

OZARK MILLS: MONUMENTS OF THE PAST

Would you consider mills as monuments to the past? The early settlers from far and wide took their grain to these primitive, but efficient mills, and waited their turn to have the grinding done. Some did their hunting and fishing until they were ready to start homeward with breadstuff and feed.

Going to the mill was quite an event for young boys, as fathers would take wagon loads of wheat and corn and drive into an old water mill over a winding country road for several miles.

One early mill of Pulaski County is the Schlicht Mill... located about six miles south of Crocker. It was also known as the Gasconade Mill.

John A. Schlicht owned and operated the mill for many years. He was born in Hafstetten, Bersirk, upper

Bavaria. He was in the old country until the age of 20.

In 1866, he came to the United States landing at Castle Garden, New York City. Later, he came to Lebanon, Missouri, where he was the manager of the J.F. Smith Mills for six years.

After purchasing the Gasconade Mill, he added the full roller process and had both steam and water power. The mill had a capacity of sixty barrels per day.

Schlicht Mill had two additional water wheels and a second pond for the mill. The mill was so popular that a small community sprang up with a general store, tavern and barber shop.

The mill operated for 105 years. It is now owned by Bernard Schermer, a wholesaler and distributor from St. Louis.

The Lost Silver Treasure

A legend exists in the Ozarks about a cave in which twenty or more pony loads of silver lie buried where it was abandoned by Spaniards years ago.

In 1949, it was reported another search was underway in the vicinity of Hammond's Mill, but nothing was ever found.

One story is that during the Civil War, two soldiers who had been taken prisoner by "bushwackers" escaped and took refuge in a cave and were there for some time before discovering the

silver. Before they dared to leave the cave in an attempt to rejoin their regiment, one of the men died and was buried in the cave by his companion.

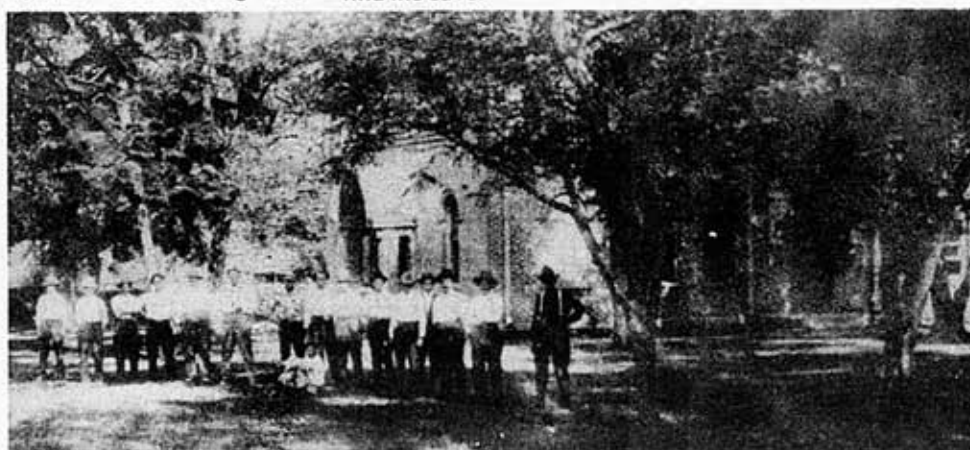
Before leaving, the surviving soldier made a crude map by means of which he hoped to locate the cave should he ever be able to return. But, it was years before he was able to come back and in the meantime, something had happened to change the appearance of things and he was unable to find the cave.



Schlicht Mill, located between Waynesville and Crocker. (Photo Courtesy of Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local Governments — Missouri Tourism — Walker)

Did You Know?

Dixon held an annual "Chautauqua" which was much like the Old Settlers Picnic.



Several men pose in front of the Pulaski County Courthouse. (Photo courtesy of the Fort Leonard Wood Museum)



In the early days, streets like this were good for horses, but bad for automobiles. People getting stuck had to rely on mules to pull them out. This picture shows the Waynesville Square. (Photo courtesy of George Lane)

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