

burn who sold a half interest to N. E. Williams in 1908, but in the following December Mr. Williams became sole owner. Mr. Williams was reported in a history as being "A man of good judgment and an able writer. He is a pronounced prohibitionist and always stands for the clean and honest administration of public affairs."

"Newt" Williams sold the Torchlight about 1912 to J. W. Cox and some six years later he sold to William Hanly.

The Torchlight was bought by the Democrat publishers in 1924 and discontinued.

Shelbina News

In the early 30's Hugh Steger came from St. Louis and started the Shelbina News. This publication had a short life and was being printed outside of Shelbina. Mr. Steger returned the next year and attempted to start the paper again, buying some equipment for printing. Again there were only a few weeks of publication.

Reminiscences

This picture shows the big sign that was placed across the building when it was built in 1896 by the late lamented Fred Haskin and the still-living Fred Naeter.



The two Freds, one being nearly 20 at that time and the other being a year older, bought The Torchlight in 1893. The two acquired the paper from the late Albert Roe and the late E. L. Cooley. Roe was a printer and Cooley was the principal of the public school. The two boys borrowed \$200 from Will Reed, who had recently come into his share of the banker Reed estate and had money on hand. They gave a note for the balance of the purchase price, which was \$800.

The two boys made monthly payments on each account. After a year or two Haskin's stepfather named Howie, received a back pension of \$1700 and set out to lead a Holiness group through the "promised land." Howie had long been a Holiness leader and it was up to Haskin to provide most of the living expense of the three. When the Holiness group set out for Hannibal to enter the "promised land," which was the low, willow-covered marshes across the Mississippi from that city, Haskin asked his step-father for \$400 as back pay on his household account. The reply was that he would pray about it.

Later Haskin went to Hannibal, rented a horse at a livery stable and started out to find the group, which he did after a three-day hunt. Mr. Howie was still praying over the matter and had come to no conclusion, Haskin related.

Haskin was known for his ability to get things done, so after a few more days, he had procured the \$400 and was on his way home. The money eliminated from Howie cleaned up both notes and the publishers started out for new fields to conquer. Will Reed was called upon again and willingly agreed to pay for a vacant lot and a one-story building on Center St. The completed project was kept within a total of \$1500, which was to be paid off in monthly installments of \$100.

A couple of tramps showed up one day and wanted to paint a sign across the building. To start with the letters were bright yellow on a black background. Local painters growled because they were not given a chance to bid. They predicted the lettering would fade out quickly.

After being in the building three years the debt was paid off and Bryan was defeated for the presidency. This combination caused the two publishers to hunt for a buyer and they sold the newspaper and property to Wesley McMurry, a delicate young man, the son of Rev. and Mrs. McMurry, and the brother of the distinguished Bishop McMurry.

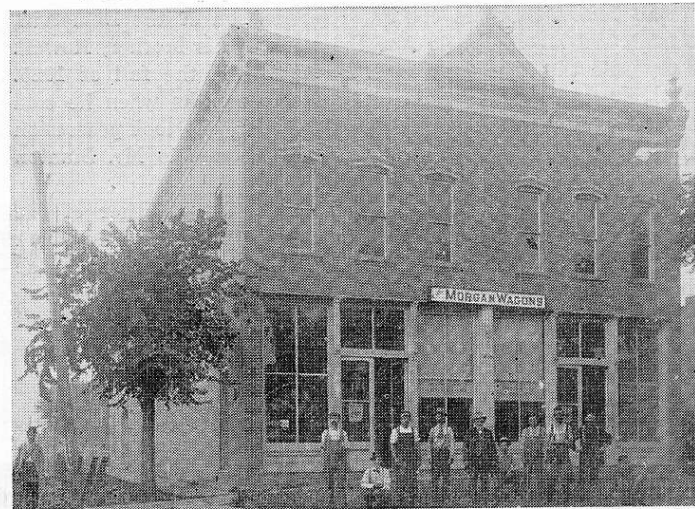
When all debts and accounts were taken care of the publishers had nearly \$6000 in money. In a short time the two decided to establish a weekly newspaper in Quincy, a city of 30,000 people. At that time Quincy had three daily newspapers and four weekly papers. How anyone could possibly have figured out that another weekly paper in Quincy could get along the two men were never able to explain. Anyway, at the end of seven months all the money was gone. There being enough assets to cover all debts the two decided to quit. Haskin went out as an advertising agent and Naeter went to St. Louis as a printer.

Later on Haskin started a question and answer feature for newspapers which still carries on under the management of his sons. Naeter remained as a printer in St. Louis until the summer of 1904 when he and his brother George, also a printer, took a boat excursion to Cape Girardeau, a river town they had never before heard of, and got a defunct daily newspaper started again. Harry Naeter, a younger brother, who also was born in Shelbina, joined his brothers and the three carried on. Harry died years ago and George died last November. Fred Naeter and his nephew carry on in Cape Girardeau.

The Torchlight was eventually absorbed by the Democrat and an insurance company acquired the building. In the meantime the Torchlight building was given a second story and the sign was painted out. A few years later the building again went into new hands and again the sign was painted over.

Twice the original sign was painted over and twice it came back. Today, more than a half century after it was first painted, the sign is about as bright and clear as ever.

Contributed by Fred Naeter



This photograph, made in 1873, shows the Morgan Wagon Factory, building now occupied by the Youth Center. Standing in front of the building are Wiley Burden, woodworker; Jas. C. Booth, carriage trimmer; W. H. Stoker, woodworker; Wm. H. Morgan, salesman; David Morgan, Sr., salesman; John R. Morgan, painter; Gedney, painter; Forrister, blacksmith; John Ayres, blacksmith; Southworth, blacksmith.