

# Fort Wood Boom Time!



Caption for this 1940's era scene read, "Fort Leonard Wood, a prosperous shot-in-the-arm to all towns in its vicinity, has boomed the volume of business at the nearby Waynesville, Mo., post office beyond the greatest expectations of the community. The average time it takes to get the mail is well over two hours, causing some dismay, but most residents take it good-naturedly. Note the forlorn look of the boy at the left center, who'll ultimately have to get to the end of the line." Photo courtesy of John J. Leuthen.



Newspaper caption to this scene looking north down Elm Street read, "With the traffic situation becoming more and more complex in the numerous communities surrounding the Fort Leonard Wood area, the two youngsters aboard a pony, strictly observe a stop sign as they cross an intersection at Dixon, Mo., a community that has more than tripled its population since the camp got underway." Courtesy of John J. Leuthen.



Christian religion and joined the Baptist church known as the Hopewell Church, and for many years was the clerk of said church, and for nineteen years held the office of Clerk of the Pulaski Co. Baptist Association. He was an honored member of the I. O. O. F., who were present at his burial from Relfe, Edgar Springs, Waynesville and Dixon, and conducted the impressive ceremonies of the order. Bro. Ross was an honorable member of the legislature of our beloved State, having held the office of Representative for two terms. His death took place March 7, 1898, at 7 o'clock p. m., aged 57 years, 7 months and 18 days. He was the father of 12 children, 10 of whom survive him and five are under sixteen years of age. Bro. Ross also served in the Civil War and was drawing a pension of twelve dollars a month for heart trouble. Funeral services were held at his late residence by the writer. May God comfort the children, and all her relatives of Bro. Ross in their hour of affliction.

-Written by Rev. J. J. Watts and published in the Rolla Herald on Mar. 17th.

The last two years of the late state representative's life were filled with tragedy. As mentioned in the previous

obituary, Ross had lost his wife just the year before. Rushing home from the legislature in Jefferson City, the train carrying the lawmaker was involved in a tragic wreck, but he was not injured. During the year preceeding this, Ross was thrown from a horse and suffered serious injuries, but apparently recovered fully.

As April approached, talk of "remembering the Maine" and exacting revenge from Spain were sweeping the country. Even in Pulaski County, the writers of Big Piney Items wrote in the March 24th Rolla Herald that war seemed a distinct possibility: "In the event of war with Spain a number of volunteers could be enlisted in our county. We hope that the better judgment of the people will prevail and that there will be no war."

It was also reported that "Seth Manes of Waynesville was out looking at his farm on Big Piney Saturday last. He intends purchasing more land to enlarge his farm."

The Dixon hill on the Frisco Line was the site late in March of a murder most foul, presenting local lawmen with a very puzzling case indeed.



Baker Hotel in Model T days. Lyon Drug is currently located at this site on the downtown square in Waynesville. Courtesy of Western Historical Manuscripts.

On Wednesday morning of last week the body of George Westover, a farmer living about 5 miles from Rolla in North Dillon, was found on the track on Dixon hill, about a mile and a half east of Dixon, fearfully mangled. As the body was cold when found it is supposed the man met his death early in the night of Tuesday, Monday night,

Mr. Westover went to Mr. Berryman's, a neighbor, who was very low from blood poisoning and who has since died, to sit up with him. About 2 o'clock in the morning he told those present that if he could catch a train he believed he would go to St. Louis or somewhere else as he said he was not particular. Without further

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1940's view looking toward the railroad tracks on Pine Street in Richland. The photo carried the following caption: "Normally boasting a population of 845, Richland, Mo., has had its peace and quiet disrupted somewhat by 300 percent increase in inhabitants. This is the main street of the community, located several miles from the Fort Wood army cantonment." Photo courtesy of John J. Leuthen.



Whole lotta sawing going on! Back in the "good old days", work was just that--work!. Arthur Fields is the second man from the left in the foreground. His dad, John Fields, is at right. Photo courtesy of Ruby Fields.



You can almost imagine Marshal Matt Dillon squaring off against a notorious outlaw in a gun duel in this dusty street scene of oldtime Newburg. Courtesy of Phelps County Historical Society.



The railroad brought boom and bust to such towns as Newburg, portrayed in this postcard scene. The construction of Fort Leonard Wood and wartime training resulted in incredibly prosperous times in the 40's and 50's for this community. Photo courtesy of Phelps County Historical Society.