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Yates City: A Time to
Remember



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VATES CITY



**A TIME TO
REMEMBER
1776 - 1976**



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ILLINOIS HISTORICAL SURVEY

PREFACE

To honor our town, community and our Nation in its Bicentennial year, we fondly dedicate the memories recorded here for young and old to enjoy.

America

Men who moulded our foundation

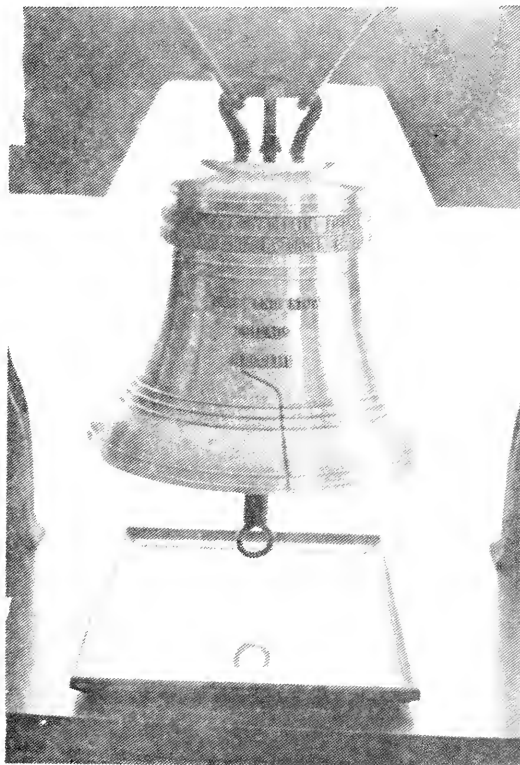
Endured the hardships of time

Reached their goals and

Ideals

Courage to face the future

America, we salute you.



"LET FREEDOM RING"



(Aerial photo courtesy of Mr. Bill Lewis)

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YATES CITY - MY HOMETOWN

They had been five months on the trail from Pennsylvania and had encountered storms, floods, breakdown, diseases, Indians, and death. Now winter was fast approaching and soon they must stop and build shelter for themselves and their animals. As they came upon an east ridge running north-east and southwest, two beautiful valleys appeared. Despite the threat of wild animals and Indians, it was decided that they would remain in this area for the winter if water could be found - for to travel further meant an unquestionable fate.

The following day, several men set out to find water and eventually Swab Run and French Creek to the north and Kickapoo Creek to the south were to be the sources. The time was September, 1834.

That first winter took its toll in animal and human life. But as spring approached, the remaining settlers decided that this was to be their new home. They set about raising crops and with the aid of nearby Indians they started to establish a site for later expansion.

More people came and with the natural process of population growth, the settlement grew. By 1857, six landowners - William Babcock, Thompson Maple, Rufus Bishop, Bostwick Kent, James Burson and Henry Burson - gave legal release to their land holdings. And on October 20th, 1857, Elias T. Byram, Knox County Surveyor, laid out blocks and lots and Section 11, Salem Township, consisting of six hundred forty acres was duly established and the streets, alleys, and public squares were released to the people with the intersection of said section at Main and Union Streets. The first business house was erected that same year on the SE corner of Main and Union Streets, but the nucleus of the business district was to be one block south on Market Street because it was closer to the depot. Numerous businesses have been established in the past one hundred nineteen years including - grocery stores, saloons, service stations, hotels, cafes, doctor and dentist offices, livery stables, blacksmith shops, cement block factory, drug stores, poultry ranch, auto sales, auto repairs, furniture stores, harness shops, implement stores, lumberyards, theatre, barber shops, clothing stores, hardware stores, carpentries, watch and clock repair, funeral parlors, printing equipment, billiard and pool halls, florists, law offices, insurance agencies, hairdressers, plumbing establishments, radio and TV repair, mill and elevator, millinery shop, sorghum factory.

Although the first locomotive in the United States appeared in 1829, twenty-eight years were to pass before one made its entrance into the small hamlet. And for many years after 1857, it was not unusual to reach the "mound" east of town, get off and push, then run along and jump back on. The Peoria & Oquawka was given the first railroad rights, followed by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy in 1899 and the Burlington-Northern in 1970.

On February 14, 1859, the Post Office was established with William Dixon as the 1st postmaster. Sixteen others have served in that position since its inception. Rural Route No. 20 was established on December 2, 1901, with Charles H. Kerr as the 1st carrier. In late 1949, the Star Route service was inaugurated between Yates City and Peoria. The new Post Office was dedicated in 1961.

School District No. 9 was set apart from District No. 1 and District No. 7 in 1859 with a tax of forty cents being levied for school purposes. An election was held for the site of the new school - one block south of the tracks, one north of Main Street. The result was the northern location because the people north of the tracks did not want their children endangered by passing trains. There were four persons in the 1st graduating class of 1894 as they received their diplomas from the "hallowed halls". By 1915, it was found necessary to have two districts - No. 147 for the grade school, No. 171 for the high school. Numerous additions were made to the school, and in 1951, District 207 was formed as a result of the consolidation of Salem Township and adjoining territory. The grade school addition, cafeteria, and gymnasium were opened to use in 1959.

These early people were extremely religious and in due time four religions came into existence. Between 1864 and 1865, the Baptists commenced a house of worship. As difficulties arose among the members, their site was sold to the Methodist Episcopal Church people. The First Methodist Church was completed and dedicated on May 10, 1868. Prior to the Methodists, but after the Baptists, the Presbyterian Church was organized on November 16, 1866. Two months before the authorization of the Presbyterian Church, a Universalist Church was organized. Their building was completed in the same year and was used by other denominations until their own houses of worship were completed. On June 25, 1967, the Methodists and Presbyterians merged into one faith - Presbyterian. A Baptist group appeared in 1971 and established their church on the SE corner of Union and Bishop streets.

A special charter was issued in 1869 and Yates City became incorporated as a village. It was named by William Babcock for his former home Yates County, New York.

By 1886, the population had surpassed fourteen hundred. The roads were dirt, the sidewalks were board (if anything); the lawns were fenced with each family having its own cows, pigs, and poultry running free within the enclosure; transportation in good weather was by foot, horse, or horse and buggy - in bad weather - foot, bobsled or sleigh.

Mr. A. H. McKeighan, editor of the Industrial Banner, felt that due to the growth and prosperity of the village, a celebration of the harvesting of the wheat and oats should occur. So, in the summer of 1886, the first Harvest Home was held. It was strictly a "horse and buggy" affair, but through the years it became one of the best affairs around. The first celebrations were held in the school yard and the main attraction was a ride for 5¢ or six rides for a quarter. That ride, of course, was a 4-seated swing seat propelled by a horse and called the "Merry-Go-Round". Another big attraction was the balloon ascension. Later, the Harvest Home moved to the Village Park, and in 1936, to the Harvest Home Park.

As for financial interests in the village, the Farmers Bank was chartered in 1871. By 1889, a People's Bank had been chartered. In 1906, it was found feasible to merge the Farmer's Bank and the People's Bank and the Bank of Yates City was formed. A new bank was built and dedicated in 1965.

Organizations - secretive and otherwise came and went. Among them - AF&AM No. 448 (1865), Royal Arch Masons No. 98 (1866), IOOF No. 207 (1868), Eastern Star No. 256 (1894), Modern Woodmen Camp No. 3102 (1895), Rebekah Lodge No 561 (1902), Mystic Workers of the World (1902),

Yates City Woman's Club (1914), American Legion Post No. 461 (1921), Salem Scissor Sisters (1921), Boy Scouts of America (1931), Legion Auxiliary No. 461 (1931), Home Bureau (1933), PTA Revival (1940), Girl Scouts of America (1950), Junior Woman's Club (1956), Cub Scouts of America (1956), Lions Club (1958).

Electric lights came to the village in 1892; telephone service was installed in 1901; pipe lines carrying gas were introduced in 1931; water was piped to customers in 1942.

On September 22, 1906, much of Yates City's business district was destroyed by fire. A fire fighting apparatus call the "Old Cyclone" had been purchased from Elmwood but upon its first use, it was found that the cylinder leathers were dried out, so the fire was battled by the "bucket brigade". In 1939, the Salem-Elba Fire District was established and the new Fire Station was erected and dedicated in 1975.

The Village Park was purchased in 1909 and is the site of the sea level marker and bandstand. A World War I cannon was placed in cement in 1936 but was donated as scrap-iron in 1942. A memorial to all veterans was placed in the park during World War II but was partially destroyed by a tornado. The Legion is now in the process of replacing the old marker with a newer one containing the names of Korean War veterans and Vietnam War veterans along with the older listing.

Through the estate of Mrs. Nettie Jacquith Crobin, the Salem Township Library was built and officially opened September 5, 1925. The library has had four librarians in its forty-seven year period, Clara Batdorf, Eva Chamberlain, Mabel Tate and Leita Mathews.

There are four cemeteries in Salem Township - Yates City, Douglas, Uniontown, and Blakeslee. The oldest marker is found in Blakeslee, 1831, and is presumed to be the burial place of an Indian.

Fifteen thousand persons were estimated to have attended the Centennial Celebration in 1957. It was not a "horse and buggy" affair, but a real extravaganza with the resumption of the balloon ascension of the many years past. The entire community helped on the various committees and the "Centennial Belles" from two days old to ninety years old participated in the advertising of the affair by marching en masse at other celebrations throughout the western area of Illinois. And to find a clean-shaven man in the Village was almost impossible. It was a great deal of work but a real memory for anyone who participated in any way.

For many people, looking back is a sign of old age. But we'll go back into time and refer to the "Good Old Days". Do any of you remember --

The Underground Railroad Movement?

The Ku Klux Klan terrorizing the community and its inhabitants into doing "moral things" they had never before found immoral?

The Yates City Bank playing in the middle of Main and Union Streets eight and one-half feet above the ground on a platform built in the "Old Tower"?

The Democrat who ran into the tower, and thus, it was moved to a safer place?

The basketball player in the "Old Opera House" who fell under the stove, shot for the basket, made it, and won the game for Yates City?

The movement of the depot in 1903?

The "grand fireworks" of the 1904 Harvest Home when a spark lit up the entire display at one time?

The crowd at the Harvest Home in 1905 was 12000?

The construction of Route 8 in 1925?

The little girl who fell into the water works well before the site was covered?

The tornato west and southwest of town in 1942?

The tornado in town in 1953?

The bank robbery in 1968?

The bomb scare in school in 1971?

Or being women, how many of you remember Empire waistlines at the turn of the century? The hobble skirts of 1910? The peg top skirts of 1914? The abbreviated skirt having barely a ruffle in the 1920's? The dripping draperies and the uneven hemline in 1928? The casual clothes of the 40's? The full skirts of the 50's? the sexy-sixties? And the "Now Seventies"?

And on and on, but only a few of the people living now can remember the past. It is a heritage left to us by our parents and our grandparents, and is truly a great heritage for some of us.

Yates City is a small community but one where you are not afraid to go out of your home at night.

We have a small business district but adequate for most needs. Our volunteer fire department is one of the best in the State. Many people make sarcastic remarks about our school system, but we have no major problems as some of our neighboring schools have and our students maintain high scholastic standards when they go away to college. We have retained our importance as a major railroad center. Our community has contributed greatly to the defense of America's democratic beliefs - many stars have been displayed in our windows and far too many gold stars have blazoned from a darkened grief-stricken home. Many of our people have gone on to carve their names among the nation's contributors in politics, engineering, education, law, the entertainment field, business, etc. We are not an idle community - and despite our inadequacies, Yates City is HOME to a great many people.

We are the hopes and dreams of our forefathers and the ancestors of tomorrow. We have truly been given a rich heritage which we can value during our lives and leave to our posterity. No matter how small or obscure our community may become in the future, people will still refer to it as "Yates City, my hometown".

Mary Lee Maxwell Maxey



Bank of Yates City - north side of Main Street



East corner of Main and Union Streets on the north side



East corner of Main and Union Streets on the south side

A LOOK AT THE YATES CITY COMMUNITY IN THE SUMMER OF 1976

"In Knox County, just a stone's throw from the Peoria County line on the Burlington route is a cozy, home like little town . . . It is peopled with honest, industrious folk, who are content to live apart from the world's maelstrom of trade and wealth getting, and find in the peace and quiet of the village an existence that is almost ideal. Set in the midst of a valley, the purple hills rising in the distance, on a sunny slope that runs away toward the distant river, surrounded as far as the eye can see with the growing green--- such is Yates City!

Though she claims a little less than 1,000 inhabitants, this little city is progressive, as a glance will show. Her progression did not come in a day, to wither away and leave the dead ghost of a town, as has happened to innumerable other cities, but her growth has been slow throughout the years and her acquisitions measured more by quality than by quantity."

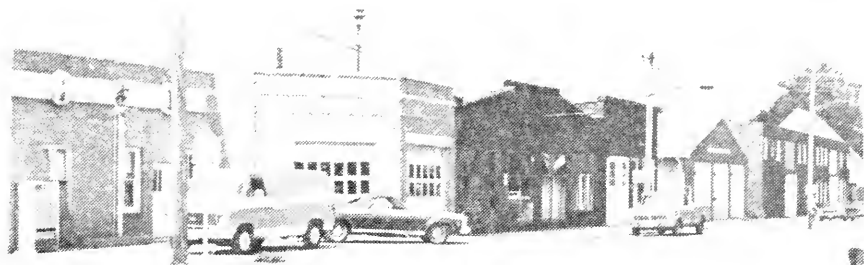
The description above appeared in an 1908 edition of the Peoria Herald Transcript in recognition of Yates City's 52nd birthday, yet it very nearly describes our community today. The last 68 years have not brought any gigantic changes to Yates City, growth has come in small ways, but the continual progress of the town and the industry of her people are evident in the public buildings and private businesses found here.

Many changes have been made on Main Street in the last five years. Entering Yates City from the east, one notices Joe's Garage, a busy automotive repair shop owned by Joe Schelkopf. He also operates a wrecker service. Another new addition is The Soft Spot, owned by Mrs. Marilyn Fowler and opened in 1975. It is a favorite place for refreshments after baseball games and school activities. Bill Fowler continues to run the Phillips 66 Station on the corner of Main and Kellogg.

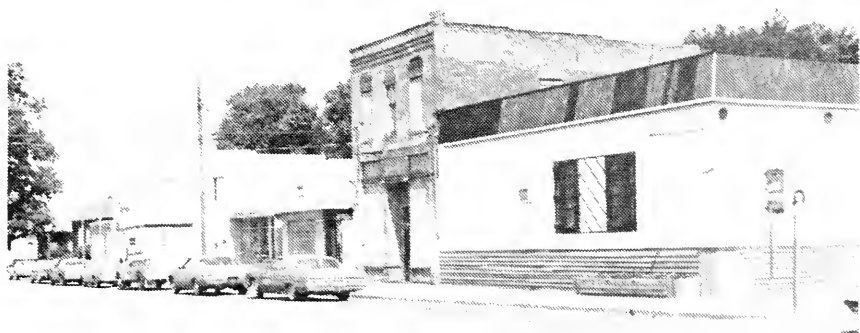
Central Park remains much the same as it was in the early 1900's, although the bandstand was remodeled in the 1960's and Purple Martin houses have been erected on the grounds. This year the Eastern Star turned it into a community Easter egg green and invited all the children of the town to hunt for eggs and candy. At Christmas, the Lion's Club places a big Yule tree in the center of the bandstand.

This spring the Bank of Yates City added an outdoor time and temperature sign to its property just west of the park. The new bank building opened in 1965 and offers convenient drive-up banking. Bob McKeighan is president of the bank. Next to it is Evalyn's Cafe, operated by Mrs. Evalyn Brewer on a site which has featured a restaurant for many years. Ralston Hardware Store, Mrs. Betty Ralston, proprietor, continues to serve the community immediately to the west of the restaurant. On the corner is the Standard Station, which has been operated by Richard Grubb since 1974.

Directly across Main Street from the station, Mrs. Donna Grubb has opened the Yates City Cafe. This building, formerly the bank, was remodeled as a restaurant in 1968. Mrs. Grubb has been the proprietor since 1973. Next to



West corner of Main and Union Streets on the south side



West corner of Main and Union Streets on the north side



New Fire Station - south side of Main Street

this cafe is Webber's Country Western Store, in business since Feb. of 1974. Many people come to town to buy boots and western wear at this busy store. Ronald and Wanda Webber recently helped sponsor a Horse Show for the benefit of the Yates City Rescue Unit. The Lion's Club Civic Center is located in the middle of the block on this side of the street and is used by many local groups for fund raising projects and by many individuals for reunions and receptions. Santa makes this building his headquarters when he comes to town. It has been available since 1964.

A busy corner of town is the northwest corner, which is the location of Ladd's market. Bill and Donna Ladd purchased the property in April of 1974 and remodeled the old Post Office building and grocery store on the site into a modern supermarket. The Saturday evening drawing for \$50.00 worth of groceries is always of interest to everyone.

Traveling down Main Street on the north side, one passes the Yates City Telephone office, built in 1960 by Darwin Prouty. The company offers services to 540 customers. Directly to the west of this building is the new Post Office which was opened in 1961. In 1970, route service was extended to include home delivery for persons erecting mailboxes in town. Willis "Bunk" Spafford is the Postmaster.

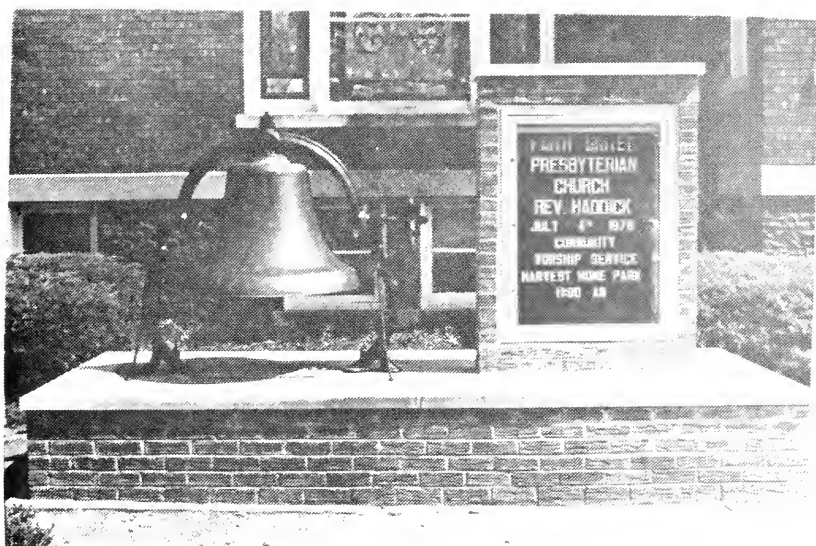
In the middle of this block is Hall's Brew Room, owned and operated by Robert and Pauline Hall since June of 1975. The city maintains an office for the water department in the old fire hall in the next building to the west. On the corner is the Salem Township Library, offering books, periodicals, art prints, records and films of all varieties for the community. As a member of the Western Illinois Library System, the library offers the same services that a metropolitan facility does. Mrs. Leita Mathews is the librarian.

Crossing the street at the corner of Elizabeth and Main, one sees Graves Milling Company, now operated by Raymond Graves. The mill is always a busy place and in the fall is a constant reminder that this is indeed a rural community. Across the street to the east is the Yates City Lumber Company, owned by James Howell. He has been in business for 22 years. The newly erected Fire House stands in the middle of this block and is an attractive addition to the public buildings. Built at a cost of \$40,000, it houses the town's two fire trucks, the pumper truck and the newly acquired Rescue Unit 1-2-3-4. Bob Foster is Fire Chief of the 35 member volunteer crew. The community is proud of the protection they offer.

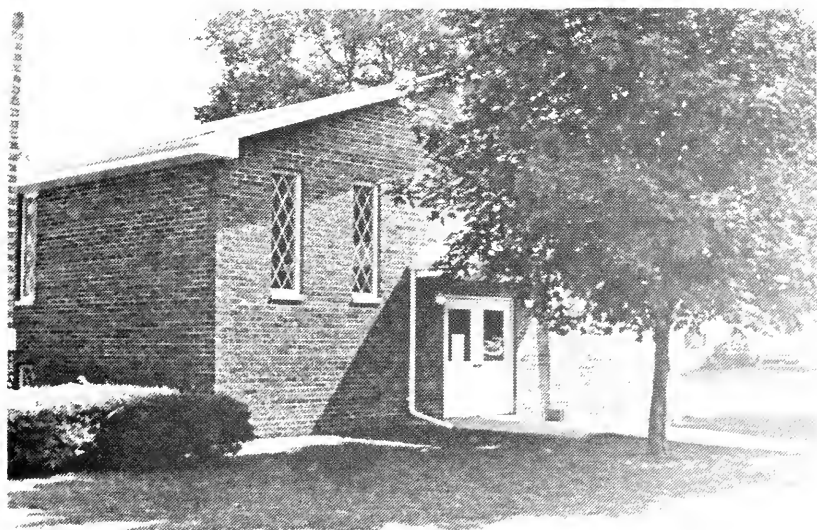
The City Building stands directly to the east of the Fire House and is the center of the city board's activities; it is also headquarters for the police officers and used generally for community service. Two years ago it was redecorated and is truly considered a pleasant place to hold meetings, bake sales, etc. Mrs. Greta Kumlander uses this building for her pre-school groups during the school year.

The two properties at the end of the block are vacant now, but around the corner on Union Street is Tom and Sally's Locker Service and Grocery Store. Taken over by Tom and Sally Endres in April, 1974, this plant is a real necessity in the town and many people from surrounding communities use their meat processing service. On the same side of the street and to the south is Casey's Tap, owned by Frank "Casey" Coykendall.

North of Main Street on Union is Jerry's Barber Shop, opened in 1970 by Jerry Cople. The old stained glass shop sign in his window was moved from the



Memorial marker on grounds of Faith United Presbyterian Church



New Fellowship Hall of the Faith United Presbyterian Church

old shop which had been located across the street, now part of Ladd's Market. The Brite Star Laundromat is situated directly to Jerry's north. This business was introduced to Yates City in 1962. It is currently owned by Clyde Hedden of Farmington, Illinois.

Scattered throughout the town are numerous businesses which are operated in conjunction with the owner's home. The B & R Bait Shop is run by Barry and Barbara Sprout on the corner of Burson and Ames Street. Tri-County T.V. is operated by Frank and Shirley Wagner. Harmon Stump Removal is the enterprise of Royce Harmon, Larry Allen has a small gun shop, Rodney Blodgett owns and operates an excavating business, and there is Norton's Welding Shop on Maple Street. Carl Bowman is still in the horse shoeing business and Col. Russell Woodcock conducts sales and auctions. Even the young people are starting trades, Grenville Pridham has a well equipped bicycle repair shop in his parent's backyard.

Beauty Shops are located in almost all areas of town and the surrounding countryside. In the heart of town, Mrs. Helen Patterson operates her shop adjacent to her home. On the south side, Mrs. Betty Shideman owns the Y-C Hair Fashions Shop. On the north side, Mrs. Betty Diefendorf has Betty and Beth Ann's Beauty Shop. Mrs. Pauline VanWinkle has a shop on Bishop Street. On the eastern fringe of town, Mrs. Chris Landon has opened a shop, on the southern outskirts Mrs. Janice Saunders operates Jan's Shop and on the extreme western edge of the district, Mrs. Sandy Johnson has a shop.

Three insurance agencies are represented in the community. DuWayne and Aileen Mathews have the Mathews Agency, Bruce and Vivian Daley have the Daley Agency and John Van Sloan represents the Country Companies. Mathews and Daleys are also realtors.

Three trucking concerns which are based in Yates City are Jack and Kenny Burgess's Trucking, Eugene "Cappy" Turner's Trucking and Berwyn "Buzzy" Meehan's Trucking.

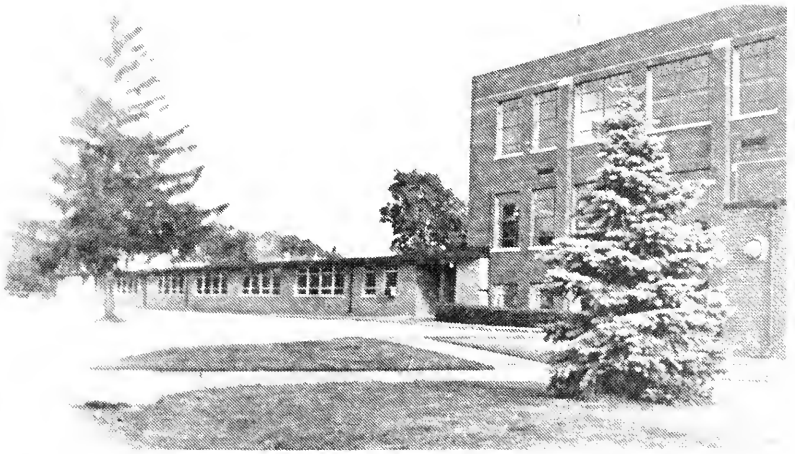
The B. Y. E. Ambulance Service is one of the town's most recent accomplishments. The ambulance, purchased by donated funds from the people of Brimfield, Yates City and Elmwood, provides emergency assistance to residents of the area, putting them in direct connection with the hospitals of Peoria, Balesburg and Canton. Volunteer crews staff the service.

Civic pride is noted in several other improvements in the town. A new Fellowship Hall, dedicated in April, 1974, as an educational and social building for the Faith United Presbyterian Church, is an attractive split level structure which serves the entire community. A new memorial brick marker and bulletin board has recently been constructed on the church grounds; it displays the old steeple bell from the former Methodist Church, which merged with the Presbyterian congregation in 1967 to form the new community church. Rev. Ben Haddick is the pastor.

The Yates City school district voted to enlarge its facilities in 1957 to include a new gymnasium, a 14 room grade school and a cafeteria at a cost of \$375,000. A dedication ceremony and open house was held on March 13, 1960, for this unique system, which operates under one roof with the connecting buildings containing all 12 grades. In 1960 the grade school enrollment was 280 and the high school 100. In 1976 the grade school enrollment is 262 and the high school is 134. Charles Herridge is superintendent.



School addition - view of the west side



Grade school addition - - view of the north side



Grace Baptist Church - corner of Union and Bishop Streets

In August of 1965, a new pavilion was completed in the Harvest Home Park for the display of produce, bakery goods and handiwork. A large sign was placed on Main Street in 1971, which directs the way to the park for Harvest Home visitors from out of town.

Growth of the town is clearly noted as one drives through the residential areas. Two new additions have been developed; the Howell addition is located on the north side of town and the Daley addition on the northwest side. Both feature modern ranch style homes. Three new blocks of streets have been opened in the last two years.

On the corner of Union and Bishop Streets, a newly formed church, the Grace Bible Church, holds religious services. It also offers a Bible camp on the north countryside. Rev. Clarence Hopkins is minister.

Douglas, which is an integral part of this community, is home of the Hoffman Seed Company, managed by James F. McKeighan, and of Grace Fertilizer Company, managed by Larry Lark. The Douglas Methodist Church is still an active fellowship; Rev. Carroll Ochsner is the minister. The Tri-County Flying Club is situated between Yates City and Douglas and offers airport facilities for private planes.

In 1908, an Elmwood newspaper described Yates City, in honor of her 52nd birthday, in this way: "Fifty-two years has this city been growing, although slowly, yet in a way and manner as will make the town stand as one of example and influence for all time to come. Her people are of the sort that makes living here a joy and peace and the younger generation now coming has already displayed the energy that will after awhile figure prominently in making Yates City one of the best towns in grand old Illinois."

In 1976, we would still agree with that analysis.

Article - Judith Rogers
Photographs by Sam Norton

PRESIDENT LINCOLN VISITS YATES CITY

The Yates City Bicentennial Commission held a kickoff celebration Sunday, July 6th, 1975. Community church services were held at 11:00 A.M. conducted by the Reverends, Carroll Oschner, Clarence Hopkins, and Ben Haddick. Special music was presented by the Elmwood Choir and Robbie Bird of Maquon.

Afternoon festivities began with the summer band playing "The Star Spangled Banner", followed by the presentation of the United States flag, the official Bicentennial flag, the Illinois State flag and the newly designed Village of Yates City flag. The flags were accepted by Mayor Neal Watters and raised by the American Legion. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Scout Troops.

The Village Flag was designed by Larry Payton, winner of a contest open to all the community school children, and constructed by a group of older ladies of the community. Larry was presented a \$25.00 Savings Bond by the Mayor on behalf of the Village.

Highlight of the day was a speech by President Lincoln, portrayed by David Hartlipp, who was accompanied by his wife, dressed as Mary Todd Lincoln. Mr. Hartlipp has been portraying President Lincoln since 1958 and is a candidate for the State Lincoln. His speech contained many of the mannerisms and humor attributed to Lincoln. Following his speech, he mingled with the people, shaking hands and visiting.

A replica of the Liberty Bell, numerous flags, historical records, pictures and other items were displayed in various places along Main Street.

The day ended with homemade ice cream, pie and cake being served in Central Park.

(reprinted from The Yates City Banner - July 10, 1975)



*Flag of the Village of
Yates City*



Bicentennial Queen and her court: Lulu Bowman, Lela Webber, Florence Kelley, Florence Dikeman



*Junior Queen and her court:
Jody Coykendall, Terry Haley,
Kathy Blodgett,
Diane Reed and Laura Reynolds,
not pictured.*



*Yates City's oldest citizen,
Mrs. Bessie Heller*

HISTORICAL DISPLAY DEPICTS 'BYGONE DAYS'

Approximately 200 people registered at the Historical Display held in Yates City on February 22, 1976. Sponsored by the community's Bicentennial Commission, the display featured dresses, quilts, tools, pictures, furniture, toys and documents.

The Heritage Committee of the Commission planned and arranged the display; Mrs. Roletta Mottaz was chairman, working with Mrs. Irene Richardson, Mrs. Kathleen Woodcock, Mrs. Emma Sieben, Mrs. Judy Rogers, Mrs. Leita Mathews, Mrs. Muriel Davis, Mrs. Dorothy Cooper, Mr. John Payton, Mr. DeWayne Mathews. Mr. J. W. Burrows handled the setting up of the display tables; Mr. and Mrs. Gary Edwards were in charge of the refreshments and Mrs. Carol Jean Cox directed the publicity.

Many people brought items of interest pertaining to their family history. Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Ramp and Mrs. Eunice Mathews displayed historical data from the Ramp and Bailey families, both early settlers of this area. Mrs. Robert McKeighan showed wedding dresses worn by her ancestors. Mrs. Earl Rogers featured the sword and discharge papers of her grandfather, who was in the Civil War. Mr. and Mrs. Glen Dikeman had many interesting mementoes and pictures of her forebearers, including a portrait of her Great Uncle Frisbe Phelps. Miss Marie and Miss Wilda Broadfield of Peoria brought some family heirlooms for display as did Mrs. Nina Elliott, Mrs. Ora Bell, and Mrs. Florice Bowhay.

Clay marbles and a bullet maker could be seen at the table of Mrs. Russell Woodcock and Mrs. Jim Sheley. Mrs. Dorothy Cooper and Mr. Harold Dikeman played old records on their Victrola and showed old dress patterns among other items. A beautiful spinning wheel which belonged to Mr. Loreign Sieben's Grandmother, highlighted their display. Mr. and Mrs. Lee Lopeman exhibited an old child's tea set as part of their contribution to the past revisited. A baby doll belonging to Mrs. Lulu Bowman graced a table which also featured a 200 year old afghan owned by Mrs. Alma Dailey.

Antique dishes were shown with care and pride by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bird of Maquon, Mrs. Joe Kennedy of Knoxville and her sister of Bellvidere. Mrs. Grace Payton and Mrs. John Payton shared tables and exhibited stoneware and china as part of their display. Mrs. Florence Kelley shared some of the history of her display of antique tableware as did Mrs. Tom Ralston and Mrs. Paul Richardson.

Mr. Robert Boyer brought in his "old" 1946 motorcycle which was a favorite exhibit of the younger men in the crowd.

Quilts of various patterns and designs were arranged for display by Mrs. Glen Rogers and Mrs. Isal Turner. Mrs. Glen Rogers also made numerous Bicentennial posters which added to the decoration of the gym. Brownie Pack No. 439 joined in the celebration by preparing colorful posters of places in Yates City for display at the event.

Old Documents of interest were viewed at Mr. Bruce Howard's and Mr. George Breckenridge's tables and Rev. Ben Haddick showed materials removed from the cornerstone of the old Methodist Church.

Mr. George Moore and Mrs. Stanton Moore, of Knoxville, provided historical material. Mr. Moore drew a poster depicting the early settlement of Yates City in connection with the railroad and Mrs. Moore sent a Bicentennial Bible for display.

Other exhibitors were Mr. Frank Gorham, Mrs. Faye Allen, Mrs. Edna Taylor, Mr. Stanley Gooding, Mr. Jerald Bowers, Mrs. Myrtle Sargent and Mr. and Mrs. Jim Maxwell.

A slide presentation was presented twice during the afternoon by Mr. Bruce Howard of Elmwood. It featured people, places and events of Yates City from early history up to and including the July 6th celebration sponsored by the Commission last summer.

Rose corsages were presented to the Harvest Home Queen, Mrs. Lulu Bowman and her court, Mrs. Lela Webber, Mrs. Florence Kelley and Mrs. Florence Dikeman and to the junior queen, Miss Jody Coykendall and her attendant Miss Terri Haley and little Laura, granddaughter of Rev. and Mrs. Ben Haddick. Mrs. Bessie Heller, who at 93 is Yates City's oldest citizen was also honored.

Mrs. Bernice Bowers set the festive mood for the afternoon by entertaining the crowd with old musical selections on the piano.

(reprinted from The Yates City Banner - Feb. 26, 1976)

DANNY BYBEE WINS IN BICENTENNIAL ESSAY CONTEST

Danny Bybee, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ernie Bybee, Lowell Staggs, son of Mr. and Mrs. Willard Staggs, and Larry Payton, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Payton, were winners in the Yates City Bicentennial Essay Contest for the 6th, 7th and 8th grades.

Mrs. Louis Rogers and Mrs. Loreign Sieben, members of the Heritage Committee of the Bicentennial Commission, announced the top honors at a school assembly Tuesday, March 30, 1976. Each winner was awarded a Yates City Centennial Yearbook and the First Place Winner, Danny Bybee, was also presented Bicentennial coins.

Twenty-two students, under the tutelage of Mrs. Marie Smith, language teacher at the school, entered the contest. The papers were submitted for judging by number and were ranked according to interest and presentation. Mr. and Mrs. Kent Kowal, former English instructors at Farmington High School, served as judges.

Each participant was awarded a Bicentennial Penny folder for their help in this event and Mrs. Smith was presented a small gift for her assistance.

(reprinted from The Yates City Banner, April 8, 1976)



Essay winners: Larry Payton, Lowell Staggs, Danny Bybee

IT TOOK COURAGE

During the year of 1865 a small girl came to what is now Yates City. This girl was nine years old. Her name was Margaret (Bloss) Coykendahl. When she first came to Yates City there were only three homes. Our Main Street now was a cornfield then.

When Margaret was only one year old her father died leaving her, her three year old sister, and her mother. A few years later her mother married a man by the name of Hensler. He and her mother had five more children.

Smallpox was a very dreaded disease, and usually fatal. Mr. Hensler had learned of the expensive smallpox vaccine. He would pay to have his own children vaccinated, but not his step children.

Margaret, being well aware of the dreaded disease, did a very unusual thing. She scratched a place on her own arm until it was raw and bled. Then she removed the scab from her step sisters vaccinated arm, and put it on her own arm. She then bandaged it. Margaret had vaccinated herself.

Later in her life a very bad outbreak of smallpox occurred. One lady in her 60's was needing care and no one would help her because of fear of getting smallpox. Margaret was willing to help the lady because she had vaccinated herself and never did get smallpox.

Margaret Coykendahl was my great-great-grandma.

Written by Danny Bybee, as told to him by his grandpa, Robert Bird.

1st place winner

SEVERAL LOCAL LEGENDS

In the mid eighteen hundreds a stage coach line ran from Galesburg to Peoria. This line happened to run through Union Town in the Salem Township. It happened one summer day that a robbery attempt had been uncovered by the men supervising the stage coach run. The message was relayed to the stage coach which had, by then, reached Union Town. When word got to the driver, he was desperate to hide the money somewhere so that it would not be stolen by the band of thieves waiting to rob it from the money box. After much indecision he finally chose to bury the money box right where they stood. This, of course, foiled the robbers' plans of raking the money box, but the box has to this day, never been recovered although many attempts have been launched to regain the treasure.

Another local story is centered around the old Wolf Covered Bridge. It is said that a witch by the name of Rachel haunts the area surrounding the bridge. It is said that at night you can see the dim light of a candle flickering in the darkness of the caves surrounding the covered bridge. This is where Rachel lives; the bridge is where she haunts. The name "Rachel" was, at one time, written in blood on the bridge. Some say it was a high school prank; others say it was Rachel herself. One of the best known stories about Rachel, among local junior high and high school students happened several years ago.

It was a clear summer eve and a full moon loomed high overhead. For some untold reason a couple of lovers were out on a drive and decided to park near the entrance to the bridge. As they settled down together the couple was interrupted by a bloodcurdling scream. When the bewildered and frightened pair looked up they were aghast at what they saw - a ghastly old woman called Rachel perched atop the car's hood! After being frozen with shock for several seconds the young man started the engine and tore into reverse. The sudden backward acceleration flung her off the hood. The car sped away but not unscathed. To this day the young man's automobile bears the fingernail scratches of Rachel across the hood.

By Lowell Staggs
2nd place winner

YATES CITY HARVEST HOME

The first Harvest Home was held in 1886. A. H. McKeighan was the man who started it. It was held for the harvest of corn and oats. After that it became a tradition. At first it was just a picnic when people would come in horses and buggies. At first Harvest Home was held in the schoolyard. When the new school buildings were erected there was no room for the Harvest Home, so it was held at Central Park. It was always crowded there, so the gathering was moved to the first Harvest Home Park, a lot purchased from the railroad.

For some reason when the American Legion took over it was moved back to Central Park, but moved to Harvest Home Park shortly afterwards. During World War 2 there were no Harvest Home celebrations.

Today about 1,000 people will show up for Harvest Home. In 1905 there was a crowd of an estimated 12,000. People from Peoria and Canton came to the Harvest Home on the CB&Q Railroad. Back then they had fireworks displays, balloon launching, trapeze acts, and things like firing a man out of a cannon.

By Larry Payton
3rd place winner



YATES CITY HOLDS BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR AMERICA IN HARVEST HOME PARK

Residents of Yates City celebrated the nation's 200th birthday, Sunday, July 4, with a full day's activities in Harvest Home Park.

A bicentennial worship service at 11 A.M. was held under the produce pavilion, which was arrayed for the occasion with a display of the Bicentennial Flag, the American Flag and the Village of Yates City Flag. Congregations of the Yates City and Elmwood Presbyterian Churches, the Grace Bible Church and the Douglas Methodist Church joined together to make the service a community one.

Rev. Carroll Ochsner of the Douglas Methodist Church gave the message, "The Land of the Free", reminding the congregation that as Christians they have a decided part to play in the future history of our country. He expressed his belief that America did not just happen— that it was caused and represents a part of God's design. He reminded his listeners that theirs is the task to bring America closer to perfection.

Rev. Ben Haddick, of the Elmwood and Yates City Presbyterian Churches, gave the invocation and the prayer. The parish choir sang "God of Our Fathers Whose Almighty Hand" and "America the Beautiful". Louis Rogers sang a solo, "The House I Live In".

Mrs. Patricia Althiser was pianist and Mr. Harold Dikeman was in charge of the physical properties used in the service.

The afternoon program opened at 2 P.M. with the Lucky Ladies opposing the Gorgeous Gals in a softball game. The second attraction featured the Mighty Men vs. the Brave Boys.

Bicentennial cakes, baked and decorated by Mrs. Dots Payton, Mrs. Mary Crenshaw, Mrs. Carol Gorham, Mrs. Helen Allen, and Mrs. Charlotte Booth, were auctioned off between the games. Col. Russell Woodcock was auctioneer, selling the cakes for a total of \$65. Richard Booth presented one of the cakes to the crowd in celebration of the birthday party; 13 candles were lighted, "Happy Birthday" was sung, and the cake cut and passed around.

An old-fashioned ice cream social highlighted the afternoon. It featured home made ice cream cakes and pies, all donated by Yates City area residents. Ice tea and lemonade were also available.

The entire day's program was planned by the Commission and all members assisted in the project.

(Anytime Bicentennial material is discussed, mention is always made of the older residents of the community and of how interesting it is to hear them tell about how things were "back when". Our committee wanted to include some of these remembrances but weren't exactly sure how to solicit or how to compile them. We decided that taped interviews would be the means and that material gleaned from them would be arranged according to subjects.)



HARVEST HOME

Bessie Heller, born on July 30, 1882 and our oldest resident, remembers the first Harvest Home held in Yates City when she was five years old. She recalls that in her Uncle Jack Coykendall's room, over where Helen's Beauty Shop is now, there was a big pile of false faces to be used in the parade. Another recollection is of a hay rack with people on it who were depicting the skinning of a cat. She is not sure that this was in the first parade or a bit later. She also recalls that one year in front of the old white wooden school house where the balloon ascension was being prepared, one young man with a pretty bay horse got his horse's foot caught in the buggy next to it and the horse really cried out.

Daisy McMasters recalls her first solo attendance at the Harvest Home at the age of 16. She says that she came from Farmington on the No. 713. The train was packed. She had sat up the night before finishing her dress, the material for which cost 3¢ a yard. It featured two panels trimmed with lace with velvet ribbon running through. The lace was expensive also at 3¢ a yard. She recalls that she had \$1.50 to spend and really felt rich. It was more than enough to cover the expenses of the day, including lunch and riding on the horse drawn merry-go-round. Bea Westbay states that the merry-go-round was the main feature of the affair.

Glen Threw states that the Harvest Home was an occasion to hitch up the team to the surrey, pack up a picnic lunch and head into Yates City for the day. Merle Daley recalls that they tied the team to the hedge fence, leaving the horses to watch the food, for it was an all day event. She and her Aunt Pearl regularly attended with her grandparents, Walter and Roletta Dikeman. It was the time of their life-- they counted on it every year.

Ethel Simkins remembers going to the great event in the old Democrat Wagon. She recalls the big barrel of water supplied for the people, with its tin cups hanging down all around the edge. If you didn't drink all of it, you just threw it out on the ground. It became quite a mess by the end of the day. The barrel also served as a cooler for babies' bottles. Ethel remembers Ralph Tyler, who was the announcer for so many years, and the gasoline run merry-go-round, which could be ridden 20 times for \$1.

Ethel Cunningham has stated many times that she always had three new dresses for the all day affair. Her granddaughter, Fern Fuller tells that her grandmother had many visitors Harvest Home day who used her home for changing clothes and for eating their picnic dinner. She did not necessarily know all of them.

Evidently the town kids had an advantage in previous years; if they got to the grounds early, chances are they got a free ride on the merry-go-round. At least Fern and Vera Taylor always tried to. Lela Webber claims the rides were free the night before the celebration. Harley Fuller often met the trains on Harvest Home day, escorting the people to the school grounds. Special trains came from Peoria, Galesburg and St. Louis.

Edna Sherman recalls that at one of the celebrations the fireworks went off prematurely at the school yard park. A spark ignited them and everyone scampered for safety behind trees and whatever. Several people have verified this report.

Earl Rogers remembers that the balloon ascension held often as a part of the festival was held at various places: the cow pasture north of the depot, north of the Taylor house, the hotel and earlier in the school yard.

THE BAND

The Yates City Band is fondly remembered by many of the older citizens. Eunice Mathews states that it was composed of civic minded older residents; it was not a kid's organization. The group practiced studiously and gave a good performance. Raymond Mathews states that at one time they used the tower in the center of town for their grandstand, making a platform on it about eight or ten feet up. Later the bandstand in the center of the park featured a concert for many a Saturday night.

Raymond Mathews recalls when the fire tower was a big attraction for him. He and his father climbed up in it to see the Sam Adams' farm when it burned. This farm was located one half mile south of Elba, just north of Lynn Sherman's farm.

BUSINESSES

Alma Daley recalls the businesses in Yates City at the time she went to third grade (approx. 1904). Where the mill is today was the Livery Stable, operated by Richard Craig and Chambers Mathews. The Lumber Yard was located where it is today with a grocery store where the oil station is next to Tom and Sally's Locker Plant. The Yates City Bank was located on the corner where the Yates City Cafe is today. East of that was Frank Chamberlain's Furniture Store. Further east was Dr. Hensley's office, where Lois Wells had her variety store. Mr. Lower had a man's clothing store, which Mr. German later took over. Mr. Lower had his home where Helen's Beauty Shop is now.

North Side Main Street, Yates City, Ill.



*Main Street in the late 1890's
(old postcard courtesy of Lyle Thurman)*

On the other side of the street where the library is today was a millinery shop. Mr. Stetson had a clothing store next door where yard goods were purchased. The Opera House covered quite an area next. A meat market run by Mr. Burry and Mr. Sloan was on the corner. Across the street where the Standard Station is today was a grocery store run by Jim Hensley; this was a superior store, according to Alma. She often bought a nickel's worth of cheese and a nickel's worth of crackers, which made a quite sufficient school lunch. Jim Triutt's law office was upstairs in the next building; below the office was a barber shop run by Fred Taylor. The post office was beside it where you could buy cigars, etc. from the postman Gilbert Layman, who was there for years. A small restaurant was on the corner next to the park where Glenn Dalton later had a garage.

Alma reports that her Grandmother ran an eating house—they were never called restaurants at that time—when they first come to Yates City. The number of trains made it a profitable endeavor.

Hazel Bantz Tompkins was the daughter of the blacksmith who operated the shop on the vacant corner across from the present gymnasium. Her family lived above the shop until her father bought the old hotel located on Market Street. He moved it to the present site just east of the Presbyterian Church. Hazel remembers the Opera House, which was a two story building on Main Street across from the City Building. She attended many plays and home talent programs there, not to mention the dances. She remembers that Mr. Kightlinger ran the American Hotel across the street from the depot. It was a busy place with ten to twelve trains entering Yates City daily. The sales persons regularly stayed there, renting a horse and buggy from the Livery Stable. They would then travel through the countryside, visiting the stores in Elmwood, Farmington, Williamsfield, etc. and return to the Yates City Hotel for lodging.

Raymond Mathews recalls bringing the eggs to Eads' Store, located where the Standard Station is now. His mother's butter was always sought after and someone was usually waiting to purchase a pat.

Lulu Bowman remember that her family seldom went to town. She says that when she and Edson were married, he raised vegetables to sell and soon they started the greenhouse and sold plants to Yates City residents for many years.

Grace Payton, who was born in the Elba neighborhood, was 14 years old when her family moved into town. She often visited with her grandparents and her Aunt Ida while her parents went grocery shopping.

Lela Webber recalls that the Chautauqua came to town and set up a tent on the grounds where Lulu Bowman's house is across from the school. They came for a week with a program every night. Lela judges them very good and worth while. At times, there was a tent put up for a roller skating rink.

Eunice Mathews recalls that her grandfather Lauren Fletcher was a Jack of All Trades. He at one time was an undertaker, and implement dealer, a hardware merchant and a buggy salesman. He had the first car in Yates City, which he built himself. Earlier he had built a covered wagon and traveled to Nebraska where he had set up a hardware business and had obtained some farm ground. He was called home by his parents because he was an only son and had to give up this Nebraska enterprise.

Florence Staggs recalls that her father bought the farm called the Shelton farm today and hired four or five men to help fell and saw the trees for lumber. The house there was built from the farm's lumber. She remembers that Mel Goodwin worked for her father for 11 years, coming when she was only four years old.

Edith Goodwin recalls that her father ran a pool hall and barber shop over one of the grocery stores in Douglas. The grocery store that was run by Billy Falls, burned fown in 1906 and was not rebuilt. The Tasker Greenhouse was known throughout the countryside. Edith lived next door and fondly relates that she still has a rose bush given to her by Nellie Tasker.

Alice and Frank Gorham were late comers to Douglas but recall that there were two stores, an elevator, a blacksmith shop, Tasker's greenhouse, a lumber yard, and trains that stopped every day. The church and the school were also important places for the townspeople. The community building was built the year they arrived, 1929, which was the year the community began celebrating The Labor Day. Douglas observed their centennial the year before Yates City and discontinued their Labor Day event the year after, in 1958. Frank came to

Douglas to work in the elevator and remembers vividly his first two customers—Frank Bowers and George Addis. They had come to sell some wheat and broke in a newcomer in no time flat!

CHURCH

Church played an important part in the life of the community and of the family. Hazel Tompkins was raised a Presbyterian and attended the church which was located on Main Street where the present library stands. She remembers the dedication of the present church building, and a year later the dedication of the Methodist Church on Main Street. She recalls that the fire bell rang during the services at the Methodist Church. This was the old fire bell which hung in the tower at the junction of Main and Union Streets in the center of town. There was a bucket brigade at that time.

Alma Daley recalls that the old Presbyterian Church contained two coal stoves in each corner at the back of the room which kept the janitors busy stoking them to keep the place comfortable through the winter.

Earl Rogers states that the Presbyterian Church building was moved from its foundation to a Main Street location so the present building could be erected. He remembers that the Methodist Church stood on the Lawrence property just west of the Presbyterian Church. One minister had such a strong voice he could be heard uptown on a summer day when the windows were open.

Mary Elliott tells that when they arrived in Yates City, her family was greeted by the Rev. Charles Cady, who was the minister in the new Methodist Church and who had been pastor only a few years previously in Monica, where the Elliotts had lived. He quickly introduced the family to the town and encouraged them to continue their singing here. They became active in the choir as a quartet: Luke sang bass, George sang tenor, Maude sang alto and Mary sang soprano.

The Uniontown residents remember their church fondly. Faye Allen who moved there after her marriage to Roy Allen, became a church member in 1915. Harry Bowers remembers this church fondly as the place where he first saw his later-to-be wife Bernice as she performed in the Children's Day exercises. Myrtle Sargent remembers that Jessie Payton was her Sunday School teacher. After Jessie's death, Mrs. Henry Thurman taught the class. She tells of the organist, Fred Conner, wiggling his ears to get the children to giggle. She drove her little black pony to church many times with him kicking up his heels on the way home, often through cold and snow.

SCHOOLS

The old country school house was the community gathering place. The neighbors often assembled at least once a month to hear the children recite or see them perform. It was a means of developing talents and friendships. Many times the schools nearby were included, especially in the spring when ball games were a part of the activity. The potluck meals and the box suppers are happy memories. Dress-up plays, hoe-downs, etc. were all a part of the festivities. The school was the center which molded a neighborhood into a community.

PLEASANT GROVE

Angie Kennelly grew up south of town and remembers that Mary Rogers, sister of Earl, was one of her teachers at Pleasant Grove. Sarah Bliss was also a pupil of this school. Attending Pleasant Grove for his first year, Earl Rogers remembers that Minnie Shives was there also for her first year as teacher. He recalls that many older boys were quite unruly and his father, one of the school board members, called in Mr. Boyes, the County Superintendent of Schools, to talk to the group. Mr. Boyes was more than adequate and soon had things under control. Mr. Boyes had formerly been the principal at the Yates City High School.

The Pleasant Grove community had another name. Apparently for social purposes, it was called the Bismark neighborhood.

PLEASANT HILL

Although born in Ohio, Florence Dikeman attended school first in 1899 at Pleasant Hill north of Yates City.

Grace Payton first taught school at Pleasant Hill in 1920, receiving \$80.00 a month.

COREY SCHOOL

Lulu Bowman attended the Corey School west of Yates City. She remembers that they seldom got into town.

Alma Daley was one of the three students at Corey School with Will Westbay and Bertha Berger. Miss Edna Ware was the teacher. After three years, it was decided that the pupils could attend the school in Yates City. She recalls that Mr. Boyer was superintendent of the town school and Lizzie Spickard was one of the teachers.

WEST UNION (FROG POND)

Nina Elliott recalls that she walked two miles each day to attend school at Frog Pond. Her home was where the Christ home is today.

BLUE SKY

Nina Elliott reports that she started and ended her teaching career at Blue Sky School. She started teaching there in 1909 when she was 18 years old; she earned \$30.00 a month. Her last assignment was to tutor the Apodaca boy when he was confined in his home in the winter of 1975. His family lives in the school, which has been converted into living quarters.

Bessie Heller was a pupil at Blue Sky and later taught there for three years. She attended this grade school all eight years; however, she recited at noon and recess for several years more. The teacher allowed her and Josie Andrews the privilege of taking two or three subjects beyond the eighth grade. She was 17 when she first taught and was paid \$30.00 a month to teach her five pupils. Her salary was later raised to \$35.00 a month when she taught 15 pupils at Cedar

Bluff north of Maquon.

The Mathews family attended Blue Sky including Edna, Floyd and Raymond. Raymond remembers that several Yates City girls were his teachers including Nina Elliott, Ethel Simkins and Ethel Swartzbaugh.

SOUTH ELBA

The Burley Lawrence family attended South Elba School. They lived on the curve west of the Kightlinger Hill north of Yates City. One of the girls, Grace Payton recalls that Roy Bowman was one of her teachers. Her family moved into town when she was 14 and she finished eighth grade and high school as a town resident.

Florice Bowhay reports that she was a pupil at South Elba when Will Allen and Roy Bowman taught there.

SALEM CENTER

Bernard Mathews grew up on the Mathews farm on the blacktop south of Yates City. He attended Salem Center. Harry Bowers and his sister Myrtle Sargent attended this school after their family moved to the home where Jerald Bowers presently lives.

UNIONTOWN

Merle Daley recalls that she first started school at Oakland but completed her schooling at Uniontown. Later Florence Dikeman was the teacher when she, Merle and her Aunt Pearl Buckman took some extra schooling past the eighth grade.

Harry Bowers and his sister Myrtle attended their first years at Shintown, better known as Uniontown. Her first teacher was Hugh Hunter of Hunter's corner north of Uniontown. They later moved only a few miles east which put them in the Pease Hill community, where they attended school.

DOUGLAS

Edith Goodwin recalls that her father, Thomas Beck, attended the Douglas school when it was taught on two floors. Ethel Simkins recalls her brothers telling about it. There was only one teacher there when she and Florence Staggs were pupils. After her mother passed away with typhoid fever, which her older sister Ethel also contacted, Florence had to quit school when she was in the eighth grade to care for the family. There were 11 in the family and much to be done.

Lela Webber, the youngest of the 11 Kay kids remembers the Douglas School. Mrs. Swigert and Mark Williams were two teachers that she recalls. Her family lived where the Leonard Hills farm is today and they moved into town where Lela attended high school. She recalls with fondness the fact that she was one of the players on the first basketball team for girls. The team was made up of Ethel Swartzbaugh, Bernice Wertz, Nina Webber, Merta North, June Slayton

and herself with Orville Webber as the coach. Their picture in black bloomers with sleeved tee shirts and long black stockings is terrific.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

The horse was a part of everyday life 80 and 90 years ago, and many residents have fond memories of them. Bessie Heller states that she often rode a horse to get the cows up from the pasture for her grandfather. Bessie stated that she even broke a horse to drive after she was married.

Alma Daley told about driving her horse and buggy to school where she was met by Mr. Mathews, who stabled it at the livery barn until the school day was over.

Bessie Heller related that one year they had 21 shoats stolen that were almost ready for market. The farmed east of Elmwood near the railroad track. At that time, there was no reimbursement for such losses.

Clyde Blust bought a 250 lb. hog for what two lbs. of bacon costs today. He remembers the horse powered farm machinery; the disc was the only implement on which a farmer rode. The hay was put up loose and it took quite a crew and the threshing was really a community effort.

Mary Elliott, who was 91 on June 17th, recalls that she has taken care of 50 babies in the home after their birth. She also nursed at Elmhaven for 15 years.

Bernard Mathews proudly relates that his grandparents William and Mary Mathews, who has been former residents of Philadelphia, returned there in 1876 to attend the Centennial Celebration of the United States of America on July 4th of that year.

Dorothy Cooper

From the scrapbook of Mrs. Faye Allen comes this poem written by Minnie Coykendall for the Fiftieth Anniversary of our Harvest Home.

HARVEST HOME

Far back in the early eighties
On a beautiful August morn
Yates City marks the great event
Memorial Harvest Home was born.
And as the years have sped away
Marking the change with joy and tear
Step by step it has reached its goal
And now gained its fiftieth year.

As we are gathered her today
In a little village on the plain
Where the breeze wave a welcome
From the fields of growing grain
Where the trees spread their branches
And the birds sing their joyful lay
Friends extend a hearty welcome
To Harvest Home's anniversary day.

Harvest Home unfurls its banners
Proudly they float upon the breeze
Gleams of sunshine cast their splendor
Through the foliage of the trees
Soft and low the strains of music
Blended with the song of bird
Voices raised in rapturous singing
In sweet refrain can now be heard.

Happy hearts with joy are beating
Bands of music softly play
In great reunion friends are meeting
On this our ever remembered day
Oh, the joy that comes from meeting
With the pressure of the hand
That proclaim the tie of friendship
Which only the soul can understand.

How sweet is the hour of meeting
With the ones that the heart holds dear
When the cherished smile is beaming
And the loved voice is ever near;
But sad is the hour of parting;
And with pain the heart is wrent
As it is pierced by the stinging arrow
That from the "Good Bye" bow is sent.

Memories that we will fondly cherish
Of faces that once were here
That no longer come to greet us
They have been called away each year.
Life's changes cast their shadows
Gloom darkens our light of day
Murmuring voices seem to whisper
Where are the friends of yesterday?
Or will the summons that to all are given,
Call us from life's rough pathways
To the eternal rest in Heaven.

Soon will the sound of the Reaper
Be heard with the falling of grain,
Carrying the souls of existence
That on eternity's shore will be lain.
Where all must reap from the harvest
Of the seeds of life's existence sown
Where we may gain Heaven's portals
And meet in our last Harvest Home.

AND THAT'S THE WAY IT WAS

The following articles were taken from Elmwood newspaper clippings which were kept in a scrapbook by Addie and Nena Bailey who resided north of Yates City in the family home, now owned by Mrs. Ruth Scott. We thank Mrs. Marie Whitney of Elmwood for the use of this book.

December 24, 1858

"On Sunday, the 11th of the present month, Mr. Jacob Kightlinger of Elba township, Knox County, shot a large grey eagle which weighs 11½ lbs., and measured from tip to tip of wings-- 7 feet and 2 inches."

*

January 4, 1862

"Corn has advanced slightly, as will be seen by the market report of today. It is worth here 11 and 13 cents. Pork is still low. Dressed hogs \$2 to \$2.25, according to weight. Fat cattle \$2 per hundred on foot."

*

July 27, 1861

"On Friday night last a bright bay mare, 7 or 8 years old, black mane, tail and legs, rather slender built, with a few white hairs on the shoulder above the right eye and slightly crippled, was stolen from Mr. William Gikdim in Salem township. He offers a reward of \$25 for the recovery of the mare and \$50 for both mare and thief. As this happened the same evening two men made their escape from the jail at Knoxville it is not unlikely that they committed the theft."

*

August 10, 1861

"On Saturday last, at the meeting of the Home Guards (Elmwood) in Yates City, three men, who have been proclaiming pretty strong secession doctrine, fearing the crowd there assembled, took refuge in a tavern, from which place they were forced by the crowd, compelled to retract in a public manner, all they had said, and proclaim themselves Union loving men."

*

July 14, 1860

"Yates City, Knox County, contains a population of 204, according to the report of the employees of Uncle Samuel, who visited it last week."

*

November 16, 1861

"A sale of real estate was made near town, a few days ago, which would indicate that the price of that kind of property has not fallen much as yet, notwithstanding the hard times. The price was \$100 per acre."

*

February 23, 1873

"In the matter of the railroad depot, Yates City is head and shoulders above Elmwood. They have a neat, commodious and comfortable passenger

building and it is a real pleasure to be obliged to loaf in the waiting room for an hour or two."

*

(When the Methodist Church was dedicated in 1905--a whole week of festivities marked the ceremonies. On Wednesday night was the banquet.)

"It was a grand success in every way. The supper was as fine a spread as can be set up, even in this land of plenty and good cooks. The price was \$1 per plate and about 275 partook of the sumptuous feast and admired the spacious new dining hall and the beautiful table, resplendent in silverware and elegant dishes. The menu was soup, long wafers, pickles, celery, olives, wafers, escalloped oysters, waldorf salad, roast turkey and dressing, cranberries, roast beef, brown gravy, mashed potatoes, rolls, coffee, ice cream and cake."

*

May 4, 1871

"Every year "when the springtime comes, gentle Annie," the farmers generally proceed to "scour" their plows by plowing up the roads all over the township, and the county, and the state, (and the whole entire union, too we presume). We know of no other act that will produce so much profanity to the square mile. (Unless it is voting aid to railroads.) as this annual sacrificing the public highways; and we are ready to believe some souls have been lost solely on account of this villianous practice! Why not quit it? Our ideas of farming are very crude, which statement is made as an apology for being so idiotic as to think it the proper thing to put the implements under cover, well greased, when not needed, and thereby do away with the necessity for "scouring". But, then, what so we know about it, anyhow?"

*

Highlights of the 18th annual Harvest Home - 1904

"The tower and band stand where beautifully decorated and the business houses, hotels and private residences were gay with flags and bunting, while at the extreme top of the tower floated the large flag, emblem of liberty to every true American.

At 8:14 A.M. the train from the south brought the Barstow Band of Farmington and a large delegation. At the same hour the train from the east arrived, bringing the speaker and a great crowd of people.

The Yates City band was at the depot to meet the visiting band, and greeted them with some excellent music.

At 1:30 the crowd had grown to immense size, and the entire park was packed full while the crowd extended all over town.

The exhibits were fine. The grains, fruits, vegetables, carpets, quilts, sofa pillows, handkerchiefs, boquets, etc., etc., were far the best and the most elegant ever shown here and the committee handled the exhibits in the best shape it has ever been done.

The hotels, restaurants, eating stands and society dinners were all crowded to their utmost capacity. The Presbyterian Church gave meals in their fine new dining hall and took in \$140.

There were no accidents, but few arrests and the crowd was orderly. The fact is the Big Harvest Home calls out the better class of people.

As to the crowd, opinions differ, some claim the attendance was the largest we ever had; others think not, but all agree it was very large. Our own opinion is that during the day and evening there were 10,000 people in the city.

This entitles us, to still put forth the claim that Yates City gives the Big Harvest Home."

(Premiums were awarded for produce and also are recorded for Best Carriage team, Best single road horse, fatman's foot race, free for all race, running broad jump, three legged race, pie-eating contest, prettiest lady on the grounds and best and largest collection of pigeons.)

*

Highlights of the 13th annual Harvest Home, August 11, 1899

"The crowd came as usual and has been variously estimated, good judges placing it at 7,000. But as was stated last year, there are really three great crowds here during the day, and we yet believe that 10,000 people visited the city during the day.

The St. Louis train, the one the band come on, was an hour late and the program was that much late in beginning, but there was not a hitch in the proceedings after the call to order, and as usual, there was not a thing advertised that was not strictly carried out.

The oratorical contest has lost none of its interest, and the four contestants all did well.The flag drill by the little girls was faultless and was a feature of the day. The military drill by the boys, under charge of Thos. Taylor was really very fine and was much commented on.

The Baldwins gave us one of the finest exhibitions of ballooning we have ever seen here. It was a fine and successful ascension and descent.

The crowd was very large, very well dressed, very orderly and was a credit to the Military Tract. There was no disturbance, and not an arrest made during the day.

There was the usual number of side shows and attractions on the streets and some fakirs, no doubt, but for those the harvest home committees are not responsible.

All the eating houses did well. The Presbyterians took in \$138 and the Methodist \$70.

Next Monday evening there is a meeting in the City Hall to make arrangements for the harvest home of 1900, and it will be better than all its predecessors."



1938 20¢ A LB.

1976 20¢ A CUP

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THAT GOOD OLD BARGAIN?

1938

Flour 24 lbs. 81¢
Coffee 1 lb. 22¢
Sugar 10 lbs. 47¢
Oranges dozen 15¢
Head Lettuce 5¢
Sliced Bacon 1 lb. 17¢
Oleo 3 lbs. 27¢
Ground Beef 2 lbs. 39¢
Toilet Tissue 4 rolls 15¢
Kellogg's Pep 2 pkgs. 23¢
Pineapple sliced 2 cans 39¢
Peas 2 cans 19¢
Beef Steaks 1 lb. 29¢
Peaches 3 lbs. 17¢
Post Bran Flakes 2 pkgs 17¢
P. & G. Soap 10 bars 32¢
Pet Milk 3 tall cans 20¢
Kraut 3 cans 25¢

1976

Flour 5 lbs. average \$1.00
Coffee 1 lb. average \$2.00
Sugar 10 lbs average \$2.77
Oranges dozen 99¢
Head Lettuce 39¢
Sliced Bacon 1 lb. avg. \$1.29-\$1.99
Oleo 1 lb. average 39¢-73¢
Ground Beef 1 lb. 99¢
Toilet Tissue 4 rolls avg. 84¢
Kellogg's Corn Flakes 12 oz. 52¢
Pineapple sliced 16 oz. 60¢
Peas 16 oz. can average 43¢
Cube Steaks 1 lb. \$1.79
Peaches 1 lb. 49¢
Post Bran Flakes 1 lb. box 82¢
Any brand soap average 40¢ a bar
Carnation Milk 1 can 34¢
Kraut 16 oz. can 37¢

A LIVING MEMORIAL

A Pin Oak tree will be planted during the month of October in the City Park as a living memorial of the Bicentennial. The tree will be purchased with proceeds from Bicentennial projects.



The Patriots of Revolutionary times used the Oak tree as a symbol of Liberty. Our Oak will stand as a monument to the Nation's great heritage and as a constant reminder to us that we are the future of America; in our hands is the trust of generations yet to come. Let's be proud to call ourselves Americans! Let's make America proud to call us her children!

A RECAP OF ACTIVITIES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Ways and Means Committee has been busy throughout the year. The entire community, in a sense, served on this committee, because without their help none of the projects would have been successful. We are proud to say that we financially are in a position to present the community with something to commemorate our nation's 200th birthday.

June 12, 1975, was our first activity. We held a flea market and trunk sale in Harvest Home Park. Individuals and organizations brought all kinds of merchandise to sell. We sold refreshments.

Our committee sponsored a "His" and "Her" bicycle and a half of beef drawing.

Homemade ice cream was sold to about 200 people on July 6th, 1975, in Central Park. The social was a part of the day's festivities which highlighted a program and historical exhibits.

July 19, 1975, and June 19, 1976, were the days to eat barbecued chicken. Big barbecue pits were set up beside Ladd's Market and half chickens were sold.

Bicentennial queens were selected by the townspeople, who cast a vote for a penny. We oversaw the contests: junior queen, (birth through teen), and senior queen, (30 years and older). The queens and their courts were announced at the 1975 Harvest Home and reigned at all Bicentennial activities throughout the year. They rode on floats decorated by our committee in the 1975 and 1976 Harvest Home parades.

Coffee and cookies were served by our group at the Historical Display on February 22, 1976.

Another old fashioned ice cream social was held in celebration of America's 200th birthday on July 4, 1976, bringing to a close a full year of projects in connection with the Bicentennial.

Our thanks to everyone.

Finance Committee

JUST FOR FUN

Here is a quiz which will tell how well you know Family Names of Yates City. You will find the answers in the back of the book!

Which family, is done up in bundles 1. _____, has the most feathers 2. _____, should be the happiest 3. _____, has no girls 4. _____, sounds like a lullaby 5. _____, has the largest farms 6. _____, is well done 7. _____, sounds like a pesky insect 8. _____, is never hot 9. _____, is protected by Smokey Bear 10. _____, is a famous basketball call 11. _____, is never hungry 12. _____, lives near the cemetery 13. _____, sounds like a wise old bird 14. _____, has the most game 15. _____, takes care of lots of visitors 16. _____, sounds like a hangman 17. _____, likes to lay bricks 18. _____, has made hamburger fame 19. _____, belongs to castles 20. _____, has an unpredictable disposition 21. _____, never quits, they always ask for-- 22. _____, is shy 23. _____, is a famous place 24. _____, never leaves the church 25. _____, always hangs on your wall 26. _____, has a lot of strength 27. _____, never gets away from money 28. _____, which family is always on the go 29. _____, is full of orders 30. _____, is a famous bachelor party 31. _____, has the best fitting clothes 32. _____, is always done 33. _____, is all wet 34. _____, is a home for spiders 35. _____, is always wishing 36. _____, is always mowing 37. _____, never gets old 38. _____, never forgets to pay 39. _____, is worth its weight in gold 40. _____, is always tied up 41. _____, never says yes 42. _____, makes up a week 43. _____, never sees sunshine 44. _____, belongs to the Bible 45. _____, is always positive 46. _____, has deep down ties 47. _____, is on the warpath 48. _____, always gives permission 49. _____, is in carrot family 50. _____, has the best barbers 51. _____, is the hardest to climb 52. _____, is an important part of buildings 53. _____, is always ill 54. _____, is always dictating 55. _____, ok's conversation 56. _____, likes tennis cups 57. _____, is an aid to Evil Knevil 58. _____, likes to make a lot of curtain calls 59. _____, is a famous candy bar 60. _____, tries to keep up with 61. _____, never grows old 62. _____, is always shining 63. _____, has the best aim 64. _____, is soldiers quarters 65. _____, is a vegetable 66. _____, rings loud 67. _____, used by voters 68. _____, sends the arrow 69. _____, makes ale 70. _____, digs, 71. _____, an automobile 72. _____, pens up chickens 73. _____, is a nice young fellow 74. _____, watches the levee 75. _____, delivers with horse and wagon 76. _____, gives a child a home 77. _____, lives upstairs 78. _____, is a skein of yarn 79. _____, hurts 80. _____, rules 81. _____, walks the most 82. _____, is the opposite of south 83. _____, is never empty 84. _____, carries 85. _____, is Dick's boy 86. _____, lights up 87. _____, is used for hunting 88. _____, grows 89. _____, makes leather 90. _____, is a foreign bird 91. _____, is a gymnast 92. _____, digs 93. _____, strips skin 94. _____, swims in the ocean 95. _____, is a rugged rock 96. _____, pats their sons 97. _____, is number seven 98. _____, served our country in congress 99. _____, is a worker in the church 100. _____, head of your town

101. _____, has coffee fame 102. _____, is a famous drink 103. _____, uses code 104. _____, has made convenient dinners for the working wife 105. _____, keeps purina company 106. _____, keeps your baby soft 107. _____, the family with chips that zip 108. _____, likes to tell fairy tales 109. _____, likes to call the ocean 110. _____, aides in shining shoes 111. _____, aides in bearing fruit 112. _____, supplies your home with furniture 113. _____, not Goodrich, but..... 114. _____, governs our educational system 115. _____, "Elsie's" employer 116. _____, likes to play the races 117. _____, assists in our drapery decor 118. _____, shall gain alot of respect 119. _____, likes to make things grow 120. _____, likes romance 121. _____, is a farmers seasonal chore 122. _____, moves like rabbits 123. _____, keeps our homes warm in the winter 124. _____, comes from a land of windmills 125. _____, never forgets breakfast 126. _____, cannot escape politics 127. _____, is Ward's better half 128. _____, is never far away 129. _____, can get themselves out of any situation 130. _____, does Aunt Blue Bell recommend 131. _____, main scene for Robin Hood 132. _____, works with metals 133. _____, is a cloth that absorbs our spills 134. _____, keeps the market supplied with meat 135. _____, provides a home for wildlife 136. _____, protects our iron & steel products 137. _____, shortened our form of writing 138. _____, knows how to get a sum 139. _____, provides our home with colonial decor 140. _____, put the first footsteps on the moon 141. _____, founder of the Methodists 142. _____, puts us to rest at night 143. _____, supplies bees with a home 144. _____, tableservice 145. _____, carries our shopping items 146. _____, do you call in case of emergency 147. _____, can build a home in a day 148. _____



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MY HOME TOWN

This booklet now has gone to press.
We've tried to do our very best
to record items of interest for folks who live here
in this most important Bicentennial year!

Though Yates City may be on the map just a dot,
It's our hometown, and we like it alot!

Irene Richardson

John Payton

Kathleen Woodcock

Roletta Mottaz

Muriel Davis

Judy Rogers

Emma Sieben

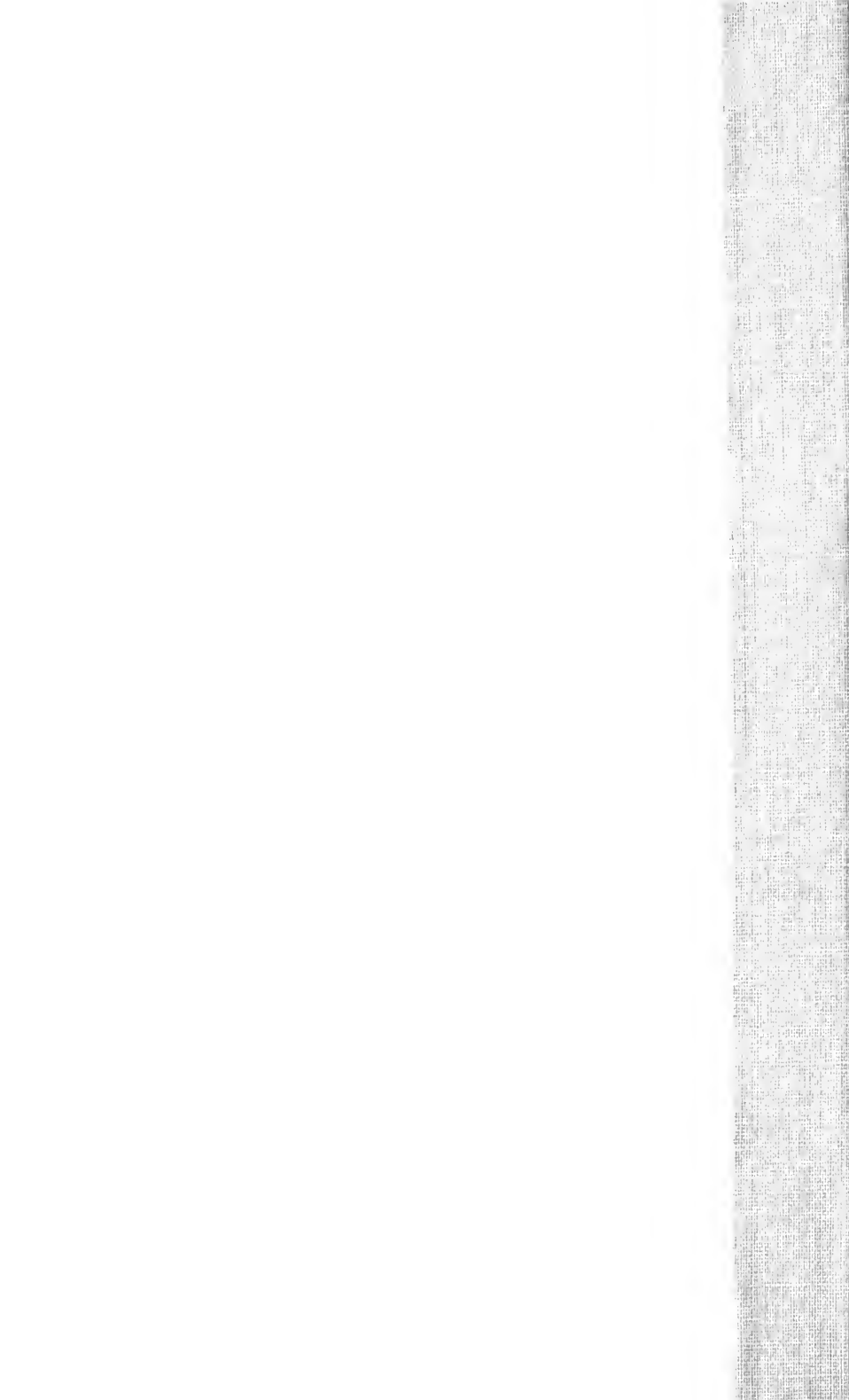
Leta Matthews

De Kayne & Matthews

Sanathy Cooper

ANSWERS TO WHAT'S IN A NAME

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Bales | 51. Shafer | 100. Layman |
| 2. Birds | 52. Hiils | 101. Maier |
| 3. Bliss | 53. Hall | 102. Maxwell |
| 4. Boyers | 54. Hosick | 103. "Cream" DeMent |
| 5. Braham | 55. Keyser | 104. Morse |
| 6. Broadfield | 56. Rogers | 105. Swanson |
| 7. Brown | 57. Davis | 106. Ralston |
| 8. <u>Bybee</u> | 58. Ramp | 107. Johnson & Johnson |
| 9. <u>Cooley</u> | 59. Bowers, Bowhay | 108. Kelly |
| 10. Forrest | 60. Clark | 109. Anderson |
| 11. <u>Fowler</u> | 61. Jones | 110. Briggs |
| 12. <u>Fuller</u> | 62. Young | 111. Buffington |
| 13. Graves | 63. Albright | 112. Curran "T" |
| 14. Howell | 64. Archer | 113. Dawson |
| 15. Hunt, Hunter | 65. <u>Barackman</u> | 114. Goodyear |
| 16. Inskip | 66. Beets | 115. Dean |
| 17. Knussman | 67. Bell | 116. Derry |
| 18. Mason | 68. Booth | 117. Doubet |
| 19. McDonald | 69. Bowman | 118. Draper |
| 20. Moats | 70. <u>Brewer</u> | 119. Eldert |
| 21. Moody | 71. <u>Burrows</u> | 120. Garner |
| 22. Moore | 72. Carr | 121. French |
| 23. Mottaz | 73. Cooper | 122. Hayes |
| 24. Payton | 74. Ladd | 123. Hopkins |
| 25. Peugh | 75. Dikeman | 124. Heaton |
| 26. Plack | 76. Draher | 125. Hollandsworth |
| 27. Powers | 77. Foster | 126. Kellog |
| 28. Price | 78. Garrett | 127. Kennedy & Wallace |
| 29. Runyon | 79. Hanks | 128. Montgomery |
| 30. Sargent | 80. Harms, Harmon | 129. <u>Rynearson</u> |
| 31. Staggs | 81. Kings | 130. Swindler |
| 32. Taylor | 82. Miles | 131. Scott "Towels" |
| 33. Threw | 83. North | 132. Sherwood "Forrest" |
| 34. Watters | 84. Phillips | 133. Smith |
| 35. <u>Webber</u> | 85. Porter | 134. Terry |
| 36. Wells | 86. Richardson | 135. Wilson |
| 37. Yards | 87. Sparks | 136. Woods |
| 38. Young | 88. Speer | 137. Zink |
| 39. Duley | 89. Sprout | 138. Gregg "Short Hand" |
| 40. Knox | 90. Tanner | 139. <u>Addis</u> |
| 41. Nott | 91. Woodcock | 140. "Ethan" Allen |
| 42. Noe | 92. Turner | 141. Armstrong |
| 43. Daley, Daily | 93. Grubb | 14?. Asbury |
| 44. Raines | 94. Skinner | 143. <u>Bedwell</u> |
| 45. Mathews | 95. Haddick (Haddoc:) | 144. <u>Shives</u> |
| 46. Sherman (Sure) | 96. Craig | 145. <u>Windish</u> |
| 47. Root | 97. Patterson | 146. <u>Sackett</u> |
| 48. Savage | 98. Sieben | 147. <u>Copple</u> |
| 49. Grandt | 99. Burgess | 148. <u>Wickwire</u> |
| 50. Cummins | | |





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YATES CITY A TIME TO REMEMBER, 1776-197



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