

Tales

Fall/Winter 1994

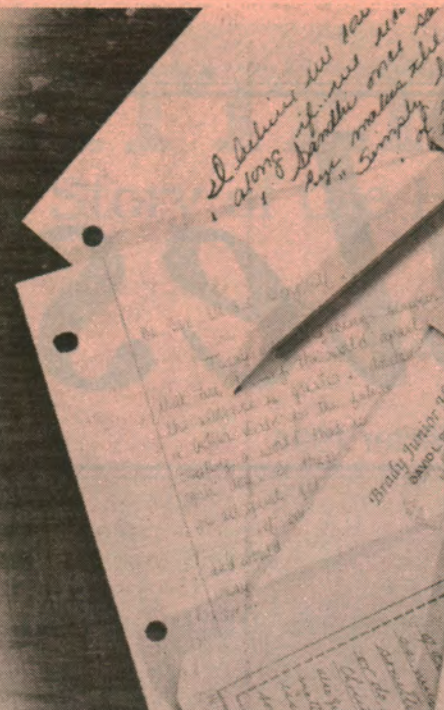


*Thunder
on the
Embarras*

page 12

WE CAN ALL GET ALONG IF...

Compiled by students of the Tales project



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Send a contribution to Tales at R.R. 2, Box 401, Urbana, IL 61801,
and indicate the issue number of the past publication(s)
you'd like to receive

No. 1: General stores, hermit Walter Whittaker, Augustus C. French, Maplewood estate, storyteller Thornton Stephens, frog gigging, subsistence farming

No. 2: Hog butchering, meat curing, butter churning, dressing chickens, Homer Adkisson's homemade car, tall tale of an Irish folk hero, benefit concert in Bellair, country living, old-time country doctor and his horse, Marvin Harrison's haunted clock

No. 3: Burl Ives, spring fair, furniture refinishing, rug braiding, quilting, first signs of spring and childhood memories, "An Ode to the Outhouse," "Professor Whistledick and His Cure-All Elixer" by Thornton Stephens, Palestine history

No. 4: One-room schoolhouses and the teachers and students who attended them, cooking and canning with Grandma, summer barnraising, ice cream social, White's country store, Merom Chautauquas, powerhouses, fishing, gathering wood

No. 5: Harry Caray, early schools in Crawford County, blacksmith Jim Tingley, George Gullett's baseball memories, trapping, recycling garbage into fuel, memories

of an old man, "Cyrus Peck" by Thornton Stephens, pet squirrel, train trips, superstitions

No. 6: Studs Terkel, printer Moran Keller, caning chairs, making molasses, the old Sears catalog, "If Grandpa Could See Us Now," political action committees

No. 7: Salt project in Maine, wild asparagus, Thornton Stephens' collection of short tales, Bellair history, Morea, how not to catch a cow, the hanging of Elizabeth Reed

No. 8: Barnstorming race car driver Bill Richter, fiddle player Pappy Taylor, "Aunt Melinda" by Thornton Stephens, old-time carpenter and Bellair restoration efforts, prairie preservation, poetry, Walter Whittaker tribute

No. 9: "Enoch's Comin'" by Ray Elliott, madstone as folk belief, memories of oil boom days, a child's pet remembered. St. Francisville history, poetry, country photo scrapbook

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Tales from the general store, inc.

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Tales is published by Tales from the general store, inc., a nonprofit cultural and community journalism corporation founded to preserve the history and culture of the Midwest. Address all correspondence to Tales from the general store, inc., R.R. 2, Box 401, Urbana, IL 61801. Or telephone 217/384-5820.

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By Ray Elliott

Tales on track; old buildings sold

After I'd started the *Tales* project and bought some property in the village of Bellair, Ill., with the intention of restoring the buildings to their era, hosting events and giving young people the opportunity of learning about history and culture firsthand, I was talking with *Robinson (IL) Daily News* publisher Larry Lewis.

Lewis, who first made it possible to publish *Tales*, listened patiently for a few minutes before he said, "You'd better quit messing around with old buildings and spend more time behind the typewriter."

I knew it was good advice. But the idea of restoring a late-19th century and early-20th century village and using it as an educational setting for students to learn and preserve their history and culture was difficult to let go.

During the spring of 1981 when I was ready to start *Tales*, I traveled to Clayton, Ga., in the Appalachian Mountains to visit Foxfire and observe how that project helped kids learn by experience.

Like a lot of other people, I pretty much knew the story of the Foxfire project. English teacher Eliot Wigginton arrived at the private school in Rabun Gap, Ga. as a young man fresh with degrees from a couple of Ivy League schools, eager to teach the mountain kids.

Besides being an outsider, educated at Ivy League schools in the North and inexperienced as a teacher, Wigginton could be described as homely. He's tall, gangly and has an Ichabod Crane look about him that some kids just naturally give a hard time.

Still, he made the effort. When he tried to discipline students by talking to them privately in the hallways, other boys followed and surrounded him in an intimidating way. During a lecture one day, the student directly in front of Wigginton used a cigarette lighter to set the podium on fire.

Before resigning in desperation, Wigginton asked his students if they would rather publish a magazine than read the works of long dead poets and writers. The students said they would. And he had visions of student works of poetry and prose to rival the work the students refused to read.

Instead, they started talking to their older relatives and neighbors about the way people lived in the mountains in earlier times. The students were interested and their work showed it. *Foxfire* (a weed that glows in the dark on summer nights) the magazine was born.

Making the best of his Ivy League days, Wigginton showed the magazine to a fraternity brother who was an editor at Doubleday. He suggested putting a collection of the magazine's articles in a book. The Foxfire books were born. From there, the project skyrocketed and gained nationwide attention.

By the time I arrived in northeast Georgia, Wigginton had been there 15 years, and Foxfire employed several people and offered an alternative curriculum to students in the public high school in Clayton. Wigginton was off on sabbatical at some university, writing a book for teachers on teaching methods. The Foxfire Fund had bought a mountain and had created a mountain village from original cabins and shops moved in and restored. The buildings housed offices and educational space for the work done there.

With the possibility of a lake being built east of Bellair that would give an economic boost to the entire area, guarantee a safe water supply to towns north of the lake and provide a recreational area for everyone, I could forsee duplicating the Foxfire project in Bellair. Real estate prices there were low. And there was interest in the community. Many people pitched in with time and money.

But with no connection to area schools and no great fund-raising scheme, I wasn't exactly sure how such a project was going to become a reality. In the beginning, I brought students from the Chicago suburbs to do research and interviews for the *Tales* articles. We started holding events at the store building and doing enough repair work to retard the demise of the buildings until we could do some constructive restoration.

Despite the initial interest in both the magazine and the restoration plans, it didn't take long to see just how correct Lewis was with his advice. The large amount of money such a project would take wasn't easy to come by. The magazine and the work with students were nearly manageable. The buildings weren't quite so manageable, however, and things went downhill.

When they did, one man who had helped somewhat regularly said, "Looks like we just wasted all the time and money, doesn't it?"

"Not at all," I replied. The experiences, the good times and the bringing together the young and the old from different backgrounds has to be beneficial to everybody involved. And the project itself lives on.

Now, however, *Tales* has sold the two houses, the store, the bank and the five or so acres it owned in Bellair. We're out of the old building business and will spend more time at the computer. *Tales* will continue publishing the magazine and other works in book form, such as the story of the Heath candy company that has just been released.

The old buildings and the greater part of the idea will be gone, but perhaps some of their significance to an earlier time will be preserved for posterity in the early copies of *Tales* and in our minds.

Mail's Here

Fans of Project Get Along speak out

My congratulations and my thanks to all of you who shared in the writing of *We Can All Get Along IF*. ...

— BARBARA J. WEST
ELGIN, IL

I enjoyed *Tales* and have been meaning to get a copy of *We Can All Get Along IF* ... but am just now getting around to it. Keep what's left of the enclosure as a contribution to a good cause.

— MARY BETH NORRIS
SAVOY, IL

Research uncovers crime of passion in family history

I have been researching family history of late, and my work led me to a mid-morning, uptown Oblong assassination of a

prominent doctor by my great, great grandfather A.M. Brown.

Whispered but never discussed, the story faded into a family rumor. Many contemporary descendants had never even heard the rumor. I decided to fully investigate the story.

The story involves adultery, rumor and an eyewitness account, but the real story was the local newspaper and its publisher George Harper. After reading just five issues, the paper gave me insight to early Crawford County (Illinois) as nothing had before.

I have enclosed the article reprinted from *The Robinson Argus*. I hope you encourage one of your fine aspirants to investigate this early local paper for the history of both the pioneers and the writers of that history. I think they will find this early work stimulating.

The Argus and *The Constitution* are available on microfilm at

the Robinson Township Library. I think this was just a part of a massive statewide effort to preserve as many of the early papers as possible.

— BOB GLEZEN
OBLONG, IL

Editor's Note: Interesting stories such as this one and many more of a less violent nature are scattered throughout the state and the nation's early newspapers, many of which are on microfilm. And, as Glezen points out, the reader gets a much clearer picture of early history than most other places.

The Tales project has always encouraged everyone, students writing for *Tales* specifically, to go to the primary and immediate sources to learn about their history and culture, but never as clearly as Glezen does in his

letter and article that follows. We have encouraged and solicited such research and writing from students across the Midwest not connected to the *Tales* project to submit their work for publication in *Tales*.

Quite frankly, we receive very little outside our own individual student contact. Anne Pool, a Paris (Ill.) High School history teacher, regularly sends the work of her students that result from classroom assignments to interview older relatives and neighbors or to research earlier history from other local sources. And Tom Gettinger, publisher of the *Sullivan (Ind.) Times*, regularly prints such articles in his own paper and sends them to *Tales* for reprinting. Two of those articles are included in this issue.

As the new year gets into full swing, we would like to renew our invitation for students and teachers (anyone actually) to

send interesting articles they have researched and written from their area. We complain about the state of our nation's educational system and society at large but do little else. Much of that would change for the better, if what we did both in and out of school were both interesting and relevant to our daily lives.

Thanks to Bob Glezen, *Tales* continues to encourage everyone to look at the world immediately around him/her for a clearer perspective of their history and culture. Send your contributions to *Tales* at R.R. 2, Box 401, Urbana, IL 61801.

There's surely a story in the following article (below) Glezen sent: what happened afterwards; how did descendants of Brown's handle the story; how did Roult's handle it; and what was it like to publish a newspaper in the years following the Civil War?

Terrible tragedy at Oblong; Dr. Roult shot and instantly killed by A.M. Brown

On Tuesday morning last at about 10 o'clock the usually quiet little village of Oblong, ten miles west of Robinson, was thrown into the most intense excitement by the shooting down, without a moment's warning, or the intimation of what was intended to be done, of Dr. George W. Roult by Achilles M. Brown. The news reached Robinson about noon, and both parties being well known here, and regarded as among the best citizens (sic) of our county, and between whom no ill-will was known to exist, created profound surprise and astonishment. Soon after hearing of the occurrence (sic), in company with Dr. Green, we went to Oblong for the purpose of ascertaining the facts and cause, if possible, of the frightful tragedy.

While there we learned that some ten years ago, while Mr. Brown was serving in the army as a lieutenant in the 98th Regiment, a rumor was set afloat of an improper intimacy existing between Dr. Roult and the wife of Mr. Brown, who was then keeping a boarding house in Oblong—the doctor

being one of her boarders. This coming to the ears of Lieut. B., he resigned his position in the army and came home. Resuming at once his relations with his family those who were cognizant of the ill reports which to only a small extent had been circulated, felt that he was satisfied of their falsity, and came so to regard them also, and he was living to all appearances peaceable and happy in his marital relations the circumstances had come to pass from their memory as an idle rumor.

Dr. Roult and Mr. Brown were to all appearances warm and intimate friends, and some two years ago formed a co-partnership in the dry goods business, in which they continued until a very short time ago, when they sold out their stock to Judge Odell. Among the citizens there were not the remotest suspicion of any ill-feeling existing between them, or any evidence of jealousy upon the part of Mr. Brown.

Tuesday morning Mr. Brown, who lives a little over a mile in the country, came into town, went about among the people, conversing with them about the trade, and business affairs as was his custom. Spoke

to some about going to see some cattle in the evening, of which he was talking of purchasing. He appeared as calm and unconcerned as to any troubles upon his mind as he ever had been. In a few minutes afterward the citizens were startled by two loud reports, in quick succession, of the firing of a gun, and the cry that Dr. Roult was killed.

It appears that the doctor and Mr. Wilson Price were sitting in the office door of the doctor talking, when Mr. B. stepped upon the platform in front. They both turned to look, and just as they did so Brown fired, the ball

**They both
turned to look,
and just as
they did so
Brown fired.**

striking Roult in the right side and passing out upon the left, in the region of the heart. The doctor pitched forward upon the floor, when Brown made some exclamation, and Roult with an effort turned his head when he

fired again, placing the muzzle of the gun so close that the powder burned his face. The second shot entered near one ear, and passed through the head and out near the other ear. Brown then walked away, remarked what he had done, and why he had done so, and that he had done it in the heat of passion, but had some previous (sic) fully made up his mind to do it, and was glad he had done it. This report we gather from a number of credible persons, and give it as we received it, knowing it came from persons who have heretofore been friends of both parties.

We were also informed upon good authority that it came to light after the shooting that for over a year Mr. Brown had been ill-treating his wife to a great extent, accusing her of improper intimacy with Dr. Roult, and threatening her life, and that no longer ago than Sunday last she had been compelled, on account of threats, to leave home and remain away the whole day. The most recent event, we understand, which had aroused any suspicions in his mind whatever, occurred near eighteen months ago, the evidence of which was of such a circumstantial character as would

not have been admitted in any court upon such prosecution.

The shooting was done with a Spenser carbine, and death occurred almost instantaneously, the doctor never speaking a word. After the shooting, Mr. Brown went out of town where he had a man at work for him, gave him the carbine and a revolver, returned to town and surrendered himself, waived an examination, and a warrant was made out by Odell and Byerly, and he was brought to town and committed to jail. A writ of Habeas Corpus was sued out for the purpose of obtaining bail the hearing of which takes place before Judge Allen this (Wednesday) afternoon, and a number of witnesses have been summoned, both on behalf of the people and the defense. Some further developments may then be brought out, and it is hoped some mitigation for the dreadful tragedy.

George Harper, Publisher
The Robinson Argus
Volume X, Number 11
August 14, 1873



Photo courtesy of the Champaign County Historical Archives at The Urbana Free Library

Frank Sadorus photographed this Wabash Railroad 10-wheeler as it takes on water at the Sadorus water tank in Champaign County. Sadorus the photographer recorded many images around his east-central Illinois home from 1908 to 1912. He was the great-grandson of Henry Sadorus, the first European settler in Champaign County.

Did You Know...

Story of Heath family published

Bittersweet: The Story of the Heath Candy Co. (Tales Press) by Richard J. Heath with Ray Elliott is now available through Tales, as well as in some southern and central Illinois book stores.

The story follows the Heath family from Virginia to Illinois in the early 1800s through the development of the well-known Heath candy bar and the amazing rise of a successful business until its eventual takeover by Leaf, Inc., an international Finnish conglomerate, in 1989. Heath's insights into the family and the company are based on his perspective growing up in the family and knowing all the key players firsthand.

Even as the story was being published, it continues. Heath has filed suit in federal court in Benton, Ill., charging that his recently deceased Aunt Ruby Dowling's will and trust was wrongly and fraudulently changed when she was 85 years old and unable to manage her own affairs. Trial date is set for

October 1995.

Copies of the first printing are available for \$22.95, plus \$3 for postage and handling, from Richard J. Heath, P.O. Box 85, Johnston City, IL 62951, or from Tales, inc., R.R. 2, Box 401, Urbana, IL 61801. Make checks payable to Tales.

Exhibit features legendary watches

Imagine a watch so complicated that a team of horologists toiled for five years to craft its inner workings. Or a pocketwatch for which the enamel cover—featuring a miniature reproduction of a famous artwork—was painstakingly painted with a single human hair. Or a multi-million-dollar watch that displays moon phases and sunsets in addition to ordinary (solar) time.

These and other treasures comprise "The Legendary Watches of Patek Philippe," which will be on exhibit Jan. 17-29 at the Sid Richardson Collection of Western Art in Fort Worth, Texas.

In honor of this Old West site,

a special series of one-of-a-kind timepieces based on famous Russell and Remington paintings have been commissioned by Patek Philippe for the exhibit and the for sale. Works including "The Scout" (Russell, 1907), "The Bucker" (Russell 1904), "The Cow Puncher" (Remington, 1901) and "Trouble Hunters" (Russell, 1902) have been replicated by Europe's few remaining master enamellers and engravers.

The collection also includes historically significant Patek Philippe timepieces, including one-of-a-kind watches commissioned by Queen Victoria, Albert Einstein and James Ward Packard.

Tales board members make career moves

Tales National Advisory Board members Larry Danielson and Steve Katsinas have taken new professional positions recently.

Danielson is now head of the Modern Languages and Intercultural Studies Department at

Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green. He previously was an associate professor of English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign who specialized in folklore studies.

Katsinas was named an associate professor in the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Toledo in Ohio. His work will center on teaching graduate courses in the administration of higher education. He previously was a faculty member in the Department of Educational Administration and Higher Education at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater.

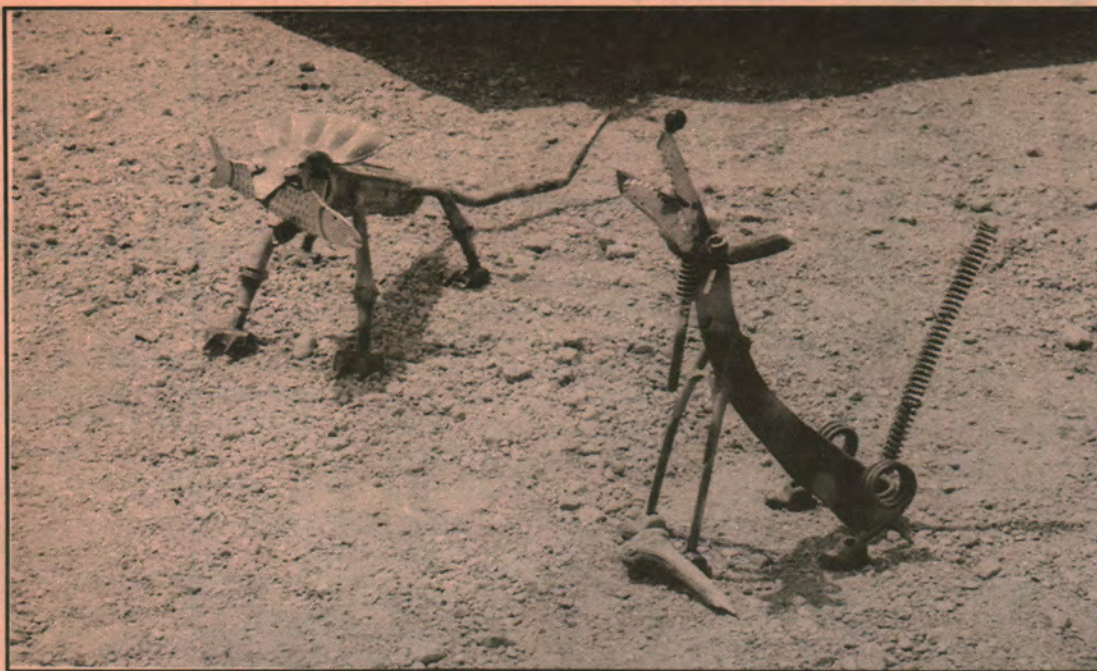
Peace rose marks 50th anniversary

Since its introduction amidst the destruction of World War II, the Peace rose has been regarded by rosarians and gardeners alike as "the rose of the century." The 50th anniversary of Peace—to be honored in San Francisco, Calif., at the spring 1995 dedication of a new Peace Garden donated by

All-America Rose Selections—provides an opportunity to regard the events of a terrible war in a unique and optimistic light.

In 1939, distinguished French nurseryman Francis Meilland discovered a remarkable rose he had nurtured from a single seed. Realizing the beginning of WWII posed threats to the flower's fate, Meilland dispatched seedlings to growers in Italy, Germany and the United States. Cuttings addressed to Pennsylvania grower Robert Pyle almost never made it. As tanks plowed the earth around Lyons, the parcel was slipped aboard the last plane to leave Lyons before France was occupied by Nazi forces in 1940.

Its official christening was marked by a flurry of doves at the Pacific Rose Society's spring show, while half-way around the world the Allied forces claimed Berlin. The bloom's next showing came on V-E Day, May 8, 1945, at the first United Nations Conference in San Francisco, when each of the 49 original U.N. delegates was presented with a Peace rose and a message of world harmony.



Bergbower's homemade menagerie of metal animals include iguanas and dogs.

'One's junk is another's art'

By Vanessa Faurie

Old tools and discarded pieces of machines tend to accumulate on any working farm worth its salt. So Joe Bergbower of rural Newton, Illinois, got the idea to turn that junk into unique metal sculptures and toys.

For several years, he's been hand-crafting various metal animals from coils and rims and rotors and whatever else he happens to run across. The result may be a bird, a dog, an iguana or perhaps a coyote or a roadrunner. Many also come equipped with moveable and/or interchangeable parts so they can change their stance or even their expression before your eyes. And now

Bergbower has begun to clothe the figures.

"I didn't always do that," he said as he was removing the clothing from the roadrunner. He sat on the back of his pickup truck at the north edge of the Ste. Marie bridge while he waited with more than a hundred people on the bridge and the banks of the Embarras River for the rafts to come by in the first-ever raft race in this small southeastern Illinois town, first settled by the French in 1836. "Now look here when I put his clothes back on him. I think they give him some character. So I started dressin' 'em up."

On the ground and in the back

of the pickup truck are examples of Bergbower's work. No two are alike. A metal dog sits along the roadside with his head held high and a bone proudly clenched between his saw-blade teeth. Next to him, a large reptile chomps down on a freshly caught wooden fish.

But not everyone readily appreciates the work of the artist. A run-in with the Jasper County Board over the accumulation of his work and material on his property led to Bergbower's attendance at a board meeting.

"I showed 'em the material I used to make things with," he said, "and then I showed 'em things I had made. I asked them whether it was junk or art. Most of the board thought it was junk. But the attorney said, 'Now wait a minute. One man's junk is another's art.'"

Bergbower makes the artistic critters in his garage and sells them at various art shows and fairs around the area.

The items range in price from about \$12 for the small tractors he makes to \$150 for the larger animals that stand about 4 feet high. But the enjoyment he gets from making the sculptures seems to outweigh his entrepreneurial desires. Despite farming 1,000 acres and raising cattle, Bergbower said he always has time to create another addition to his menagerie.

"I can still find the time to do this, because I like to do it," he said, holding up a small green tractor. "I just try to price things so I can get paid for my time. I just love to make these tractors. Takes me about an hour to make one.



Photos by Vanessa Faurie

Bergbower and friend

Author's Note: Just in case you can use it some time, I'm enclosing a copy of a poem I wrote for a non-credit course at the University of Illinois. I think maybe the topic—the Rockford Peaches Girls' Baseball Team of the '40s—might be appropriate for Tales. I'd be delighted if you could use it.

We Saw The Peaches Play

By Janice Bengtson

The late spring afternoon is warm and windy,
Young voices reach me through my wide-open patio door
As the Little Leaguers chatter
From the ball diamond on the school ground.

I remember long-ago days and long-ago games,
The call of the vendors, the smoke wreathing the lights,
The voice of the announcer saying, "Play ball!"
And the pop of the balls into the girls' gloves.
It was a good time.

In the '40s,
When the war and post-war years
Meant gas rationing and limited travel
And we were girls, not boys,
Our dad, who would really have preferred
Seeing the Cubs play,
Took us to see the Peaches play ball.

The stadium had no parking lot,
So everyone parked on the streets
And we sometimes had to walk what seemed like a mile
With plaid wool blankets tucked under our arms
To the stadium with its smells of popcorn
Peanuts and smoke.

We always sat in the same section
Straight up from third base while the PA system
Blared organ music and the Peaches warmed up
Right in front of us.

My sister and I loved those games.
We yelled as loudly as anyone else,
"Mow the lawn!" "Hit it way out!"
And Snookie was at shortstop
And Dottie was loose-limbed on first base,
And Rose ("She's really getting old," Dad said)
Was the best catcher in the business.

Two of my friends were bat girls—Diane and Ida.
They wore uniforms like the Peaches,
Walked out on the field to pick up bats,
And had balls autographed by the players.
Sometimes the Peaches even played catch with them.

For a few days after each game
My sister and I would play catch in the alley,
Pretending we were bat girls or even Peaches.
Often we could persuade Dad to hit us some balls
After he came home from work
And I remember the sting of the ball in my mitt
When I would catch one of his hard-hit flies.

I dreamed of joining the Peaches,
Of hitting game-winning runs, of catching wild flies.
But by the time I was old enough
The attendance at games was dwindling,
The games in Chicago were more exciting and accessible,
And the league was on its way out.

Now the Little Leaguers have left the diamond.
The parents have picked up their blankets
And the pop of the balls and the young voices
Are heard no longer.
Dusk has settled over the school ground.

CLASS WORK

Students learn about Great Depression through interviews

Editor's Note: The following two stories were written in a U.S. history class at Sullivan High School in Sullivan, Ind. Teacher Karen Sheffler asked students to interview people who had lived through the Great Depression. These two articles were then printed in the Sullivan Daily Times. Manager Tom Gettinger then sent them on to Tales with Sheffler's permission.

Other teachers are encouraged to send editorial material from their students for possible publication in Tales that would fit its editorial tone. Send to Tales, R.R. 2, Box 401, Urbana, IL 61801.

By Dan Shryock

Butch Shryock was born on March 18, 1920, to a hardworking family in a rural town called Graysville, Ind. It was a small town with no railroad, no strangers and three stores. He was the second born son with five more children soon to come. Butch was 9 years old when the stock market crashed.

Growing up, he lived in a small four-room house heated by coal and lit by electric lights hanging from the ceilings.

His father, Everette, was the custodian at the local high school, which back then was a very good job. Everette brought home \$75 a month.

Butch's mother, Sarah Monk Shryock, was a homemaker. Taking care of five boys and two girls was a full-time job. She was a large, jolly woman who was very special to her family and loved throughout the community.

During the Depression, Butch and his brothers helped their father keep the school clean and tidy by sweeping, dusting, mopping and emptying waste paper baskets. Of course, they weren't paid, but their father really needed the help and was greatly appreciative of their hard work.

When it came time for these hardworking people to eat, their

meals were bland and monotonous, but Butch's mother was good with what she had. She used 25 pounds of flour a week, and they grew 15 to 20 bushels of potatoes a year. It seemed like at every meal the family ate beans, bread and potatoes. The small country stores were only visited when an item could not be grown or traded. These stores were owned by locals who dealt in everything from gunpowder to garlic.

From the time Butch was 10 years old, he bought his own clothing. He used the money he made from baling hay for his uncle. Each year he'd go through three to four pairs of overalls, three or four blue shirts and one or two pairs of work shoes. Since Everette had a good job, none of the boys had to wear used clothing.

In the fall and winter, Butch would get up at 6 a.m. and eat his oats and canned milk and then be at school by 7. He would help his dad until school started at 8:30; after school he would either have basketball practice or help out again. He had no chores at home since they lived in town.

Saturday was a day of work, but then the evening was spent relaxing with the family. The only entertainment came from the Farm Bureau meetings. While the farmers were meeting, the children would play whistle or "holler" in the graveyard. In the summer, the family would jump in their only car and go to an outdoor movie.

On Dec. 7, 1941, Butch and his new wife, Rhoda, were preparing for a Sunday dance in their Graysville apartment when they heard the news of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. He knew he would be going to war very soon to join three of his brothers already there.

Soon the government was asking people to ration. He, like everyone else, had food and gas stamps. This didn't bother him because he had a good job and didn't have to go to war after

all because of a health problem. His wife was also doing well. She worked at a bomb factory in Terre Haute.

Finally, in September 1945, the war was over. Butch didn't lose a brother but his mother did pass away. He was very glad the war was over; so were the rest of the people on Wabash Avenue he partied with on that glorious day.

By Jason Ewing

On October 29, 1929, banks closed and the stock market crashed. The stock markets, however, were not the only things that crashed that October; so were the hopes and dreams of a young mother named Fleda Riggle Gilbreath.

At 20 years of age, Fleda had a husband named Gene. Along with her mother-in-law, the family lived in a small four-room house in rural Turman Township, west of Sullivan, Ind.

To heat the small house, Fleda burned wood that was cut from any wooded area close to where they lived. Since they didn't have electricity, they used kerosene lamps to light the house and make the nightly trips to the privy, or the outhouse as it's commonly called.

Because outhouses did not

While the farmers were meeting, the children would play whistle or "holler" in the graveyard.

empty into a sewage system, it was necessary to contact "honey-dippers" to clean out the privy when needed. They performed this job at night because of the odor. Whenever the job was completed, lime was added for future use.

The family only took baths once a week. Since they didn't have a water heater, water was heated in an old cook stove in a reservoir (a tank on the end of the stove). A wash pan was used to wash hands and face daily.

A wash tub was used for bathing on Saturday nights in the kitchen. They would close the kitchen door and bathe in the tub behind the stove where it was warmer. The same water was used for every person in the house. The baby would usually bathe first, then each person according to age.

Since money was tight, most of the family's clothes were homemade or hand-me-downs. Fleda even sewed Clarence's shirts and underwear. During this time period, material sold for only 25 cents a yard. She also knitted socks out of yarn and darned them as many times as possible before they were beyond repair.

Another expense was buying shoes. They were only bought when the ones they owned were totally worn out. An unfortunate event occurred one day when Fleda took her daughter Mary to town to buy her a pair of shoes for \$1.98. Fleda had \$3 with her, but she pulled her handkerchief out of her pocket and the money fell out of her pocket when she was not looking. Mary went home barefooted without the new shoes.

Fleda had four children within six years. Her second son, Bill, was ill quite often, so he stayed with Mrs. Gilbreath, Clarence's mother.

Doctors made house calls for 50 cents a mile and charged \$25 for a birthing fee with an additional charge of \$10 for the use of ether. Most mothers gave birth at home

instead of a hospital with only a doctor and a midwife present. Occasionally, Fleda worked as midwife.

Hog butchering days are quite vivid in Fleda's memory. They butchered once a year; but if a family was fortunate enough to have an extra hog, this event occurred twice a year.

The family jumped out of bed at 4 o'clock in the morning and started the fire to heat water to the boiling point. When it was boiling, it was poured into a wooden rain barrel. The men then killed the hog, cleaned it and scalded the carcass in the barrel.

Whenever that was done, they scraped the hair off with a sharp butcher knife and cut the body into parts. The hog was processed with a mixture of different ingredients, then trimmed down to the good meat. The scraps were made into sausage.

Another girlhood memory for Fleda was watching the hobos ride the rails; her brother even rode them. She remembers that many of the hobos came to the house asking for food. Fleda always fed them because she was frightened not to.

The worst problem during the Great Depression was the lack of money. The country's entrance into World War II did not really help. Clarence went to induction, but the armistice was signed before he was called to duty.

The family was renting Harvey Bicknell's farm when the war was announced. Like everyone else, they received rationing books on sugar and various items that were rationed. To avoid some shortages, Clarence grew and smoked his own tobacco.

Luckily, none of Fleda's immediate family was inducted into the war, but some nephews of Clarence were. When the war ended, one by one they all came home.

Everyone breathed a sigh of relief when the soldiers came home alive. The war was over. The Depression was over. A happier time could begin.

This day is called the feast of Crispian:
 He that outlives this day, and comes safe home
 Will stand a tip-toe when the day is named,
 And rouse him at the name of Crispian,
 He that shall live this day, and see old age,
 Will yearly show on the vigil feast his neighbors
 And say 'Tomorrow is Saint Crispian:'
 Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars.
 And say 'These wounds I had on Crispian's day.'
 Old men forget: yet all shall be forgot,
 But he'll remember with advantages
 What feats he did that day ...
 And Crispian Crispian shall ne'er go by,
 But we in it shall be remembered—
 We few, we happy few, we band of brothers ...
 And gentlemen in England now abed
 Shall think themselves accursed that they were not here,
 And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
 That fought with us upon Saint Crispian's Day.

from Shakespeare's King Henry V's pep talk to his greatly outnumbered soldiers as they prepared to do battle with the overconfident and badly generalled French in the day-long Battle of Agincourt on October 25, 1415

That scene from Shakespeare used to come to mind when I thought of Marines spearheading the landings at Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Bourgainville, Siapan, Tinian, Iwo Jima, Okinawa ... or the Army storming the beaches at Anzio and the combined American, British and Canadian Allied forces, aided by French Resistance fighters, mounting the massive invasion of Normandy.

And it still does. When I was reading *The Longest Day* by Cornelius Ryan in preparation for attending the 50th anniversary commemoration of the Normandy Invasion this past June, I read where at least two men were thinking of those famous lines as they were heading for the beach that morning.

Ryan writes about officers giving their men last-minute speeches before the invasion as they waited aboard ships stretched in formation for miles along the English Channel. Lt. Col. Elzie Moore, who was headed for Utah Beach with an engineer brigade, didn't have a speech. He had wanted to recite King Henry's speech from Shakespeare's play but could remember no farther than, "Once more unto the breach, dear friends ..." and gave it up.

Maj. C.K. "Banger" King was on the first wave to Sword Beach with the British 3rd Division. He planned to read from the same play and wrote down the lines he wanted. He closed with the passage, "He that outlives this day, and comes safe home/Will stand a tip-toe when this day is named. ..."

That's a stark contrast to Allied

Commander Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower's address to the troops on the eve of the Normandy Invasion in World War II.

"You are about to embark upon the Great Crusade, toward which we have striven these many months," Eisenhower said. "The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of the liberty-loving people everywhere march with you.

"In company with our brave allies and brothers-in-arms on other fronts, you will bring about destruction of the German war machine, the elimination of Nazi tyranny over the oppressed people of Europe, and security for ourselves in a free world.

"Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well trained, well equipped and battle-hardened. He will fight savagely."

Eisenhower was so sure of the German tenacity in the coming battle and so unsure of what he could expect from the troops that he had also prepared a press release announcing Allied withdrawal from Normandy in case the Germans drove the Allies back into the sea. But his troops never saw the release until long after the battle had been won and the war was over.

Instead, Eisenhower concluded by saying, "I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full victory!"

He made no mention of how the survivors would feel in years to come.

The D-Day and World War II veterans in Normandy for the 50th anniversary commemoration of

the invasion on June 6, 1994, may have been "stand(ing) à tip-toe." They were obviously proud of what they had done 50 years ago to preserve the free world and believed that nothing less than full victory should have been acceptable.

But while most of the veterans going back to commemorate the day would agree that their part in the war was the most memorable time of their lives, I never got the feeling that any of them thought anybody should "remember, with advantages, what feats he did that day" or that others should "think themselves accursed" for not having been there.

Many of the veterans on the midnight ferry I took from

Portsmouth, England, to Ouistreham, France, on June 4 were British. And none of them were "stripp(ing) their sleeves and show(ing) his scars." As they waited for a complimentary bottle of Calvados (apple brandy from Normandy) from the French government as a symbolic gesture for those who helped liberate the French, they stood quietly.

When a much younger British paratrooper tried to claim a bottle for himself, they said nothing. He was a bugler who was going to play at the ceremony commemorating the fierce battle for Pegasus Bridge, a necessary objective to protect the eastern flank of the invasion.

"Don't I deserve a drink for

playing me bugle at Pegasus in honor of these brave lads who fought there?" he asked after he'd been denied a bottle and waved at the line of old men behind him. "They (the French) don't have the decency to give me a drink just like the rest of them."

I asked him if he had been there. "Was I there?" he asked. "No, I wasn't there. But then because of all the journey I've done in life, I mean, a bottle of bloody brandy isn't a bugaboo, is it?"

Nobody paid much attention to the man as they stood around talking about their own journeys. If anything, they may have been a bit embarrassed.

One old British paratrooper who had been at Pegasus was standing

D-DAY + 50

Something that



Photo by Ra



had to be done

By Ray Elliott



The unauthorized photos above and at left were taken on D-Day and the days following by a fellow soldier of Henry Berry of St. Joseph, Ill. At top left, veterans return 50 years later for a ceremony at Pointe du Hoc in Normandy.

war told us what was taking place.

While the aging veterans were welcomed everywhere as liberators by the French people, speeches and conversation after conversation expressed the hope and belief that what the World War II generation had fought so hard and had died for would not be forgotten.

"Make sure those kids you teach know what happened here and what it meant," a man said, grasping my hand after a brief conversation in a milling crowd of veterans waiting for the national ceremony at the American Cemetery at Colleville and President Clinton's speech. "It's up to you now."

I sat numbly among the D-Day veterans and thought about that. Some of those kids are interested in knowing what happened and why it was so important. But I've also been told by others that "that doesn't interest me."

President Clinton stood at the podium in front of the D-Day memorial, looking out over nearly 10,000 dead American soldiers, and spoke about what the invasion had meant to the free world. I'd heard his other speech at Pointe du Hoc earlier that morning when the Rangers who had scaled the cliff there on D-Day were being honored.

During the address at the cemetery, Clinton read from a letter Cpl. Frank Elliott had written from England to his wife back in Pennsylvania. The young soldier said he was homesick and missed cheeseburgers. He never got back to eat any. He died on the beach that morning and is buried behind the chapel.

I'd heard my cousin who had landed on Omaha Beach in the same outfit talk about him from the time I was a small boy. I tried to imagine what it had been like 50 years earlier. It was impossible. Only those who were there could really imagine what I was trying.

"Been thinking about you all day," one D-Day veteran wrote on a card to a friend back in the States. "Beach still the same. Different on top."

Not long after the ceremony

was over, one of the Normandy veteran paratroopers who had made a 50th anniversary commemorative jump near Ste. Mere-Eglise the day before talked about wanting people to know and remember what the difference was all about.

"I was supposed to go on (Peter) Jennings this morning," he said.

"I couldn't get to it. But this straw-hat-and-cane show here and the old-men-jumping-out-of-an-airplane bit isn't what this is all about. That just gets the attention.

"I come here every five years and visit these graves and try to let people know how things were here and how important it was. You can't let people forget that. That's what it's all about. I'd come more often, but I can't afford it."

The difficulty in getting it across to students and letting people know just how important it was came across loud and clear after I returned to the States and started another year teaching high school English and journalism. A fellow teacher who accompanied me on the trip, relayed a conversation he had with a colleague.

"So I hear you went to France to celebrate the war," the colleague said to him. "I didn't know you went in for that kind of stuff."

"It wasn't exactly a celebration," he said. "It was a commemoration of the liberation of France. I've never been involved in the military or that kind of thing, but it was extremely interesting. And the French people were greatly appreciative to the veterans for what they had done."

"Yeah, right," the colleague said. "It's still celebrating war."

The old paratroopers and the other veterans who made the trip once more wouldn't agree. Nor would the people of Normandy. In another parade and ceremony I heard about after D-Day, one whole town turned out to honor a veteran from Florida who had taken a round in the spine in his first few steps on Utah Beach, was evacuated and had never been a part of any parades or commemorations.

As the man was wheeled off the tour bus, the grateful citizens of

the town applauded wildly and gave him wine and flowers. After the parade through town, the people and bus loads of veterans went to the nearby cemetery where more than 4,000 soldiers were buried. In front of each cross or Star of David stood a well-dressed child with hands folded in front of him or her.

The mayor addressed the group and asked each child to promise that on the 100th anniversary of D-Day each of them still alive would make sure that there was a 100th anniversary commemoration of the D-Day Invasion that liberated the French people from the German occupation so it would always be known and commemorated beyond this time. After they promised, the children opened their hands, and each released a white dove.

On another day, I observed the commemoration from a table in a small bar and restaurant in the seaside town of Grandcamp-Maisy. Across the tiny room against the wall sat the present-day imitators of the D-Day veterans, wearing World War II-vintage uniforms and gear. They drove the authentic World War II vehicles parked outside. These men and women were into the spirit of the war as much as they would ever be able. Make-believe MPs even occasionally directed traffic.

At the next table, two D-Day veterans with airborne insignas on their baseball caps and jackets ate, drank small glasses of draft beer and talked to their sons or brothers with them. Two women, apparently the wives of the veterans, occupied a table near the door. A French man sat alone to the left of the veterans. Two French women sat at the table behind the American women. And an English couple sat across from the women.

"The mussels will be good here," the English woman looked around at me and said as I pondered my lunch choices aloud. "They'll be fresh. You'll like them."

The two American women had difficulty deciding what they

Continued on page 13

in a small group across the room. "A lot of lads out there was left behind," he said, while emphasizing the commemoration of the event over any celebration. "Young lads."

And some of the lads who weren't left behind were headed for the Normandy coast on a damp, cloudy night similar to the one they had had almost 50 years earlier. Later, they sat at tables together, nursing beers and sharing memories. Many of them never slept during the crossing and were staring off at the Normandy coast as the first gray streaks of light showed in the east.

After the ferry landed in Ouistreham, people headed off for parades and ceremonies through-

out the Norman countryside. Another traveler and I had hooked up with a graying reporter from Florida who had been filing stories from England for nearly a week before D-Day. The stories spotlighted people who had lived through the war.

He planned to do the same thing in France. We drove around the countryside, stopping that first morning at out-of-the way places like the Sunday morning mass in Goustranville, where two British paratroopers who had landed near there 50 years ago were being honored. Cars lined both sides of the narrow road for a quarter of a mile in each direction. The church was filled to capacity. People who had been children there during the

Award-winning filmmaker explores Irish-American heritage in new book

WASHINGTON, D.C.—“Every immigrant is a citizen of two nations, torn between the opportunities of the New World and memories of the Old. But for few is this so true, or so poignant, as for the Irish in America.” Thus begins *Out of Ireland*, a new book by Paul Wagner and Dr. Kerby Miller that explores the history and psychology of Irish immigration to the United States.

Out of Ireland is based on a documentary film funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The film will air on public television in the fall of 1994 or spring of 1995.

Between 1841 and 1926, the population of Ireland fell from 8.5 million to only 4.25 million. Driven to tyranny, oppression, famine and dreams of glory, 7 million people made the journey to America in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. Today, more than 44 million Americans can trace all or part of their ancestry back to the Emerald Isle.

Out of Ireland breathes life into the statistics through personal stories of eight historical families whose personal letters and memoirs, unearthed through years of research in Ireland and North America, communicate individual hardships and successes even as they illuminate the patterns of experience that are common to all.

Illustrated with compelling, rarely seen photographs collected for the film, *Out of Ireland* is more than a chronicle of hardships. It is an inspirational story because those who survived typhus and cholera on the “coffin ships” or in waterfront slums and quarantine camps were the seeds of America’s greatness.

Irish farmers, lumbermen and railroad and canal workers drove the frontier ever westward. Two hundred thousand Irish immigrants fought in the American Civil War. Irish entrepreneurs laid the foundation of American prominence in agriculture, business, the

labor movement, culture and politics.

More than anything, *Out of Ireland* is the history of the American experience: how a group of people gave up all they knew and loved to create something better.

It is about the profound historical and psychological consequences that belong to this nation of immigrants—the bitter-sweet paradox of the American dream.

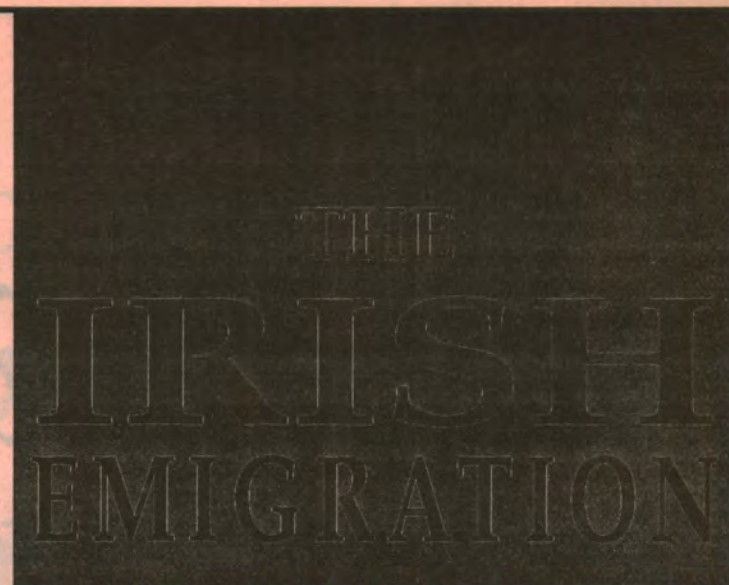
“I have everything that would tend to make life comfortable,” wrote Maurice Wolfe, a young Irish immigrant and a sergeant in the U.S. Army, “but still at night when I lay in bed, my mind wanders across the continent and over the Atlantic to the hills of Cratloe. In spite of all I can never forget home, as every Irishman in a foreign land can never forget the land he was raised in.”

Paul Wagner is the Academy Award-winning documentary filmmaker who produced and directed the film version of *Out of Ireland*. He has produced numerous films on American history and culture for broadcast on public television stations and for presentation at the Smithsonian Institution. He won his Oscar for co-producing *The Stone Carvers*, a film about Italian-Americans who are artisans at the Washington National Cathedral.

Kerby Miller is a professor of history at the University of Missouri—Columbia whose extensive research on Irish history and immigration is the basis for much of the film. Miller is also the author of the award-winning 1987 book *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America*.

Out of Ireland retails for \$24.95. The hardbound, 9" x 11," 132-page book features 100 duotone photographs. ISBN 1-880216-25-6.

The book is available in bookstores and gift shops, and through Elliott & Clark Publishing, P.O. Box 21038, Washington, DC 20009; telephone (202) 387-9805; facsimile (202) 483-0355.



By Clare Barkley

The story of Irish emigration is one of political, religious and economic oppression which resulted in nearly 300 years of exile for millions of Irishmen. Unique among all nationalities of immigrants to North America, the Irish saw their emigration as involuntary and unwilling. Through their letters home, whether reporting hardship or success, runs the thread of heartbreaking homesickness for Ireland. Generations of immigrants express enduring loyalty to Ireland through their words and actions.

On July 12, 1690, an event took place which ended the 150-year struggle of Irish Catholics to resist conquest. In the lush and beautiful valley of the Boyne River about 50 miles north of Dublin, the Protestant army led by King William of Orange defeated the Irish armies of the deposed Catholic English king, James II. English Protestant rulers since Henry VIII had tried

again and again to conquer Ireland.

Following the victory at Boyne, the Protestant colonists and the British government instituted Protestant Ascendancy. Nearly all land in Ireland was confiscated and given to about 10,000 Protestant families. Some Catholics were fortunate enough to lease land that had once belonged to them and their ancestors, paying ever-increasing rents and risking eviction. If a farmer fell behind in his rent or if the landlord found that grazing sheep and cattle was more profitable, the farmer was evicted and his house leveled. Sometimes entire villages were leveled to the ground to make way for pastures and to rid the landlord of impoverished tenants.

Most of the dislocated Catholics were desperately poor subtenants and laborers who rented only a few acres on which to raise potatoes to feed their families.

Another component of Protestant Ascendancy was the establishment of Protestantism as the legal religion although 75 percent of the population was Catholic. The poor Catholic farmers were forced to pay tithes to the Protestant Church of Ireland.

In order to assure the endurance of Protestant Ascendancy, certain Penal laws were passed. These laws forbade Catholics to purchase land, to inherit land on equal terms with Protestants, to vote or hold political office, to engage in certain trades or professions or even to live inside the walls of towns without paying special fees. Catholics were forbidden to own or carry firearms or even to possess a horse valued at more than 5 pounds. Nearly all Catholic churches were destroyed or confiscated, and many bishops and priests fled or lived in fear of arrest and execution.

These conditions prevailed for about 100 years, when many of



Photo courtesy of the Bostonian Society

The Charlestown, Mass., police force of Station No. 15 in the early part of the 20th century. As the Irish entered city and state politics, patronage jobs allowed workers to sidestep prejudice in the private sector.

the penal laws were relaxed. Catholics could practice their religion and own land, but Protestant Ascendancy firmly controlled the soil and the government. British troops numbering 25,000 were permanently based on the island.

The dilemma of Irish Catholics was to emigrate and perhaps to prosper overseas or to stay in Ireland and fight for freedom. The letters of the Devereux family reveal the pain and uncertainty of such choices. The Devereux' Norman ancestors had settled in County Wexford in the 12th century, amassed large land holdings and enjoyed elite status. Now they were deprived of their property and were working as tenant farmers.

John Devereux emigrated to America and worked as a dance instructor. Walter stayed at home and persuaded his blacksmith neighbor to forge long steel pikes to be used as weapons in a rebellion of the United Irishmen. The growing strength of the United Irishmen was of such concern to the Protestant landlords that the British army instituted further cruel repressions assisted by the Loyal Orange Order, a new group dedicated to preserving Ascendancy.

The rebellion that Walter helped organize culminated in the Battle of Vinegar Hill, which was led by Catholic priests. The United Irishmen suffered crushing defeat at Vinegar Hill, a spot about 15 miles from the Devereux cottage.

Catherine Devereux, the mother, referred to the event as "the wicked rebellion." Her husband died in prison, a son James was killed in battle, and Walter fled, supposedly to the West Indies, but was never again heard from. In 1800 Catherine wrote to John, by now a prosperous store owner in Utica, N.Y., "If we don't get some relief, the Catholics can't live here." She sent her youngest sons, Thomas, Luke and Nicholas, to join John in America.

Many Irish fugitives from the 1798 rebellion emigrated and prospered. They were the first of the great waves of Irish immigrants and cemented the notion that the Irish immigrant was a political exile, a theme repeated again and again in Irish Catholic culture. The belief that such emigration would cease if Ireland were free led to generations of support for Irish-American

nationalist organizations

Irish Catholics who had been evicted from their land settled in clachans, rural enclaves of a few dozen to several hundred thatched cottages surrounded by fields on which farmers raised potatoes to feed their families. These settlements were not villages as they had no shops, markets, churches or public buildings. Each clachan contained families with special skills such as weaving, shoemaking or thatching, so the clachans were self-sufficient, though desperately poor. Most clachans also contained the traditional musicians, storytellers, singers and poets who brought joy and meaning to their lives and preserved their customs and beliefs in relative freedom from government interference.

But the strange events of August 1845 changed all this. An elderly farmer described the events in this way:

A mist rose up out of the sea, and you could hear a voice talking near a mile off across the stillness of the earth. It was the same for three days or more, and then when the fog lifted, you could begin to see the tops of the potato stalks lying over as if the life was gone out of them. And that was the beginning of the great trouble and famine that destroyed the land.

For the succeeding five years the potato crop failed. Roughly three-fourths of the people in rural Ireland were wholly or largely dependent on potatoes for survival. The result was mass starvation. Landlords evicted tenants from their cottages because they could not pay the rent and so the landlords could enlarge cattle pastures. They continued to export beef and other food products during the famine.

Sir Charles Trevelyan, director of the British government's Irish relief measures, wrote, "The great evil with which we have to contend is not the physical evil of the famine, but the moral evil of the selfish, perverse and turbulent character of the Irish people."

The *London Times* declared that Ireland's catastrophe was "a great blessing ... a valuable opportunity for settling the vexed question of Irish ... discontent." The *Times* advocated the replacement of evicted Irish Catholics with imported English and Scottish farmers, who would be thrifty, loyal and Protestant.

The starving people quickly



Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress

Two Irish countrywomen read a letter from an emigrant relative in America, 1902.

filled the poorhouses or wandered the land, frantically looking for food and spreading typhus and cholera. During the five years of the Great Famine, more than a million Irishmen perished.

Once again, Irish Catholics looked to the West for hope. Hundreds of thousands of Irish in North America sent money or passage tickets to bring relatives to America. As a result, more than 2.5 million emigrated, mostly to the United States. In only 10 years, 30 percent of Ireland's population left the island.

Passage was perilous for those lucky enough to obtain help from relatives in America. The first leg of the journey was made in cattle boats across the Irish Sea to Liverpool where many were tricked out of their passage money, and women were seduced into the city's notorious brothels. Those who made it out of the Liverpool dockyards were put into small, unseaworthy ships with poorly trained crews who were unconcerned with supplying water, medical assistance, cooking and sanitary facilities for their malnourished, diseased passengers. During "Black '47" the mortality rate on these "coffin ships" was 40 percent. Many more died in "fever sheds," quarantined camps.

The surviving immigrants were forever affected by the Great Famine. An Irishman in America described it 50 years later: "... weeds had full possession of the soil, and ... blossomed beautifully. (Their) yellow blossoms, glistening in the sun, ... made a picture in my mind that

often stands before me—a picture of Death's victory, with all Death's agents decorating their fields with the baleful laurels."

Memories of the horrible Famine and hard times in America convinced the immigrants even more firmly that they were exiled, and their accounts fueled the fires of Irish-American nationalism in generations to come.

Letters written from America often exaggerated the advantages Irish immigrants could expect here, but compared to conditions at home, America did indeed seem wonderful to the Famine survivors even though most worked at the bottom of the economic ladder. Irish-American priests and politicians encouraged immigrants to settle on farms, but despite their agricultural heritage, few had the skills to be farmers or the capital to acquire farms.

Despite low wages, Irish immigrants sent money back to their relatives to improve their lot at home or to bring them to America. According to historian Arnold Schier's calculations, the Irish in America sent more than \$260 million home in the late 19th century.

Prejudice against Irish Catholic immigrants was widespread in America. The Irish were frequently exploited, paid poor wages or not paid at all. Worker uprisings resulted in bosses driving the Irish workers away. Advertisements for workers often included the advice "No Irish need apply." The Irish response was to set it to music, and "No Irish Need Apply" was the most popular song of the 1870s. Songs

and music were important expressions of almost every condition the Irish endured or emotion they felt.

As the Irish entered politics, they were fiercely loyal to their own and benefited from such machines as Tammany Hall. Obtaining patronage jobs and contracts allowed Irish workers to sidestep Yankee prejudice in the private sector. They became policemen, firemen, gas workers or construction workers for firms that did business with city government.

By the early 20th century, Irish Democrats were a political force: "Big Tim" Sullivan in New York, "Bathhouse John" Coughlin in Chicago, John "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald in Boston and the Pendergast brothers in Kansas City. Al Smith, who had turned Tammany Hall into a champion of housing, factory safety and other reforms to benefit the American working class, was soundly defeated in the 1928 presidential election. The success of the Irish politician remained rooted in city and state government until the election of John Fitzgerald Kennedy in 1960.

Irish women immigrants generally fared better than men in America. They worked in textile mills, laundries and as domestic servants in the homes of middle- and upper-class homes, often saving several thousand dollars before they quit jobs to get married. Their prospects for marriage were much better in America, and they could choose their own husbands.

In late 19th century Ireland, women could not choose their own husbands, and few were allowed to marry at all. Before the Famine, Irish farmers practiced "partible inheritance," dividing land among sons, who could then provide for a family if they were willing to subsist on potatoes, the only crop that could provide enough nourishment from smaller and smaller farms.

After the Famine, the small land holdings were inherited intact by the oldest son. Younger sons emigrated. Thus, there were few opportunities even for arranged marriages in Ireland. Because of such dismal circumstances at home, the waves of unmarried young women who emigrated saw the venture as an escape to better employment and better marriage prospects rather than exile. The Irish are the only

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Thunder 'n' Mud

BY
RAY
ELLIOTT

Embarras River raft race takes area by storm

When Leon Geiger approached Ste. Marie, Ill., businessmen Steve Shipman and Don Gelz in January '94 about holding a raft race on the Embarras River in the summer, Geiger had already been thinking about the idea for "a couple of years." He thought it "would be fun to get a bunch of people to race down the river" a few miles, give a few prizes for the winners and then have a party for everybody.

"They jumped on that (the idea) right away," Geiger said. "I just thought it would be something if—well, just a lot of fun."

In the following weeks, Shipman talked with Clete Kraus, who owns property on the Embarras River in the Bend area southwest of Ste. Marie in the southeast part of the state, about using "The Boar's Nest," a cabin Kraus has built on the banks of the river. He agreed to let the cabin be used for the party after the race, billed as "Thunder on the Embarras," had finished up just below the hill.

After that, Frank Geiger, Leon's brother and partner in farming and a tavern, Don Kraus, Clete's brother, Gelz, and Mark Shaffer all got involved in organizing the event. It included the race on a 10-mile course down the river from northwest of Ste. Marie to "The Boar's Nest," an awards ceremony and a hog roast and dance there later.

"They got the job done," Jason Geiger, Leon's son, said the day of the race. "But it wasn't organized. Nobody knew what anybody else was doing."

"Jason just didn't know what was going on," Frank later said, then smiled. "We all knowed what we wuz doin'."

Knowing what they were doing was decided early. That was part of the fun. To help cover expenses and pay prizes, a \$10 entry fee per raft was set. All rafts, it was agreed, had to be homemade—barrels, plastic jugs or buckets, styrofoam, innertubes, plywood and anything else laying around the house or the farm could be used. But nothing factory-built would be eligible to compete.

Each team would consist of four to six people with at least one member of the opposite sex

per team. All team members had to be at least 18 years old or have a legal guardian aboard the raft and have a personal life-raft device.

Other rules the group agreed upon also helped establish a safe race and guaranteed garbage wouldn't be dumped in the river and everybody would have fun. Prizes of \$100 for first place, \$50 for second and \$25 for third were announced. Everything then had to be scheduled and publicized.

"Steve's (Shipman) wife, Connie," Geiger said, "did a lot of the artwork, the posters and the maps. She did quite a bit of the running."

With everyone having full-time jobs or businesses to run, it was necessary to have someone available to doing the running and get the raft race from an idea to the real thing, Geiger said.

State regulations almost stopped the race before the running started, though. When Geiger first approached the state about the race, the game warden in Jasper County told him he couldn't hold the race. Each raft, the warden said, would have to get individual certification since rafts were considered water craft because of a new law that had just gone into effect in 1994.

But the game warden finally suggested that the race might qualify for a regatta or boat-race permit. Geiger applied and was given one with no problems.

"I thought there'd be like 15 or 20 at the most," he said, chuckling at the thought of the regatta permit.

But like the several hundred spectators who came to the race and the party for the fun of it, people started planning to build a raft to enter. A Huck Finn-like sense of adventure seemed to come alive after the race was publicized and continued until the race was over.

A month before the July 16 race, 35 rafts had already been entered. By race day, 85 separate rafts had entered, but only 82 of every imaginable design ran the 10-mile course in low water.

At the bridge over the Embarras just north of Ste. Marie, a Jasper County deputy sheriff directed traffic and a couple hundred or so people stood



Photos by Vanessa Faurie

Homemade rafts of all sorts make their way down the Embarras River for the first "Thunder on the Embarras."

looking up river for the first raft to come around the bend. With the water low, sandbars jugged out into the river. People lined the banks on both sides of the river; others waded in the shallow water or walked along the bank and around the bend.

"Hey, what you doin' down here?" somebody called out and the echo bounced along the river in both directions. "Want a beer?"

"Sure thing," a voice replied. "It's good to see you."

Similar conversations took place wherever people met. Strangers became friends for the day. Although many people were drinking beer or sodas and snacking, the river was free of human litter.

"Trash was the main thing the game warden was worried about," Geiger said later, explaining that each raft was required to carry a trash bag to collect cans, paper and garbage. "And the people on the rafts didn't throw anything in the river. The river



didn't have one cigarette. Everyone was really responsible."

When the first raft rounded the first bend where only a few people stood, somebody pointed and hollered, "There they are."

As the rafts floated by on milk jugs, oil drums and anything else that wouldn't sink, powered by bicycles, foot paddles and oars, a cheer or a wave greeted each one. The rafts helped create a sense of peacefulness as they drifted slowly down the river.

At the ceremony later in the evening, the Don Kraus team was

awarded the \$100 first place award, based on time, in a raft that had team members side by side rowing in unison. Bob Gangloff's team came in second and Grady Herman and Jamie Booth's third. Additionally, the Embarras Management Association, which is an agency headed by Joe Bergbower of Newton that wants to clear the river channel, gave plaques for the slowest raft, the ugliest raft and the skimpiest bathing suit on a raft.

The job of putting the race together to get to that ceremony and the hog roast and dance required securing the proper liability insurance, obtaining permission to enter and cross another's property, soliciting donations from area merchants and farmers to help pay the costs of the event, which "just about" broke even.

Area media provided adequate coverage both before and after the event that resulted in some 1,200 people attending. A final move by Geiger that helped the race in the long run was inviting

the county sheriff's department.

"I wanted them," Geiger said. "There were some people who didn't think when I did that it was the right thing to do. But they're all glad I did now."

People were glad the sheriff's department was present at the event because a young woman from California was found dead along the river bank upstream the next afternoon, apparently murdered by someone, still unknown, during the post-race

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D-Day

Continued from page 9

would like because they didn't speak French. And they didn't like it much when the waitress, who didn't speak English, wasn't explaining what was available.

"These menus should be in English," the louder of the two said. "How do they expect us to read these menus? We're American."

After pointing out their orders on the menu and then eating a sandwich and fries, the women ran into another problem figuring the correct amount due. After several minutes of talking loudly to each other about the check, one of the gray-haired women said, "I need some help with this. I don't trust these people."

The small French woman at the next table stood and said, "Here, I will help." She looked at the check, counted out the exact amount from a pile of bills and pushed the rest of the money toward the woman before returning to the corner table.

"There's finally a French person who knows how to treat an American," the American woman said. "It's about time."

The French woman sat silently.

As the late-afternoon lunch crowd thinned out, an American couple retired and living in France took the seats earlier occupied by the English couple. A short time later, the French woman asked them if they would like a glass of wine and got glasses for them when they agreed.

'You'd like to think that people would see the importance of what the men did here.'

The French woman said she had just returned from a three-week holiday in the United States and had come to Normandy from her Paris home to commemorate the 50th anniversary of her people's liberation. She had lived in Normandy in her youth.

"My father was among 1,000 officers that took a big boat called *Sirocco*, and this boat was supposed to go to Dunkerque to England to prepare the D-Day," she said softly with a heavy French accent. "They were torpedoed by Germans. Only four people survived. This was the night between 30 and 31 of May

1940. And I was born on the fifth of June 1940. My father died five days before my birth.

These Frenchmen were going to England to help prepare for an invasion planned for 1942. That invasion was never attempted, but the woman's mother didn't know for a year and a half what had happened to her husband that night.

"One day I met one survivor of this ...," she said, her voice trailing off. "These French people, this generation, knows what happens. And to see Americans and British coming again is very emotional. I come just for D-Day, to see."

Other instances also showed dramatically how far one part of the world has to go to achieve the kind of world people like the French woman's father and the thousands of veterans thought they were fighting and dying for 50 years ago. The reporter from Florida told about another incident that stands out.

His columns ran on the front page of his paper and got so much attention the editors wouldn't go to press until they heard from him. Twice when he hadn't filed a story because the batteries were down on his computer or he hadn't been able to find a workable phone connection, editors back in Florida called in the middle of the French night for him to dictate the stories.

A couple of days after D-Day, he was dictating a column to a young black woman at his newspaper. When he finished, he asked her if she had been reading any of his columns.

"No, I don't pay any attention to that stuff," she said. "That was a white man's war."

He relayed the story with dismay. I never saw the column he was going to write about it. But the reporter, a Korean War combat ranger veteran whose stepfather was buried in the American Military Cemetery in Colleville, wasn't too surprised when he came across that kind of attitude.

"Nobody should be sorry they haven't been in a war or wasn't here 50 years ago," he said, voicing what many of the veterans showed in their eyes. "You'd like to think that people would see the importance of what the men did here, though. The black veterans I talked with didn't think it was just a white man's war."

Nobody wanted to think he went through something as horrible as D-Day and the war

when many men didn't survive and then have no lasting result from it or have nobody care about the sacrifices.

"It's just something that had to be done," veteran after veteran said, more interested in "teach(ing) his son" than "show(ing) his scars." "I'm glad we did it. But nobody should ever have to do it again."

At right: British D-Day veterans on a ferry from England to France. Below: President Bill Clinton greets a four-star general at the ceremony at Pointe du Hoc.



Photo by Jim Lyons



Photo by Ray Elliott

Zippo lighters used in war effort

When the news of the D-Day invasion flashed around the world, every American shared in the renewed hope of complete victory. Those on the homefront continued their contributions to the war effort, no matter how small. Every scrap drive, every ration stamp, every war bond was a blow for freedom.

Zippo lighters played their part in the war effort. When brass and chrome were earmarked for military use only, Zippo manufactured the windproof lighters from steel, and spray-painted them black. The demand for Zippo lighters for soldiers was so great that founder George Blaisdell devoted the entire wartime production output to the armed forces.

He even wrote a fan letter to war correspondent Ernie Pyle, offering to distribute Zippo lighters through Pyle to deserving servicemen stationed overseas. The letter began a warm correspondence between the two men, and Pyle made Blaisdell famous in his column as "Mr. Zippo," writing, "If he only knew how soldiers coveted (Zippo lighters). They'll burn in the wind, and pilots say they are the only kind that will light at extreme altitudes."

Stories about Zippo lighters soon came back from servicemen. One army pilot was able to bring his disabled plane in to a safe landing by using his Zippo to illuminate his instrument panel. Other soldiers told of lifesaving

signal fires lit with Zippos, or potentially fatal bullets stopped by their lighters. Zippos lit campfires, cooked soup in helmets and were treasured talismans for men far from home.

The greatest World War II story of all concerns Ernie Pyle. In 1945, on board the USS Cabot in the South Pacific, Pyle was asked by Dennis Hyde, a young naval officer, what the ship's secret destination was. Pyle borrowed Hyde's Zippo, scratched one word on the bottom, and told him not to look at it until the orders were opened. When the announcement came, Hyde read Pyle's message: "TOYKO." The assault on mainland Japan was underway.

Irish

Continued from page 11

group of immigrants who sent as many women as men.

More than 4 million Irish immigrants who arrived in the late 18th and early 19th centuries found assimilation to be easier than early immigrants had for several reasons. First, the church was well established throughout the country, providing education and continuity. Then the political clout of the Irish Democrats in big cities gave all Irish confidence and improved their chances for work and their working conditions. The Irish were also dominant in labor unions by this time. There were many ethnic charitable and mutual assistance societies to help pave the way for new immigrants.

Still there was a pervasive homesickness for Ireland and the raging need for revenge among the immigrants as well as the American-born Irish. Among the many American nationalist organizations throughout the country was Clan na Gael, a secret revolutionary society. The Fenians, one of the most important nationalist political movements in Ireland, also had large, active divisions in the United States, which at one time raised a military force of 50,000. They planned to return to Ireland to fight, but after meeting defeat in an attempted invasion of the British in Canada, only a few hundred actually went.

Most Irish Catholics in Ireland and in the United States favored the Home Rule movement, but more ardent revolutionaries wanted total independence. The Clan na Gael financed a revolution in Dublin on April 14, 1916, the day after Easter Sunday. About 1,000 rebels seized the post office and other public buildings and proclaimed the creation of an Irish Republic. By the time they surrendered a week later, Dublin was in ruins and 400 people had been killed. The leaders, Patrick Pease, an idealistic schoolmaster, and James Connolly, a socialist labor leader, were executed by a British firing squad along with other leaders of the Easter Rising.

This roused the anger of even the more moderate Home Rule advocates at home and in America. Over the next two years, the Home Rule movement disintegrated, replaced by Sinn Fein, meaning "Ourselves Alone." The goal of Sinn Fein is total Irish independence. In the British election of 1918, Sinn Fein won nearly every seat in Ireland's Catholic constituencies,

but they refused to take seats in the British Parliament. They met in Dublin in 1919 and declared their assembly to be the government of the Free Irish Republic. Meantime the remnants of the Easter rebels and new recruits had formed the Irish Republican Army (IRA).

A fierce guerilla war, financed by \$10 million from Irish-Americans, was fought by the IRA from 1919 to 1921 and eventually forced the British government to the bargaining table. In December 1921 a treaty established the Irish Free State. This treaty was only a partial victory, as six Ulster counties were named "Northern Ireland" and remained part of Great Britain. The struggle to achieve the goal of Sinn Fein—"Ourselves Alone"—continues to this day.

The distinct Irish America of the early immigrants seemed to be vanishing into the general population as the stream of immigrants dwindled from the 1920s through the 1960s. However, historian Dennis Clark says that since the 1960s, "a tremendous cultural revival has occurred." There is renewed interest in Irish traditional dance, music, literature and even in the language. In part, this revival reflects the concern over the current violence in Northern Ireland, but more broadly it is a reflection of the *Roots* phenomenon, a longing for personal identification.

Clark further states, "It is impossible to understand people unless we understand their origins, unless we understand the flagrant and subtle ways in which childhood affects all of us. The imprint of Ireland made the Irish immigrants what they were, and when they brought that to America it made them behave and think in certain ways, but they passed on parts of that imprint to their children, their grandchildren, even to their great-grandchildren."

American-born playwright Eugene O'Neill said, "Nothing says more about me than the fact that I am Irish."

Clare Barkley, originally from Newton, Ill., recently retired from Urbana (Ill.) High School after a 35-year teaching career and is now teaching at the American International School in Lahore, Pakistan, for the 1994-95 academic year.

Raft Race

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party.

"I knew inviting the law was a good idea," Geiger said. "You're better off to have it in for situations like this. It worked out better having the deputies there, especially since the murder happened. Otherwise, there would have been all kinds of wild rumors about what happened."

Besides that unexpected and unfortunate incident, the "Thunder on the Embarras" itself was much bigger than Geiger, Shipman or Gelz ever imagined it would be when they first started talking about it. With all the fun they had, the sense of community they saw, they expect to have another race next July the same time, the same place, in spite of the tragedy.

Other than hoping such things are avoided next time, Geiger doesn't see too much the group would do differently. Seeing more than 80 homemade rafts floating down the river on a hot July day and working together to have a good time seems to be something that will take place next July.



Photo by Vanessa Faurie

Huckleberry Finn would have felt right at home on the Embarras.

"People just kept commenting on how great things were going," Geiger said. "We learned some

things to improve on, but more 'n likely, we'll do it again."

Research team evaluates historic Indiana landscapes

MUNCIE, Ind.—From the public parkways to private gardens, Ball State University researchers are helping Indiana protect its historic landscapes.

Associate landscape architecture professors Anne Henderson and Malcolm Cairns are taking inventory of some 200 historic designed landscapes around the state in a two-year project beginning this summer.

The efforts stem from a national movement and is funded by a \$39,900 grant awarded earlier last year by the State Historic Preservation Review Board.

In the project, Henderson and Cairns will document and evaluate the landscapes and recommend whether they should be protected.

The sites include public parks and parkways, college and university campuses, residential estates and gardens. Some landscapes are as large as the Fall Creek park system in Indianapolis. Others date back to the 1890s.

"You can't protect something if you don't know you have it," Henderson said. "We're going to try to help Indiana communities learn about the value of historic

landscapes."

Landscapes contain remnants of cultural history and can be made clean, safe and useful for recreation, nature studies, environmental awareness and wildlife preservation, she said.

"After deterioration, an intended landscape might look like a natural woods," Cairns said. "The public looks at that and sees a derelict, unsafe environment. The good news is that it can all be reclaimed."

Just as historic buildings can be preserved, a landscape's traditional structure, views and vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns can be protected, Henderson said.

The project focuses on sites designed by master landscape architects and gardeners such as internationally known Frederick Law Olmsted Sr., his sons Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. and John Charles Olmsted, George Edward Kessler and Jens Jensen.

Research also includes the work of nationally prominent landscape architects John Nolen and Harland Bartholomew in Elkhart and Evansville, respectively, and designs by Indiana's Lawrence Sheridan and Frits Loonsten.

Among other things, Henderson and Cairns will review whether the eldest Olmsted's plans for several college campuses were implemented, and they will evaluate work done under federally funded Depression-era programs.

They also will examine residential gardens by Beatrix Ferrand and Ellen Shipman and search for other landscapes designs by Marian Coffman and Rose Nichols.

The researchers will evaluate whether the original plans for the landscapes were implemented. If so, the pair will determine if the sites are sufficiently intact to recommend protection.

In the end, Henderson and Cairns will publish an inventory of Indiana's historic designed landscapes, complete with photos and plans, and list sites that might be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

They also will produce a standard survey form and survey methodology so other historic landscapes can be evaluated.

The statewide project is part of a national movement supported by the National Park Service.

The Last Word

A dog's life isn't always the best

By Vanessa Faurie

Patch never really had fate on his side in his short, occasionally happy life. But I suppose that could just be a matter of perspective.

The handsome, sparsely spotted Dalmatian hadn't lived with us out in the country very long before he disappeared over the Labor Day weekend in 1993. Not wanting to keep him tied up, we had given him the run of the grounds. He slept in a shelter away from the house and could come and go as he pleased—which he did quite successfully until one night when he decided to go and stay gone or else someone decided for him. We never knew.

For the first few days, I kept thinking he was going to come bounding up the lane at any moment, acting as if nothing had happened and expecting his dinner pronto. But every time I looked out the window and scanned the yard, there was no sign of him.

I drove around the area, checked the local animal shelter regularly and put ads in the newspaper. I even distributed fliers throughout the neighborhood asking if anyone had seen him.

There were a few calls from people who were trying to be helpful. But their leads turned into dead ends. Either the dog they had found wasn't Patch, or the dog they had seen in an area was long gone by the time I got there to search myself.

As the days passed, I thought more and more about Patch and what I always thought was the hard luck that seemed to follow him. Or was it that he was really a very lucky dog, always scraping by and pulling through the tough times?

I always had a suspicion that Patch started his life in one of those puppy mills where the breeders care more for the dollar than they do for the dog. Patch made his way to a pet shop where he first won the heart of his original owner. Patch was named for the big, black marking he had over his left eye. What the new owner didn't know at the time she adopted him was that Patch had contracted the parvo virus from

which only a small percentage of puppies even survive. The emotional attachment already firmly in place, she willingly and hopefully forked over the money to the local vet to try and save Patch. Several hundreds of dollars later, he was OK.

Puppyhood was not atypical for Patch. He and his owner endured the growing pains of soiled carpets and chewed up shoes. And like most young dogs, Patch was a silly nut who seemed to feed more on attention than on food. It didn't matter that Patch was growing into his full size quite rapidly; he still jumped up and slobbered the unsuspecting with a slurpy lick if given the opportunity.

By the time Patch came to live with us as a spry 2-year-old, he needed lots of space to expend his frantic energy. When our vet first met Patch, she said, half-jokingly, "He should be OK—so long as you can let him run about 50 miles a day." He also had a recurring problem with his kidneys, which could have been damaged from the parvo he had as a pup. So he had to have a special diet to help keep that malady in check for the most part.

Over time, Patch settled into his new life on the farm. With some discipline, attention and his older adopted brother Duke, a Doberman, to show him the ropes, Patch no longer jumped up on people or their cars and just minded better, in general.

Occasionally, he still found ways to get into trouble. Sometimes he was a partner-in-crime with Duke. The two would steal into the neighbors' yards and bring back the spoils of their raids. For a time, they were into Tupperware and littered our yard with several items of the plasticware line. Another time, stuffed toy animals were the

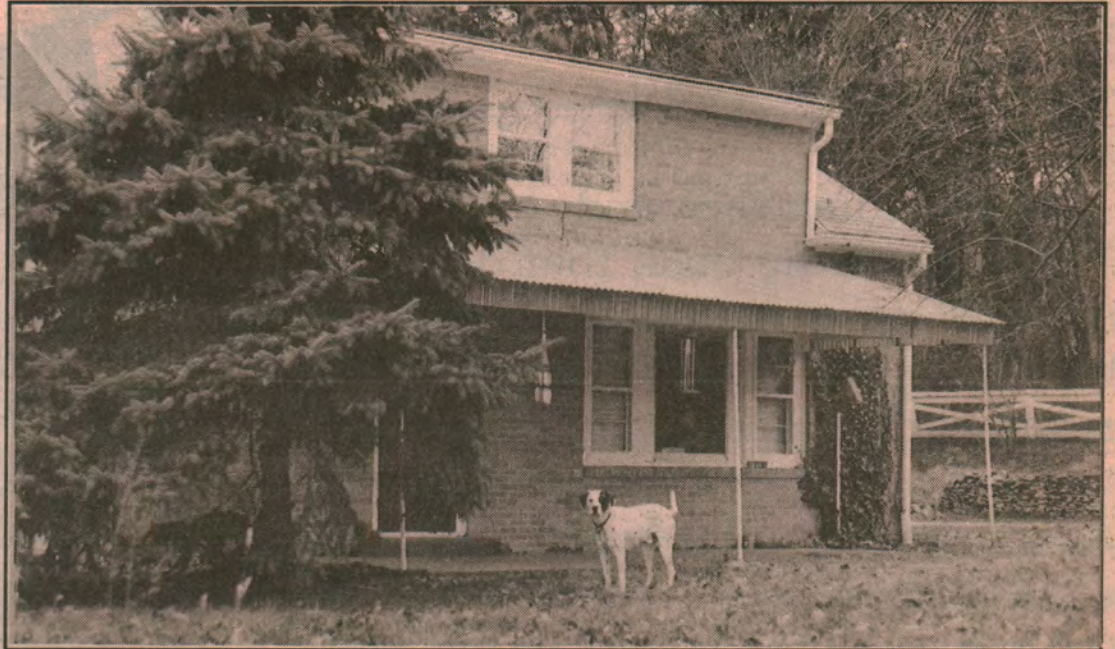


Photo by Laura Koepke

Patch enjoyed his freedom.

plunder *du jour*. Why this stuff was in the neighbors' yards to begin with, I don't know.

Several months after Patch came to live with us, 14-year-old Duke died, and Patch carried on alone. It was the following year that he disappeared.

After more than a month of searching, I had all but given up hope of seeing Patch again. It was the not knowing what had become of him that drove me crazy. I think I would have felt better even if I had learned that he had been hit by a car because at least I would have known what had happened.

I still thought of him often and kept checking with the humane society to appease my glimmer of hope. The people at the society were terrific in giving their support and advice, and I was heartened by their genuine concern for my loss.

Finally, on Oct. 11, a month and a half after Patch disappeared, Dill Seymour of Seymour, Ill., called to ask if I was still looking for my dog. He

had gotten my number from the humane society and had a dog in his garage that fit my description of Patch.

Even though Mr. Seymour was some 20 miles away and across two interstate highways, it sounded promising. The dog in his garage had turned up on his property the night before. He had the same kind of collar and registration tag as Patch had.

With renewed hope and guarded anticipation, my friend and I immediately left our workplace and followed the directions Mr. Seymour had given me to his home. The farther we drove, the more amazed I was going to be if the dog was, in fact, Patch. He would have covered some territory during his adventure.

As we pulled into Mr. Seymour's drive and I got out and walked up the path to the door, I saw a Dalmatian in a pen in the yard and my heart sank. I could tell it wasn't Patch. But I knocked on the door and waited to thank Mr. Seymour for his trouble just the same.

Dill Seymour was an older gentleman who greeted me with a smile. When I pointed to the dog in the pen and told him that it wasn't my dog, his smile grew wider as he said, "Oh, no, that's my dog. Your dog is still in the garage."

And sure enough, when we walked to the garage and opened

the door, out bounded a thinner, but just-as-lively-as-ever Patch. I expected him to look much worse-for-wear, but he was hardly even dirty—which made me wonder if he left home on his own accord in the first place.

It was a tearful reunion, and Mr. Seymour seemed to take just as much pleasure in it as I did. In between my many grateful "thank yous," we talked some, and he said, sadly, that the day happened to be the anniversary of his wife's death.

So we talked some more. He loved and missed her very much. Before my friend, Patch and I headed for home, I told him how I hoped he could take some comfort in knowing that he was able to restore some happiness for someone else.

Patch was back home to stay. It later turned out to be a relatively short-lived homecoming. The following March, Patch became very sick when his kidney problem resurfaced. After several attempts by the vet to change his deteriorating course, his kidneys quit functioning, and we were resigned to having him put down to end his suffering.

I still don't know if Patch was simply an unlucky dog to have had all the troubles he had in his short life or if he was an extremely lucky dog to have kept pulling through.

But I felt lucky to have had him around.

"He should be OK—so long as you can let him run about 50 miles a day."

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