



Nevada Library and Bushwhacker Museum

**Tri-County Genealogical Society**  
(Vernon-Cedar-St. Clair Counties)  
c/o Nevada Public Library  
218 West Walnut Street  
Nevada, MO 64772  
[tricitygenealogy@centurytel.net](mailto:tricitygenealogy@centurytel.net)  
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~motcogs/>



Vernon County Courthouse  
Nevada, Missouri

# NEWSLETTER

November 2008

## Dec. 13 Meeting ~ Christmas Luncheon Church of Christ Fellowship Hall 302 E Hospital Rd, El Dorado Springs

Officers will be elected and installed at the December meeting. If you would like to volunteer, there is still an opportunity to do so. Nominated 2009 Society officers are:

- President: Kathe R
- Vice-presidents: Gayle T  
and \_\_\_\_\_
- Recording Secy: Janet J
- Treasurer: Ray L
- Corresponding Secy: Darlene L
- Webmaster & newsletter editor: Nancy

Members are invited to bring a photo or historical item of interest to show and to share highlights of their year's genealogy research.

Following the "show & share," a potluck Christmas lunch will be enjoyed. Please bring a tray or dish of Christmas luncheon food to share. Paper plates and plasticware will be provided.

The meeting is open to the public.

### 2009 Membership Dues

Your 2009 membership dues can be paid at any time. They can be brought to a monthly meeting or mailed to the society at 218 W. Walnut St., Nevada, MO 64772. Individual membership is \$10; lifetime membership is \$100. Memberships fund the publication of the newsletter and help purchase resources for the libraries. Your membership is greatly appreciated.

### Program by Helen Lodge

During her program at the November meeting, Helen Lodge offered tips and strategies for conducting research. She emphasized the importance of looking at the *entire* family and creating a detailed "life trace" (timeline) of the ancestor in question. A copy of all documents pertaining to the individual should be obtained and information from them added to the life trace.

Helen also recommended that the Society consider purchasing the book, Family Tree Problem Solver by Marsha Hoffman Rising for the Genealogy Dept. The cost is \$13.59. This book discusses strategies for research and breaking down brick walls.

She additionally encouraged members to consider a research trip to Salt Lake City with the Wichita Genealogical Society in September 2009.

### New Resources in Genealogy Department

A copy of the earliest records of burials at **Balltown Cemetery**.

A copy of the index to **Missouri's Union Provost Marshal Papers: 1861 – 1866** for Barton, Bates, Cedar St. Clair and Vernon Counties, copied from the internet. (Copy for El Do Library also.)

## Balltown Cemetery Dedications

The Military Dedications at Balltown Cemetery on Nov. 9 were attended by about 300 persons, despite the cool weather. During the ceremonies, State Rep. Barney Fisher presented Robert Seater (left) with a Missouri State House Resolution for his



volunteer work at historic Balltown cemetery.

During the afternoon's event, Society member Charles Foreman visits with attendees about



military service and Charles' 1950s-era Army jeep which he has completely restored and had on-site for viewing.

## Newsletter Format Change

You may notice the slightly wider margin beginning with this issue of the newsletter. This will enable filing in a loose-leaf notebook or binding.

## Vernon Co Extension Center Holiday Open House ~ Friday, December 5

The Vernon County Extension Center Holiday Open House will be held Friday, December 5. The staff and council wish to thank everyone for their support and patronage. Food and refreshments will be served between 8 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

## Fire and Sword: A Missouri County in the Civil War

This is a new book by Patrick Brophy which tells the stirring story of Civil War days in Vernon County and western Missouri. Interspersed in the text are the narratives by many people who personally experienced the unforgettable ups and down, the sorrows and heartbreaks of that tragic period. Included are eyewitness accounts of the burning of both Nevada and Montevallo. The 258-page deluxe paperback book can be purchased from the Society - \$19.95. (+\$3.50 mail order.)



## Civil War Ancestor Research

With the Civil War sesquicentennial fast approaching in 2011, there is tremendous renewed interest in researching ancestors who fought during that time. With more records being indexed and additional information available online, Civil War research is become easier to conduct. The following information is taken from the National Archives site, [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)

In 1911 Missouri began granting pensions to indigent Confederate veterans; none were granted to widows of Confederate veterans. Missouri also had a home for disabled Confederate veterans at Higginsville. The pension and veterans' home applications are interfiled and arranged alphabetically at the Missouri State Archives\*\*. Typically, the pension file is small, perhaps four to eight pages, containing a standard application form and may include letters of recommendation from family members or others.

NARA lists Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia

state repositories for Confederate pension records at:

<http://www.archives.gov/genealogy/military/civil-war/confederate/pension.html>

Missouri's Union Provost Marshal Papers: 1861–1866 are part of Record Group 109, War Dept. Collection of Confederate Records in the NARA. Although they are records of the Union Army, they were associated with Confederate records in the War Dept. because they relate, in part, to Confederate citizens and sympathizers. The Missouri State Archives created an online database index to the Missouri portion of the collection. It can be searched online by name, keyword, or county at <http://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/provost/>

The index contains 127 entries for Cedar County and 73 for Vernon. The index gives names, county, a brief description, date, and microfilm reel number of the item. A copy of the index for the Missouri counties of Barton, Bates, Cedar, St. Clair, and Vernon has been printed and copies placed in the Genealogy Dept and the El Dorado Springs Library for our members who do not use the computer in research.

\*\*If requesting research from the Missouri State Archives via email, please see <http://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/email.asp> If requesting research via U.S. mail, the address is:

Missouri State Archives  
P.O. Box 1747  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-1747

Information on researching Union records can be found at this NARA website: <http://www.archives.gov/research/civil-war/index.html>

### **Vernon County Land Records Lost During the Civil War**

Vernon County land record Deed Book "B" was lost during the war; however, the index to it was saved. The index shows simply

the names of the grantors and grantees and the page of the record and no more.

### **Civil War Incident in Vernon Co**

One of genealogy society member Ruth Mische's ancestors was Joseph Copeland, and the following is an account of an incident which took place on the Joseph Copeland property in Drywood Township in Vernon County near the end of the Civil War.

"In the spring of 1865, before Lee surrendered, a Federal soldier, named Wilhite, was killed by some bushwhackers at the house of Joseph Copeland, on the Landon branch. The soldier lived in Cedar county, near Stockton; he was on his way to Kansas, on private business, and stopped at Copeland's for the night. The bushwhackers rode up dressed in blue, and claimed to be Federal soldiers from Ft. Scott. The soldier was deceived, admitted his identify in spite of the hint of Mr. Copeland that he was in danger, and the bushwhackers took him out and shot him. His body was buried on the Landon branch, on the south part of section 4. In years past the lonely grave was strewn with flowers every Decoration Day."

**History of Vernon County, Missouri.  
St. Louis: Brown & Co. 1887. Page 816.**

Ruth's friends Keith Walker and his sister, Shirley, recall seeing the gravesite of Wilhite when they were young children (about 70 years ago); so Ruth arranged to visit the area with them to locate the grave. On Nov. 19, 2008, Keith Walker, Shirley Walker Banes and husband Gene, genealogy members, and Ruth Mische met George Garton who farms the area; and George led the group to the general area of the burial. However, nothing could now be found to positively identify the exact area. Pictures and GPS coordinates were taken in the general area.



George Garton, Nancy T, and Ruth M in the general area of Civil War-era Wilhite burial.

Later, a search was made in the new Vernon County cemetery directory database to ensure Wilhite was listed, and it was discovered that a recent entry had been made based on early Deepwood Cemetery records which stated that the Wilhite body had been disinterred from the field and buried in the Grand Army of the Republic lot in Deepwood Cemetery on Sep. 16, 1888.

Having this date, a search was then made of the Sep. 1888 *Nevada Daily Mail* microfilm, and the following article was found:

### **MURDERED YEARS AGO. A Scrap of Vernon County War History.**

"We will remove the remains of a man named Wilhoite, from W. M. Bunce's pasture, to the soldiers lot in Deepwood, said Superintendent G. W. McLean to a MAIL representative this morning.

"Well?" interrogated the reporter.

"Wilhoite was a Union soldier," continued Mr. McLean, "who was murdered in 1864, and it has been determined by the G. A. R. post to disinter his remains. On Sunday they will be reinterred in the soldiers lot, at Deepwood, Rev. Armstrong conducting the religious services at 3 o'clock p.m.

"The crowd that murdered him were not connected with either the Union or Confederate forces it was simply a band of

robbers and murderers. They made an attack on James Moore's residence early on the same night with the avowed purpose of killing him. A man by the name of Howell and, perhaps, one or two other men at Moore's repulsed them. Mr. Moore lived at that time on his place just west of town near what is known as the University Addition. The gang that made the attack on him, went away after being repulsed and just before daybreak made a raid on Sherl Brasner's father-in-law's house—I have forgotten his name. This gentleman lived about eight miles south of Nevada near the W. M. Bunce farm. They found Wilhoite there and took him out and murdered him in cold blood, despite the tears and entreaties of the family. As soon as it was light enough, the ladies of the family went out and buried the dead man where he fell.

"Wilhoit was from Polk County. I have written to ex-sheriff Acard there informing him of the facts in the case and asking him to notify Wilhoit's relatives and send us his history but have not heard from him."

*The Nevada Daily Mail, Nevada, MO.  
Thursday afternoon, September 13, 1888, p. 4, col. 4.*

A search was then made in the abstracted *Nevada Noticer* index book which led to the following additional newspaper article regarding Wilhite:

### **More of Wilhoit's History.**

Speaking of the Mail's article a short time ago on the murder of Sam Wilhoit, during the war, while carrying a message from Stockton to Fort Scott. W. T. Tow, of this city, in conversation with a representative of the NOTICER, said:

"I was intimately acquainted with Sam Wilhoit. We lived only a short distance apart and were brought up together. Wilhoit's parents were well thought of and Same bore a good reputation up to the time of this occurrence which I know to be correct.

"Sam Wilhoit was born in Polk county and he belonged to the militia and was twenty years old at the time of enlisting. His father was a southern man. Sam Wilhoit married a girl who's folks were very radical. His wife fell out with his mother and they had a difficulty in some way. His wife was several years older than her husband and had control over him. She told him to go and give his mother a good whipping, which he did; he went to her house and knocked her down and beat her badly. His own party of soldiers got after him to arrest him and he started to run away and deserted his party; went west; got out somewhere; supposed to have been somewhere in this county on his way to Ft. Scott, he met with some parties that he thought were federal soldiers and told them he had killed several rebels in Polk county and had to run away for safety. They happened to be bushwhackers and they shot him, filling his body with shot. It was on Copen's [Copeland?] farm, eight miles south of town where he had stopped to get his breakfast. They stripped his body of clothing and left it. Some parties came along a little while afterward and picked the body up and carried it two miles from Copen's farm and buried the body. The Mail had it that he was carrying a dispatch from Stockton to Ft. Scott when killed, which was a mistake.

*Nevada Noticer, Nevada, MO.*  
September 27, 1888, p. 3, col. 6.

...There may be another *Nevada Daily Mail* newspaper article based on details in the *Nevada Noticer* article.

The survey of Deepwood Cemetery did not show a gravestone for Wilhite.

### Items of Interest from Area Newspapers

[The below newspaper articles were transcribed by society members.]

### FROM VERNON COUNTY.

Nevada, Mo.  
July 6th 1871,

*Messrs. Editors:*

By request of a mutual friend of ours we have been induced to give you and the readers of the TRIBUNE a few items from this section, which may prove acceptable to some, and the first of all we have to chronicle is, that the Glorious Old Fourth was duly celebrated in our place by an old-fashion barbecue. At an early hour on the Fourth the people commenced flocking in from the surrounding country by scores, and by 10 o'clock A.M. the Public square was literally alive with the beauty and chivalry of our county, flanked by the appearance of many stalwart forms of prairie yeomen. A procession was formed under the charge of C. O. Grave and Joseph Harding, Marshals of the day. The Nevada silver cornet band, heading the procession with their beautiful chariot, discoursed martial music; next came a noticeable feature, and the great Ku-klux Investigating Committee of Congress ought to have seen the same, for it might have quieted their nerves, for it was no less than that Col. D. C. Hunter, ex-rebel, who, under Old Pap and the gallant Joe Shelby with the gallantry of the chivalric Knights of old, carried the Southern Cross off into the hottest of the fray, carried the stars and stripes. In connection with this, we must give the Col's reasons for doing so, in his own words that it was his flag; the flag of his country, America, and that he was as loyal as any man; that he was taught in his youth to worship that flag, and that he had fought that flag with all the vim that partisan rancor could command and he surrender to it, it became his flag, and that the 4th of July belonged to no one party or section, but to America, and that all have an equal right to the 4th of July and the grand old flag, which no true man can deny, or

traduce the chivalry of either the living or the dead, it makes no difference on which side they fought as they were all sincere and all were Americans and all their acts were part and parcel of the history of the American people. The Colonel was followed by 38 young ladies and Misses, dressed in white, each representing a bright star in the galaxy of our glorious Union, then came the various public officers of the county and town followed by a large concourse of people on foot, horseback and in carriages, wended their way to the new Fair Grounds where a stand and seats had been prepared for the occasion. After the audience was seated Judge Gray introduced elder W. I. Mountjoy, who addressed an impressive prayer to the throne of Grace. The reading of the Declaration of Independence was premised by a few brief and pertinent remarks from S. H. Claypool, Esq., who read the declaration, afterwards James B. Johnson, formerly of Louisiana, Mo., delivered a thrilling and eloquent oration. He was followed by W. I. Stone, another talented young member of our bar who premised his oration by humorous remarks of his boyish enthusiasm in delivering his first oration on a previous occasion which created considerable merriment. His oration, though not so eloquent in the declamatory style as Mr. Johnson's was a great effort and betrayed the clear thinker and deep reasoner. His theme was mostly on the evils of the individual worship of party, the blind zeal of faction arising from the same, and upon the duties of citizens. Both of these young gents favorably impressed the entire audience and made certainly their marks on this occasion.

A patriotic poem was delivered by mine host, John Dermott, of the Nevada House. The delivery of the poem was enthusiastically applauded; and whilst endeavoring to do justice to the orators of

the day, we must not omit to mention the Nevada Glee Club, which alternately assisted the band in discoursing sweet notes of music. The Club is composed of musical amateurs, ladies and gents, who did fine singing indeed. It was quite a treat to all lovers of good music to hear the reverberations of the music by the Club echoed in silvery cadences beneath the o'er hanging dome of oaken foliage, and lost as it were enchantingly in the mazes shades of the surrounding woods. In fact, without jesting, Nevada can boast of more musical talents and appreciation than any town of its size in the State. The audience then repaired to the table and did ample justice to the luscious barbecued meats, prepared under the superintendence of our eccentric friend, Maj. Craft.

The dinner was simple and plain, consisted of good meat, tender, juicy, well done and good bread, and plenty for all; after dinner the audience returned to the stand where Col. Davis, lately of Kirksville, Mo., but now a resident of our place, was introduced to the audience. Col. D. was, we learn, a gallant ex-Reb., and followed the fortunes of Gen. Price in the late unpleasantness, made some eloquent and patriotic remarks, and the procession was reformed and marched back again to the public square, where a humorous race was gotten up by some wags; a wheelbarrow race, with the parties during its honors securely blindfolded. Some seven or eight competitors entered in the list, and all started off in fine style at the taps of the drum, but soon the competitors described in their course every imaginable line ever known to the student of Geometry from the tangens, to the zig zag of a worm fence, and the ludicrous mistakes of the competitors created considerable merriment and laughter, and only two of the parties succeeded in reaching the place of starting, when the crowd dispersed

for a while. At twilight 38 rounds were fired from a home-made cannon, which sent its thunders echoing far out o'er the prairies, which was followed by fire works and fire crackers, and a ball at the Court House, and a supper at Wade's Hall for the benefit of the Orphans' Home at Kansas City, which we believe was liberally patronized, wound up the day.

It was generally estimated that over 3,500 persons were upon the grounds, and we are happy to say, that no accident occurred, nor anything unpleasant to mar in the least the occasion the entire day.

Radicals, Democrats and stern ex-Rebs. all joined cordially in celebrating the day and to add zest to the festivities, forgetting in the enjoyments of the hour, all past differences and prejudices, burying all animosities, gathering fraternally, as it were, around the alter of liberty, to renew as of yore, the vows of patriotism. To a true lover of his Country, such a scene as was presented on this occasion, this cordial union of all antagonistic parties in celebrating our national jubilee, was cheering in its character; giving hope that the grand experiment of Republican Government, was not yet wholly a failure, as some wise one would gladly prophesy, and we hope that many such scenes will grace each returning Anniversary of our National Independence for centuries to come, North, East, South and West.

Our thriving town is still giving evidences of life and improvements. A large brick business house is being erected on the northeast corner of the public square, by some gentlemen late of Illinois. Several residences are also going up gradually assuming shape and form. The Baptist denomination have the foundation wall of their church done, and will soon commence laying the brick. It will be a neat edifice when completed. The Southern Methodists have completed theirs, and it is quite large

a[nd] spacious. The Episcopalians have also built a neat church though not quite finished, is still used for services. They have a neat and fine toned organ to add attraction to their service, and they will soon have a large bell to call their people to service. Our Christian Friends, who are the leading church in point of numbers, are making preparations to build a fine church, and it has been the wonder of many why they have not built before. Our Presbyterian friends of the old Missouri Synod, are also contemplating the erection of a house of worship. We have no less than eight religious organizations in our place, and we think our town will compare favorably with any other town of its size in the State in that respect.

The County Court at its last session did quite an amount of business in the way of substantial improvements, by letting out contracts for two bridges, one over Clear creek, and one over the Little Osage, also in addition let out the contract for the building of a new jail house and Sheriff's residence, at the cost of \$10,000 dollars, which will doubtless be soon under way.

Our people are quite jubilant over the prospect of the Laclede & Fort Scott Railroad being rapidly pushed to completion. This line, when built to its ultimate destination, reaching from Ocean to Ocean, will place us on a great thoroughfare which must enure considerably to our benefit, and in addition, the M. K. & T. Railway being already built, and reaching far down in the Indian territory, and ere many months will be completed to the Queen City of the Lone Star, Galveston, also adds greatly to our prospects, and Nevada, being at the junction of these two great thoroughfares, must necessarily be a place of some importance. Also, we have every assurance that we will have another Road coming from Northward, and perhaps two.

The Louisiana, Lexington and Gulf Road, and the Kansas City, Arkansas and Gulf Road. The latter Road has had its claims pressed very energetically upon our people of late, by its active President, Col. I. D. Williams of Kansas City, and whenever it becomes necessary to take hold our people will be on hand quite lively. So with all these thoroughfares concentrating here, as it were, can but make Nevada the Grand Railroad centre of the glorious Southwest. It requires no visions of prophesy to foresee that by another decade Nevada will be a respectable city, looming up in the thousands. Our people are awakening up to the great importance of erecting some Manufacturing establishments of importance here, and it needs but some leading spirit to prompt the movement and give shape and action to the general desire, and we do not believe that any other town of its size offers more and better inducements for Capitalists, Merchants and Manufactories than Nevada, and it is an excellent point for either a Woolen Mill, Foundry or an Agricultural Implement factory on a large scale; and from the characteristic liberality of our citizens, we are fully convinced that any party having experience and capital desirous of establishing such in our place, will be ably seconded in their efforts by our citizens.

We have had so far this season an abundance of fine rains, and our crop prospects are most excellent, giving the lie to croaking prediction, that ours was a drouthy country. Wheat crops have turned out far better than generally anticipated, notwithstanding the partial drawbacks in some localities of chinch bugs and rust. In fact, we have an over average crop of wheat and a larger area sown by fifty per cent, over any former year. New wheat has been coming in to market for some days past, some of which is purchased at our

Merchant Mill, ably managed by its proprietors, Eddlemon & Co., a great deal is bought by various parties and shipped to St. Louis by Rail. Corn is looking fine, indeed it could scarce look better. Vegetables and potatoes are all doing fine. So with bountiful crops and our great Railroad prospects ahead, we can but expect a heavy emigration this fall. More anon.  
Yours,

B. B.

*Peoples Tribune, Jefferson City, MO.  
July 19, 1871, page 2, col. 4.*

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**MISSOURI STATE NEWS.**

Word was received at Nevada of a sad accident which occurred at the home of Mr. Cordovia, living in the northern portion of the county. A 14-year-old son of Mr. Cordovia was in the yard working with a 22 target gun when it was accidentally discharged, the ball passing through an open window, striking the 6-year-old brother of the young man in the back of the head. A surgeon was immediately sent for, but when he arrived the little fellow was dead.

*Springfield Express, Springfield, MO.  
June 10, 1887, page 1, col. 1.*

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**ABOUT MISSOURI.**

Clay Johnston was killed Monday afternoon by a fall from a horse at Nevada. He was kicked in the abdomen.

*Springfield Express, Springfield, MO.  
June 22, 1888, page 1, col. 8.*

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Election results - Vernon County:  
For President:     302 Buchanan  
                          172 Fillmore  
For Governor:     234 Stewart  
                          174 Rollins

*Liberty Weekly Tribune, Liberty, MO:  
September 4, 1857, page 2, col. 3.*



### Monthly Meetings

Monthly meetings of the Tri-County Genealogical Society (Vernon-Cedar-St. Clair Counties of Missouri) are held the second Saturday of each month and begin at 10 a.m. They are alternately held at Nevada and El Dorado Springs at the following locations:

**Nevada** Public Library Meeting Room, 212 West Walnut, Nevada (enter at South side of building). On Saturdays, there is not a 2-hr parking limit on the streets.

**El Dorado Springs** Church of Christ Fellowship Hall, 302 East Hospital Road, El Dorado Springs. Carpooling from the Nevada Library to El Dorado Springs is usually available; contact the society at [tricountygenealogy@centurytel.net](mailto:tricountygenealogy@centurytel.net).

### Tri-County Genealogical Society

Membership in the Society is currently at about 75, and we use nametags at monthly meetings to help everyone get acquainted. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in family history research. Annual dues are \$10 for an individual membership

(+\$5 for each additional member within the same household up to \$25 maximum), \$5 for a Student, or \$100 Lifetime, per person. We would be pleased to have you join the local society if you are not already a member, and you can do so at our next meeting or by sending a check to Tri-County Genealogical Society, 218 West Walnut Street, Nevada, MO 64772. 2008 Society officers are:

President: Neoma F

V. Pres: Janet J & Nancy T

Recording Sec: position open

Treasurer: Ray L

Corresponding Sec: Darlene L

You received this monthly newsletter notice because you are a member of the Society, have indicated an interest in our organization, or represent an area genealogy group. If you do not want to receive this email notice in the future, please contact the Society at [tricountygenealogy@centurytel.net](mailto:tricountygenealogy@centurytel.net) and request that your name be removed from the email list.

***If you have enjoyed reading the Tri-County Genealogical Society's newsletter,  
You are cordially invited to support the work of the  
Society with an annual membership.***