Highway 7, built in the late 1890s. It burned and, while a new one was under construction, buzzards roosted in the rafters, which led to the school's new name.]*

November 16

Richland Mirror

Bridge at Hooker

The State Highway Commission is asking for bids for the construction of a bridge at Hooker in Pulaski county, on the line of the proposed state road from Rolla, through Waynesville to Lebanon. Bids for

this work will be opened at Jefferson City, Dec. 2nd, in connection with eighty other projects in forty-five other counties in the state, the aggregate cost of the projects being close to \$5,000,000.00

November 30

Richland Mirror

Richland a Tie Distributing Center

J. F. Grabner has made large shipments of ties from both Richland and Crocker the last few days. Two car loads were shipped from Crocker Saturday and four cars have been loading here this week, making a total of more than 3,500 ties. *[Seems a train car can hold nearly 600 railroad ties.]* Mr. Grabner usually ships in the neighborhood of 40,000 ties a year and expects to handle at least that number next year. The current year has been considerably lighter than usual, due to unsettled conditions prevailing in railroad circles in the after war period. The first of the week Mr. Grabner purchased the rights on several hundreds of acres of timber near Waynesville, from which he expects to secure 7,000 to 8,000 ties, and he also contracted with a saw mill for an additional 2,000 ties. Inasmuch as there are other purchasing agents here, it will readily be seen that the tie business

is one of considerable proportions and that it means much to the town and community in the revenues it produces.

Installing Radios

C. M. Evington, Lloyd Murphy and R. S. Belshe are installing radios at their homes this week and expect shortly to be able to "listen in" on the concerts which are being broadcasted from the various stations. We understand that Messers Evington and Murphy are putting in extra large instruments and are afraid that with the high character of entertainment these machines will give their friends may find it necessary to issue injunctions to compel their attendance to business. G. W. Barlow, E. E. Noe and Clair Chalfant are among the citizens of Richland to our knowledge who have previously installed radios.

The radio is getting popular nation-wide and it has come to be a popular pastime to "pick" programs of various sorts out of the air.

December 14

Richland Mirror

E. A. Steckel Residence Dynamited

An attempt was made to dynamite the E. A. Steckel residence Tuesday evening about six thirty o'clock but the building was not seriously damaged. A window and two doors were shattered,



Shown above is the 1922 graduating class of Crocker. Left to right-front row: Myrtle Vennett McDaniel, Charley Ferguson, Teddy Carver, Harold Newcomb, Perry Ferguson, Thurman Turpin, Clara DeFoe Lessly. Second row: May Gardner Crismon, Nell York Miller, Marie Martinson Adams, Blanche Howard Mace, Supt. W. E. Ray, Edna Williams Walters, Ica Henderson McMillan, Mildred Salveter Curry, Gertrude Tully Hayden. Photograph courtesy of Pulaski County Historical Society. Caption line of names from a *Pulaski County Democrat* clipping (n.d.).



This is Richland in the 1920s, at the corner of McClurg and Chestnut streets. Charles J. Seeburger's drug store is at extreme left, mostly hidden by trees. Seeburger put oil on this dirt street several times to keep down the dust. Courtesy of John Bradbury.

the building was caused to settle apart in the center slightly and porch was damaged to some extent. All the damage can be repaired without any considerable expense.

Several sticks of dynamite were planted near the house, with sufficient force to have demolished the structure, if properly placed. Mr. Steckel feels that he had a fortunate escape, after all.

The officers in charge of the investigation believe they know the identity of the dynamiters and further developments may be expected soon, we are told.

[Edmund A. Steckel was the proprietor of Ozark Springs Resort near Richland and developer of the Turkey Ridge community. He also was elected mayor of Richland in 1919, serving one term. He also ran as a Republican candidate for state senator in 1920. See John Bradbury's article "E. A. Steckel: The Man Who Put Richland (and Turkey Ridge and the Ozark Springs Resort) on the Map" in the 2011 Old Settlers Gazette. It details Steckel's

entrepreneurial efforts and his untimely demise.]

Hazlegreen Bridge Contract Awarded

The contract for the construction of the bridge across the Gasconade at Hazlegreen has been awarded to the Wasau Iron Works of Wasau, Wis. for a consideration of \$109,000. This amount is nine thousand dollars in excess of the estimated cost.

As stated in our last issue, this bridge will be on the route of the state highway from St. Louis to Springfield and will be the most expensive bridge in the state road system. With the letting of the various contracts the past week the building of the system of state-wide hard surfaced roads begins to look like an early reality.

It is expected that work on the Hazlegreen bridge will start soon if the weather permits.

[There is some confusion in the press regarding the construction contract for the Hazlegreen bridge. There is some confusion about the spelling, too.]

December 15, 1922
Laclede County Republican
Low Bid of \$99,000

That the contract for the construction of the bridge over the Gasconade river at the Beck ford, near Hazelgreen, will be let within a few days was indicated Wednesday by H. P. Moberly of Springfield, division of highway engineer, who was in Lebanon.

Seven bids for the construction of the proposed bridge were received by the state highway commission at the recent meeting. The lowest bid, which amounted to approximately \$99,000, was filed by Riley and Bailey of St. Louis. Four of the bids were within a few hundred dollars of each other. The estimated cost of the bridge is \$107,000.

The bridge and embankment, extending across the bottoms, will be almost one-half mile in length, according to Mr. Moberly. The bridge will be constructed of steel with a 20-foot roadway and a floor of concrete. On the east side will be constructed a 100-foot concrete trestle to take care of

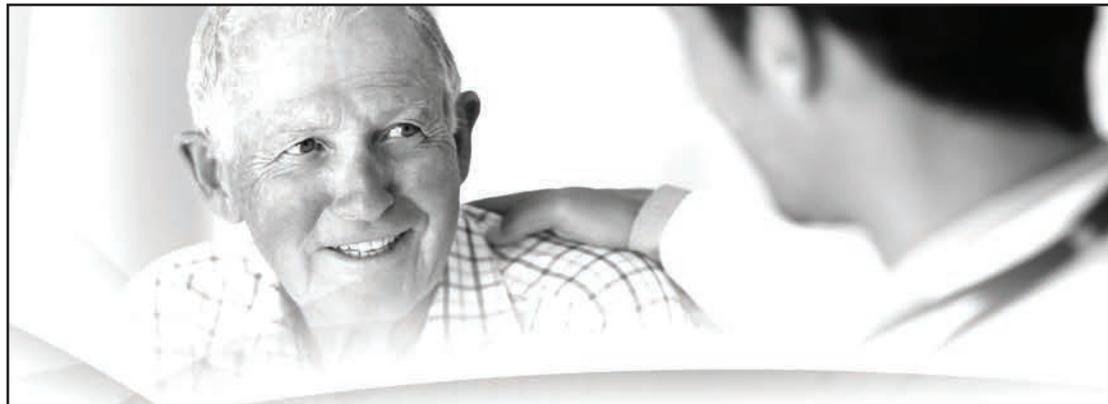
the overflow during high waters. The main bridge will consist of four spans, one of 120 feet, two of 160 feet each, and one of 80 feet, for a total of 520 feet.

Mr. Moberly also stated that the firm of Riley and Bailey had made the low bid amounting to \$72,000, for the construction of a steel bridge over the Big Piney at Hooker.

December 28
Richland Mirror

Bridge Across Roubidoux

The surveyors surveyed out a bridge site across Roubidoux here Monday for the Primary road that is to be built through here from St. Louis to Springfield. This bridge will be three all steel spans with 20-foot concrete driveway extending from near the front of the Doolin blacksmith shop on Main Street to the barns on the M. G. Wyrick farm. This bridge will cost between seventy-five and a hundred thousand dollars. Bid will be received at an early date.—reprinted from the *Pulaski County Democrat*.



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