

## Cedar & Vernon County Missouri Genealogical Society

218 W. Walnut St., Nevada, MO 64772

Email: [Cedar.VernonCoMO@centurytel.net](mailto:Cedar.VernonCoMO@centurytel.net)

Website: <https://Vernon.MOGenWeb.org>

### December 2023 Newsletter©

#### Society Meeting: Wednesday, 20 Dec 2023

**Winter weather policy: In case of inclement weather (snowing, ice on roads, or schools closed), the meeting will be cancelled.**

The Cedar & Vernon Co MO Genealogical Society meeting, program, and Christmas Luncheon will be held **Wed., 20 Dec 2023, at Pizza Hut, 1314 S. Hwy 32, El Dorado Springs, MO at 11:00 a.m.**, Dutch treat pizza party will follow a brief business meeting. If traveling from Nevada on U.S. 54, continue through El Dorado Springs to the third traffic light and turn right (south) onto Hwy 32. The Pizza Hut is immediately on your right. We hope to see you there!

**GENEALOGY MEETING  
DUTCH TREAT**



**DEC 20, 11:00 A.M. AT PIZZA HUT  
1314 S. HWY 32, EL DORADO SPRINGS, MO**

*Come visit with others who also enjoy researching  
their family history and share stories of  
interesting genealogical finds!*

Monthly genealogy meeting & program  
Cedar & Vernon Co MO Genealogical Society  
Email: [Cedar.VernonCoMO@centurytel.net](mailto:Cedar.VernonCoMO@centurytel.net)  
Website: <https://Vernon.MOGenWeb.org>

***Everyone Welcome !***

Laura presented a very interesting program on researching her Mayflower ancestor in November. She shared tree charts she has used and displayed several books from the Genealogy Dept

which can be helpful for anyone who is searching their family during that timeperiod. The Mayflower "Silver Books" are available at most larger libraries (the Genealogy Dept has only a couple of the books). They contain 5-generations of lineage for each of the Mayflower passengers. Additional resources have been created from both Daughters of the American Revolution and Sons of the American Revolution proven patriots to Mayflower passengers. Get a head-start on your early American Colony ancestors with these resources. <https://thamayflowersociety.org/>

**Membership Dues** for calendar year 2024 can be paid at any time by mailing them to the above address or giving them to the treasurer at a meeting.

\$10 for an individual

\$15 for a couple, same household

\$100 for life membership.

Benefits of membership include receiving the emailed monthly newsletter, free posts and articles in the newsletter, and free lookups in the new database of Vernon County deaths and burials for your personal family research. Dues reminders will be emailed after 1 Jan 2024.

The Society has considered several different meeting days and/or times in an effort to accommodate more local members. Through several member surveys, it was determined that there is no better day and time for the meetings than the third Wednesday of the month at 10 a.m.

A year of new and exciting programs are planned for the Society! These will be posted very soon in both the newsletter and on the Vernon. MOGenWeb website. Most research on our computers, and program internet links and handouts will be shared to all members as available.

The new <https://Vernon.MOGenWeb.org/> website is live! The site has a cleaner and brighter appearance and more simple design. The screen width is more accommodating for those viewing

on a laptop, cell phone or tablet device. The website contains the most complete list of resources for researching your Vernon County ancestors, and many of the links pertain to researching *any* Missouri county. "How-to" information and links are listed alphabetically by category at the [Resources](#) link. New information will continue to be added to the site. One basic web page will remain on the old RootsWeb site (which is now owned by Ancestry.com) to advise researchers of the new internet address.

In setting up the new website, your editor was reminded of the many volunteers who originally transcribed hundreds of biographies for the site: Ginnie B., Becky S., Marty P., Kay H., Anna G., Julia B., and others. Thank you for helping get the website off the ground when the genealogy society website was first established! Unfortunately, Ancestry.com shut down that site a few years ago, and all resources were moved to the county GenWeb site.

Suggestions for research links on the website are welcome!

Each county bordering Vernon County has a web page. See "Other Research Links" on the Resources page. Most counties have a GenWeb website for free research information—please share information that the County Coordinator can post to help other researchers.

The Society is soliciting recommendations for additional resources to purchase for the Genealogy Dept. Please share your recommendations and also the locations where your ancestors lived—which colonies/states and counties are your geographic areas of research? Is there area/regional microfilm you would like to see added to the collection? Please email the Society.

- - - - -  
**The Illinois Death Certificates** searchable database has been updated to include death certificate entries for the years 1951 - 1971 <https://www.ilsos.gov/departments/archives/databases/idphdeathindex5171.html>

- - - - -  
The DeKalb County Historical Society has an interesting "**Voices of the Past Cemetery Tour**" at <https://missouridchs.com/votp> Our thanks to member Elaine K. for sharing this link.

**FamilyTreeDNA 2023 Update – Past, Present and Future** If you tested DNA at FamilyTreeDNA, <https://www.familytreedna.com/>, you will be interested in this article by Roberta Estes about all of the new features at the website <https://dna-explained.com/2023/12/11/familytreedna-2023-update-past-present-and-future/>

- - - - -  
**Share YOUR research** in a future newsletter. Bring it to a meeting to be scanned or mail/email the information/photograph to the society at [Cedar.VernonCoMO@centurytel.net](mailto:Cedar.VernonCoMO@centurytel.net)

- - - - -  
**Prairie Divide School #105**  
**Moundville Township**  
**NW Corner SW1/4 SE1/4 TWP34 R32 S27**  
**N 037° 40.050' W 094° 25.649'**  
By Lyndon N. Irwin

Prairie Divide School has largely been overlooked in Vernon County School records. It is only mentioned in the book of Vernon County Schools but no information was given. Previous mentions of it in earlier Bronaugh history books have led to confusion about Prairie Divide. That confusion occurred when a school that was founded in 1877 on land owned by Albert and Mattie Duncan was claimed to be Prairie Divide. However, when the deed records are examined, that deed refers to the location of English School #62, a mile north of Bronaugh, so the 1877 claim is simply incorrect.

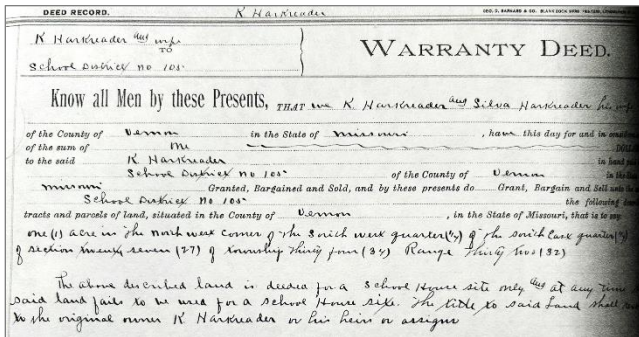
Prairie Flower School #61 was the oldest school in the area. It was located 2 miles east of Bronaugh and was founded in about 1870. Lone Valley or Chicken Bristle School #111 was one mile south of Bronaugh. Wild Rose School #108 was more than four miles southeast of Bronaugh in Drywood Township and across Little Drywood Creek. That meant that there was a large area (sections 26, 27, 34 and 35) between those three schools where there was not a convenient school for students to attend. The Enumeration List for 1897, show L. P. and K Harkreader families in Prairie Flower district. However, enumerations for 1899 – 1904 show the same Harkreader children in Lone Valley district enumeration. There is no evidence that these families had moved. They owned property in section 27 and are good examples of families whose children had to walk or somehow travel long distances to Prairie Flower or Lone Valley. Children who lived so far



from a school had very inconsistent attendance and therefore poor performance. Therefore, in the early 1900s, there was an effort to build another school that would be located centrally in the deficient area.

See a [1903 Map of Moundville Township, Vernon County, Missouri](#) at this link.

In August 1906, K Harkreader, who owned property in section 27, donated 1 acre with the legal description mentioned above to be used for School District 105. This appears in Vernon County Deed Book 110, page 492. It appears that number 105 may have been previously assigned to another school district, but that number had not been used since 1896, so it was assigned to this new district in 1906. There was a stipulation that if a school ceased to operate at that location that it would revert to Harkreader and his heirs. The new school was named Prairie Divide.



Vernon County Missouri Deed Book 110, page 492



Lyndon Irwin standing at the approximate location of where the Prairie Divide School was located

“K” was the only name ever used by K Harkreader. It does not appear to have been an abbreviation. He was a brother to John T. Harkreader who served as Vernon County Sheriff from 1901-1904. K served as deputy sheriff for at least part of his brother’s term. Living beside K was another brother, Lemuel P. Harkreader and their maiden sister Mollie Harkreader. Both K and Lemuel had school age children so it makes sense that K would provide an acre for the establishment of a convenient school.

According to previous Prairie Divide information, the first directors of the new school were Thomas Henson, George Davis and Jim Hamilton. Henson and Davis were close neighbors to the Harkreader’s and had school age children according to the 1900 census. (They would not have had children back in 1877). The Henson and Hamilton families were also on the same new phone line in 1909 – the Wild Rose Line.

The year after donating the land, K Harkreader died unexpectedly at his home at the age of 46. The newspaper in Liberal told of his death and described his home as being north of Verdella. That is correct. Verdella is a tiny village three miles into Barton County, due south of where K Harkreader lived in Vernon County. He was buried at Worsley Cemetery near Bronaugh. His widow, Sylvia and children, continued to live on the farm until April 1910, when they moved to Nevada, where she had purchased a home.



Interestingly, the 1910 census showed Lemuel Harkreader and his family living on Prairie Divide Road. So in other words, the road name must have been assigned after the school was founded. Other families with school-age children living on that road in 1910 were John Daugherty and Daniel Mallory. Living on Davis Road just north of the school were George Davis, Linzy Brown, John Manly, Frank Myers and James Hamilton. They all had school-age children.

Thomas Henson had moved from the Prairie Divide area and was living on Henson Road, which was the road that Prairie Flower was on. Road names currently equivalent to these are Prairie Divide = 1175, Davis = Younger and Henson = Highway N. The most descriptive way to describe the location of Prairie Divide School is that it is about a quarter mile south of the intersection of Younger and 1175 Roads. It was on the east side of the road. This is just north of the driveway that now leads east to Bushwhacker Lake from 1175.

There were occasional mentions of Prairie Divide in local newspapers but none before 1910. In March 1910, a new column appeared in the Bronaugh Journal called "Prairie Divide Items." It did not mention the school but it did tell about the social events of the area. The column only appeared one time. Some 1911 school notes told that Mary E. Fox of Nevada was hired to be the teacher at Prairie Divide. In the spring of 1912, a listing was published of all eighth-grade graduates in rural schools in Vernon County. There were five from Prairie Divide—Riley Brown, Ida Fleming, Daisy Henson, Lucille Henson and Bessie Pine. This tells us that although the Henson's had moved closer to Prairie Flower, they continued to go to school at Prairie Divide.

Discussions about consolidation of rural districts began in about 1913 and by 1916, the Bronaugh district was the first to consolidate four rural schools, including Prairie Divide, into their district. Bronaugh had a larger two-story white frame building across from the Methodist Church. Consolidation allowed parents to send their students to one of the rural schools or to transport them to Bronaugh.

The rural schools in the area were sometimes included in programs at the larger school in Bronaugh. In November 1915 a school fair was held under the direction of J. W. Tetrick, and teachers from English, Prairie Divide, Prairie Flower and Lone Valley schools assisted. Belmont and Glendale (Glenwood?) also participated but are in Harrison Township. Admission was ten cents. The evening included a declamatory contest and a play given by grade school pupils. Specimens of pupils' writing, drawing, crayon and watercolor work were on display. Embroidery, crocheting and fancy work

were shown. There was also an agricultural display. When programs included the rural students and their families, the building was not large enough to handle the crowd. Discussions were beginning that Bronaugh needed a much larger building.

The news items from an area called "Victory" in the Liberal News of May 1917 said that many from that area had attended a dinner for the last day of school at Prairie Divide School. The school was less than a mile north of the Barton County line.

At the end of 1917, T. B. Henson was treasurer of the Bronaugh C-1 School. He had received a State Aid check paid to schools that had consolidated. The money was an incentive to encourage districts to consolidate. Henson, serving as treasurer of the district, demonstrates how a parent whose children attended rural schools, participated in the overall district leadership. By September 1918, Henson had enrolled his children, Charley and Hazel, at Bronaugh.

In February 1920, the state education department awarded certificates to schools that met testing criteria (above 80%). Prairie Divide, Prairie Flower and Lone Valley did not reach that level. Instead, they qualified for second class status meaning that their students tested from 60 to 80%.

Quarterly exams were given in the rural schools. In January 1922, the Prairie Divide highest scores were published. "A" class students were Bertha Willard, 1st and Corine Pryor 2nd. "B" class students: Houston Hall was 1st and Lillian Pryor was 2nd. It was also noted that the Prairie Divide community had held their regular meeting on a Saturday night at the school. Community members were encouraged to participate in the meetings for the betterment of their school and community.

In May 1922, the county Farm Bureau held an essay contest. Students wrote about "Why Dad Should Join the Farm Bureau". Entries were received from most all county schools including one from Prairie Divide. The top three essays were awarded \$5, \$3 and \$1. In addition, a grand prize of a purebred Poland China gilt (hog) was

also to be awarded. The judges were kept busy reading 155 essays!

Later in May 1922, Miss Stella Webb was hired to be the Prairie Divide teacher that fall. Stella had just graduated from Liberal High School. The Liberal News stated that Prairie Divide was 4 ½ miles northwest of Verdella, but it was about due north. However, when school started that September, the Bronaugh Journal announced that the teacher at Prairie Divide was Miss Doris Bills of Nevada.

The Drywood notes in the Liberal News for September 15, 1922, reported that R. A. Crockett and H. L. Beasley were building a much-needed bridge near Prairie Divide School. This probably refers to a bridge over the creek just to the north of the school on Prairie Divide Road.

The 2004 obituary for Neva Ames Post (1917-2004) mentioned that she attended school at both Prairie Flower and Prairie Divide and then graduated from Bronaugh. The John Ames family lived a mile and a half south of Prairie Flower and about a mile northwest of Prairie Divide so her attending all three schools demonstrates how Consolidation worked.

The only photo from Prairie Divide that has been found is in the Bronaugh Community History Book. It shows a group of unidentified students and their teacher who was identified as Juanita Thompson who looks quite young. She was the daughter of Chauncey and Pearl (Feller) Thompson of Bronaugh. Since Miss Thompson was born in September 1905, we can estimate



Prairie Divide School. Teacher at time of this picture was Juanita Thompson Day.

that the photo must have been taken in the during the 1925-1926 school year since she was teaching at Bronaugh in 1926-27 and was married

and teaching in Webster County for the 1927-28 school year.

In March 1926, the state Farm Bureau held a "Clover and Prosperity Conference" at the Baptist church in Nevada. Each school district was invited to send a delegate to the conference. Each delegate was then encouraged to bring a younger farmer as a guest to acquaint them with the organization. D. B. Morrison was the delegate from District 105.

The following table is an incomplete list of known teachers at Prairie Divide:

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
1911 - 1912	Mary E. Fox
1918 - 1919	Ruth Fleming
1920 - 1921	Miss Willard
1922 - 1923	Stella Webb and/or Doris Bills
1923 - 1925	Eula Terrel (paid \$70 per month)
1925 - 1926 est.	Juanita Thompson
1927 - 1928	George Hougland

School consolidation eventually caused Prairie Divide to cease operation, and the students went to Bronaugh. Bronaugh had built a large brick three-story school building in 1922 and offered four-year high school diplomas. The John G. Saathoff family lived about a mile from both Prairie Flower and Prairie Divide. Their son Elmer was born in 1923 and he started school at Prairie Flower. Their daughter, Evelyn, was born in 1927 and when she started school in about 1933, she and her brother were transported to Bronaugh. They rode a "bus" with the children of Mr. and Mrs. Walter New who lived down on the county line, a mile south and a little east of Prairie Divide. This does not prove that the rural schools had closed but it does indicate that some families were willing to transport their children to the larger central school.

Writing about the history of the Bronaugh Christian Church, Eileen (Kerr) Thompson, wife of Don Thompson, wrote, "In 1942 Prairie Divide school house was bought and annexed to the end of the (church) building, which served as classrooms and a dining hall." So the Prairie Divide building is still nicely preserved in Bronaugh.





**Prairie Divide School building added to the east side of the Bronaugh Christian Church to serve as classrooms and dining hall—the center section in this picture.**

At about that time, John G. Saathoff purchased the large bell from the school. It then sold at the Saathoff estate sale in 1994, and JaWan Thompson bought it.



A 1951 plat map shows a school icon at the Prairie Divide location. This was actually after the school building had been moved. However, the exact date that the school closed is not known, and the area was so remote from nearby towns with

newspapers that it was only rarely mentioned. No further mention of Prairie Divide school has been found in any records after 1928.

See a [1951 Map of Moundville Township, Vernon County, Missouri](#) at this link. Towns and schools are in red.

Why was the name Prairie Divide chosen? There seem to be two possibilities. The new school was formed to divide the Prairie Flower district. But more likely, Prairie Divide Road certainly does seem to be on a divide. The area to the east of the school is timber covered and more Ozark-like. Across the road west, the terrain was native prairie with few trees. This is still obvious today when one visits the Bushwhacker conservation area.

**Acknowledgements:**

Thanks to Shelley Baldwin in the Vernon County Recorder's office for being patient during my 10 hour search for the deed record. Thanks also to Adrienne Lee, Vernon County Clerk for helping me go through school records in their files. Thanks to Gary Irwin for explaining the legal description and helping to locate the precise location of the school. Thanks to Jan Thomas for the gravestone picture. Thanks to the JaWan Thompson's for locating the proper plat map, helping to locate the bell and for general encouragement.

- - - - -

**Newspaper Articles**

Sheriff Baugh has received a card from Wm. R. Taylor, sheriff of Ionia county, Michigan, offering a reward of \$50 for the arrest of a man giving his name as Samuel Kramer, says the Nevada Post. Kramer forged a deed to a farm there and obtained \$2,600 on a mortgage. The personal description exactly matches that of Samuel Hatcher who worked the same game here by forging a deed to the farm of Arthur Vail and securing \$3,000 on a mortgage from G. R. Rohrbaugh. The plan of operation is also exactly the same and there is little doubt that this is the same man.

**The Metz Times, Metz, Missouri; 17 Feb 1911 p2**

- - - - -

**From Missouri.**

Messrs. John A. Lefever and J. N. Madden, of Friends Creek township, who had just returned from a three weeks' trip to Southwestern Missouri, paid us a short call. The first named bought an improved farm near Nevada, Vernon county, to which he will remove. Both are loud in their praises of the country and its productions, among which they particularly mentioned the splendid fruit, samples of which they brought with them. The peaches they left on our table are certainly finer than any we have seen this year.

**Decatur Weekly Republican, Decatur, Illinois, 17 Aug 1882 p3**

- - - - -

## Williams Family Bible

Provenance and other information about these Bible pages are unknown.

### BIRTH & DEATHS

William Williams born July 11<sup>th</sup> 1801  
Nov. 3, 1873

Sarah B. his wife March 18<sup>th</sup> 1803

Martha C. Williams  
their daughter  
was born Dec. 30<sup>th</sup> 1827

Justinean A.  
Williams their  
son born April 1st 1831

Mary C Williams  
was born Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> 1833



### CHILDREN'S MARRIAGES

Justinean A. Williams to  
Mariamne Beverly March 7, 1865

Malvina S. Williams to  
Robt. W. Smith Dec. 21 1865

Parmelia J. Williams to  
James Sutherlin Dec 12 1866

Emily N. Williams to  
Daniel Woolridge Dec 13 1866

Elizabeth M. Williams to  
James M. Turley Nov 9 186

Julia L. Williams to  
Marion F Benedict June 12 1872







**Nevada High School Band Visiting Nederman Music Corp, Oct 20, 1936. Photo is from the Garret Henry Summers collection and provided for publication in the newsletter by Tobie Brown, a Summers descendant of the first pioneer settlers in the area which became Vernon County, Missouri.**

# # # #

This newsletter is published by the Cedar & Vernon County Missouri Genealogical Society, a 501(c)(3) organization.

2023 Officers of the Society are

President, Valo J.  
Treasurer, Marty P.

Recording Secretary, Lynda B.  
Newsletter Editor & Webmaster, Nancy T.

Calendar year 2024 Society Dues are \$10 per person, \$15 per couple in the same household, \$100 lifetime per person. Dues and can be mailed to:

Cedar & Vernon Co MO Gen Soc  
Attn: Membership  
218 W. Walnut St.  
Nevada, MO 64772

The monthly emailed newsletter and free lookups in the new cemetery database are benefits of membership.

*Thank You for your membership in support  
of the work of the Genealogical Society*