

By
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HISTORY OF BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI

Barry County was organized in 1835 and at the time of the reorganization comprised in addition to its present territory, the counties of Newton, McDonald, Jasper, Barton, Vernon, Stone, Taney and a part of Christian, Dade, Green and Cedar Counties. The first County seat was at Mt. Pleasant some two miles southwest of where Pierce City now stands, the court house was of log with a stick and clay chimney, (elsewhere described herein)

The Osage Indians were the last Indians to leave this part of the country, about 1830, going into the then territory of Indian Nation and now located near the town of Pawhuska, O. la. At the time of the organization of the county the country was full of all kinds of game and up until the early seventies there were plenty of deer, turkey and smaller game with an occasional bear, wolves were very plentiful and the early settlers were unable to raise sheep on account of them.

Most of the early settlers of Barry County came from the Carolinas, Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia and in coming west to carve themselves new homes, out in the vast forrests and endless prairies endured many hardships coming as most of them did with Ox teams, and lynch pin wagons, many of these hardy pioneers on their trip to their new homes, buried Father, Mother or some of the children leaving them in the vast woodland or lonely prairies in unmarked graves but not forgotten.

Most of the early settlers of Barry County came from the hill countries of other states where they had springs and running water and hence we find the first ~~places~~ places settled in the county ~~where~~ were near fine springs and along the fertile valleys where the early families built crude cabins of log with cruder out buildings most of the buildings were without floors, windows, doors ~~and~~ shutters while clearing the forrests and preparing land for crops. For their meat they had only the game with which the country abounded, obtaining meal by cracking the corn with a pedel in a hollow stone. The good Mothers run the spinning wheel and the loom to make their clothes, man made their own shoes out of the skins of animals killed and thought there were lucky to get them.

The wheat of that day was harvested with the old reap hook, bound in bundles and thrashed over a barrel, later the old ~~tread~~ tread thrashing machine was introduced, along about this time came the cradle for cutting wheat and oats and the horse power thresher, then came the McCormack droper that cut the wheat and dropped it in enough for a bundle, at harvest or house raising the early settlers always had their jug of whiskey and invariably after a house raising a dance followed running late into the night.

Most of this county was prairie at the time of organization, only timber along the streams, the prairie lands was covered with the finest grasses and almost feed the horses and cattle the entire year.

The county was very much divided on the slave question and at the breaking out of the civil war, many of the counties sons joined each army, twas now in the city of Cassville, where the Confederate Legislature passed the Articles of Cession Nov. 2nd 1861. There was in that meeting of the legislature 44 representatives and eleven senators, Hon W. S. McConnell, the grandfather of Sam Wear now of Springfield, was a member from this county, Ex. U.S. Senator Geo G. Vest was state senator at that meeting.

After the Counties on the west and north of us were formed the county seat was moved to McDonald, (now called McDowell) here a log jail was constructed, but the counties of Taney and Stone were organized on the east and it was necessary to move the county seat west in order to be near the center of the county. Commissioners were appointed and Cassville was selected and account of the election and court contest as to whose land it should be located on is given elsewhere. Cassville was chosen as the county seat in 1844.

Being located as it was both armies during the civil war ~~run~~ over r un the county and refugees from both committed many deeds of ~~XXXXXXX~~ out lawry, burning houses, barns and even calling people to their doors in the night time and shooting them down, very few houses were left standing after the war. our location being on the Old Wire Road about half way between Springfield, Missouri and Fayetteville, Ark. our people suffered from both armies.

It was along this great highway that the U.S. Government established a telegraph line from Jefferson City south to keep in touch with their army, and hence the name of the Old Wire Road. It was along this road that the U.S. Mail was carried from Springfield to Ft Smith, Ark in a mail coach drawn by four horses in the late sixties and early seventies. On these coaches the driver sat outside and carried the mail sacks in what was called the boot, a receptical under his fee, we weill remember Aleck Denton driving the stage and riding to school in early morning with him. Aleck Denton was an uncle of Firm Denton who is now with Frisco Ry.

It was one of these stage coaches that was held up and robbed on the head of shoal creek in the late seventies, after the Frisco had built their line as far west as Pierce City, Mo. and Eureka Springs was just being opened up. Parties run what they called the nine hour stage from Pierce City to Eureka Springs, Ark, drawn by four mules at that time, and was held up near what is now the Packwood Place. Mrs. Nannie Ayres of Cassville happened to be on the coach going home from Eureka and as the passengers filed out, an old gentleman by her side got up she noticed a large bill fold in his pocket and jerked it out and put it in her bosom, she saved some five hundred dollars for him, she complained of being an invalid and unable to get out, the parties who robbed the coach were afterwards caught and sent to the state prison.

The murder of Carney and his wife by Geo. Moore for their money was avenged by a mob of the citizens of the east part of the county coming to Cassville and taking him from jail and hanging him in broad day light to the arm of the bell post at the southeast corner of the court house, no one was ever arrested for the hanging.

For a number of years the west terminus of the Frisco was Springfield, Mo. and the freight to Ft Smith and Indian Territory had to be hauled by teams. I have seen these freighters in droves of twelve and fifteen wagons, they would load south with merchandise and bring back hides and furs, many of them in the fall of the year bringing a wagon box full of pecans. These men had hard times and were out all kinds of weather. I have been with when we spread out bed on the ground around a log heap and get up in the A.M. all covered with snow. As a usual thing this camp was made by driving the wagons in a circle and putting the horses inside the wagon circle to keep them from being stolen, many of the teamsters had their horses stolen and left many miles from home with their loaded wagons. In such cases some of the others hitched his wagon behind theirs and by changing with each other would deliver their load and get him back home. I remember the Logan boys who were early settlers of Cassville had a very fine team of sorrel horses that were stolen one night north of Springfield and were never found.

In those days the roads were not what they are now and the teamsters had hard sledding, during the springs of the year any land that was low was almost impassable to the freighter.

I have seen eight or ten teams mired down in what is now main street of Cassville, Mo and on either side of the road was rail fences and the freighters would tear rails from the fence to pry their wagons out of the mud until his team could handle it. In the neighborhood of Washburn I have seen stalled teams that would reach for more than a quarter of a mile, teamsters prying at their wagons and doubling up with two or more teams on the wagon. These men certainly faced many hardships to get the freight to its destination. I cant refrain here from giving some of the names Z.L. Roberts, Geo Lee, the Logan boys, Gee Hawk, R.W Elrod, Chas. Grubb, Wm Noel, Add Lee and my father W.D Manley who are all now dead. But it was the spirit of such men as these and other before them that has made it possible for us to be here and further develop the country.

Edd Clumb was legally hanged in Cassville, Mo in 1885 for the killing of a man by the name of White and a girl by the name of Ella Bowe. It seems that White had run off with Clumb's wife from some northern state and Clumb followed them out to this country and located them living on Capps Creek in the northwest part of the county and lived for some time with them, during this time Clumb's wife became ~~sick~~ sick and the Bowe girl stayed with them for house help. Mrs. Clumb finally died and the Bowe girl stayed on at the White house and it seems that Clumb and White were both infatuated with the Bowe girl. Clumb being jealous and upon finding them on the banks of Capps Creek together he shot and killed both of them and forced a negro working for White to assist in burying them in a blind ditch on the farm. The negro got scared and in the night went to Pierce City and informed the officers and they came out and arrested Clumb for the killing. He was tried and convicted and hanged. N.L. Hailey being the sheriff at that time and did the hanging. Thousands of people on foot, horseback and in wagons and buggies came for miles the day before to see the hanging, which was public in what was at that time the Pharis cornfield, but now part of the city of Cassville. C.D. Manley was one of the guards for the sheriff.

James Roberts shot Wal Greenwood one night on the place now owned by Isaac Brock, pistol used was one of old cap and ball, the bullet went clear through him and was taken out at his back. Greenwood lay for months from the wound but finally got well. Roberts was tried and acquitted. Afterwards Roberts shot Tom Brattin at a dance at the Utter place north of town, the shooting was over a girl. Brattin died and Roberts was tried and acquitted. Roberts left here several years later going to Okla. where he was on the police force for sometime, having died while holding that position. W.O. Evans was killed between Exeter and his home on the old wire road at a pond on his place, some parties were arrested but none were convicted of the crime.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

In 1858 the County Court ordered the erection of a brick court house in the Public Square at Cassville, Missouri to cost \$5,500 and the contract was let to William Young and Abner Neeley for the above price. D.P. Pharis was on their bond for completion and they were unable to finish it for the price and Pharis took over the contract and finished the buildings, it was in this building that the Articles of Confederation were signed Nov. 2nd 1861 which attached ~~the~~ Missouri to the confederate states, this building was used by the officers of the Union army during civil war, tis said that the house got in such a condition during the war that hogs slept in some of the rooms, the soldiers punched our bricks for port holes to shoot out of, it was in this building that Michael Horine was county clerk during the war and to preserve the records of the county that he took them to a cave and hid them until after the war. The commissions who had charge of the construction of the court house were W.G. Townsend, L.J. Blankenship and M.L. Wyrick. Later the court ordered a third story added to

this building and changes made in doors and windows, the commissioners for this were J.W. LeCompte, A. B. Talbert and G.M. Goodnight.

The first jail built in Cassville, Missouri was of log and two story, the logs were hewn and consisted of an outer wall of hewn logs 12 inches square, with an inner wall of the same and space between filled in with stone, very small windows with iron bars across for lightning, stair to second story went up outside building trap door in floor of second story and ladder went up for the prisoners to get up and down. This jail was later removed and joined to the court house on the north side in 1884 and runway built from the second story of the court house to get out of jail, a few years later the log jail was torn down and steel cells purchased and put in the second story of the court house and for years was used as the jail. Later it became dangerous to the safety of the records and it was decided to build a new jail and the citizens of Cassville contributed \$2000 toward building a brick jail, the present one. The steel cells were removed from the court house and put inside the new brick jail.

This court house became unsafe and the people of Barry County were clamoring for a new modern court house, an election was called by the county court to vote bonds to construct a new building but they were defeated. An election was then called to vote on a removal of the court house and county seat to Exeter Missouri which was defeated. A second election was then called for bonds which met with the same defeat as the first. After a few months the court ordered another election for the bonds and Dr. W. T. Bailey, C. C. Chander, Benton Robbins, P. E. Horine and C. D. Manley were appointed by the citizens of Cassville as a campaign committee, this campaign will go down in history as the only one of its kind, no questions were asked as to whether you were wet or dry, the only question was were you for the bonds and if not what would it take to arrange matters. The court called the election for Saturday, we presume to give the boys Sunday to see that their vote was properly counted. It is said that Flat Creek and Mineral Springs Townships cast more votes than they ever had before or since and they were accused of voting their dogs and taking names from tombstones, the election carried but some of the citizens thought there was fraud and that some people were voted that had been dead for years, sent a representative down to look over the ~~tax~~ pole books upon his return the enemy was sure there was fraud and appointed Frank Archibald to come down and ask for a look in which he was given. But sometime had elapsed since the election and things had been cared for and there was no contest filed, if any county in the state is having trouble in voting bonds for public buildings and can't put them over many of this committed ~~are~~ still living. It is said that some good woman living in Cassville on Tuesday after the election called her son over the phone and told him to bring the election returns and come on in that we had enough votes. The amount of bonds voted was \$40,000 and the citizens of Cassville gave \$10,000 thus we had fifty thousand dollars to construct and did construct an up to date modern two story stone court house and credit to any county. This court house was built in 1913 and out of native stone quarried near Cassville.

The County Alms house was a very crude building partly built of logs and not very comfortable. During a cold winter Robert Clark then an inmate froze his feet until one of them had to be amputated, so the milk of human kindness in the good citizens finally prevailed upon the County Court to construct a modern and up to date building for the care of the unfortunate and the old house and land was sold and land purchased just north of town and a modern up to date two story building was constructed of brick and paid for without bonds or increasing the tax rate. This building was burned Feb. 15th 1923 and at once the court began the erection of nearly the same kind of building as the old one. Which with the \$8600. insurance they constructed without bond issue. Barry County has an Alms house which we are justly proud of.

The first school of the county were private, twas after the Civil War that he had free school, the school house in Cassville at that time ~~stood~~ 1868 stood on the hill just outside of what is now the city limits. Ben Sippy of Venice, Ill. taught a four months term. followed next year by a man of the name of House. The school building was burned in 1872 and for several years Cassville had no school

What school we had was taught in private dwellings, one of these houses was on the lot now occupied by J.M. Black, after two or three elections to vote bonds, a school building was built near the railroad. It was in this building that Professor N.L. Maiden the real founder of the school of Barry County taught his first term and continued to teach there until the school outgrew the building and a brick school house was erected on top of the hill, which was occupied by Maiden as principal for several years. It was Professor Maiden who began to get the boys interested in school work and many of them have made good. He had such boys as J.L. Hankins, Sam Hankins, W E Hankins, W.E Hankins, Hugh Dabbs, Dr. Holmes, Dr. McCall, Geo. E Harris, E.N. Meador, the Earle boys, The McNally boys, the Marbuts, Wares, McClures, Cowherds, Bennetts and many others we do not call to mind but who have gone out into the world and made good and here is not a single one of these boys who will not always have a kindly feeling for Prof. N.L. Maiden. His influence did not stop at Cassville, but he was County Commissioner of Barry County and built up the school interest of the whole County and to-day Barry County has a school system that is second to none in the state of Missouri with terms of school running eight and ten months. In about 1914 the school building was declared unsafe and torn down and a new modern building was built on the same ground to take its place. Then later the school growing so large a high school building was built in the north part of town and the old building used only for the grades. The district now employs 13 teachers.

On April 18th 1880 the Marshfield cyclone went through this county killing one person and breaking the thigh of Mrs Robert Overton, destroying several houses and barns doing thousands of dollars worth of damage.