

# Baxter County History



The Wolf House is the most historical building in Baxter County.

Photo courtesy of Ray Grass

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# BAXTER COUNTY HISTORY

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BAXTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Mountain Home, Arkansas

Regular Monthly Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m., the first Tuesday of each month, at the Arkansas Power and Light Building on S. W. Highway 62, Mountain Home, Arkansas.

Active Membership           \$5.00 per year  
Associate Membership       \$2.50 per year

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PROGRESS OF BAXTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Hazen Bonow, Historian

September 2, 1980

The Baxter County Historical Society met at 7:30 in the Redi-Kilo-watt Room of the Arkansas Power and Light Building with Quinby Smith presiding.

The program for the evening was an interview with M.E. Curlee and Rex Bodenhamer who were introduced and interviewed by Quinby. They talked about "Politics in the Past".

Quinby first became acquainted with Mr. Bodenhamer while he was working at the Baxter Bulletin. He later worked for his wife at the Post Office for 15 years. His sister also took piano lessons from Mrs. Bodenhamer.

Quinby started the program with a story of Mr. Mack running over Dr. Robert "Bobby" Baker when he was a small boy. Bobby lived with his grandmother Baker in a big house on Main Street where the Mountain Home Motel is now located.

Old Tom Morris hauled wood and he was going north on Main Street with a load when Bobby jumped on the back of his wagon for a ride. Arriving near home, Bobby jumped off in front of Mr. Mack's car. He put his foot on the brake, but Bobby went under the wheel.

Mr. Mack got out of his car and picked him up and rushed over to Dr. Mooney's office on the east side of the square. They sent for his grandmother to come down. Bobby was very quiet and his eyes were closed for about 15 minutes, then suddenly he opened his eyes and looked up at his grandmother and said, "grandmother, can I go to the show tonight?" Fortunately Bobby was not seriously hurt!

Mr. Mack ran for County Assessor in 1916 and won. His first assesment trip started at 9:00 a.m. on a Sunday riding horse-back from Mountain Home to Big Flat. This was a 35 mile trip. He forded the river at Shipps Ferry, then on to Lone Rock. After he passed Lone Rock he never saw a person until about 6 miles out from Big Flat. Dark overtook him and he had to go through some scary dark forest....it was 9:00 P.M. when he finally reached Big Flat.

Candidates running for office would go to picnics and every kind of gatherings to speak. They would get together and figure out where they would go.



At that time there were no hotels or eating places in the county except in Mountain Home, Cotter, Gassville and Norfolk. There may have been a place of some type at Big Flat. When a candidate was out campaigning, he had to find a place to spend the night wherever he happened to be. He would hunt up the nearest farm house and ask for lodging. Sometimes it would be pleasant and sometimes it was pretty rough.

Mr. Mack recalls starting from Big Flat to go to Culp. About a four hour trip on horseback. He arrived at Culp about 4:00 or 5:00 p.m. It was raining so hard he had to stop at the first house he came to. The folks at the house told him he could give his horse some oats and that he could stay over night. The lady of the house said the family had had their evening meal, but she would fix him a bite to eat. The bite was a greasy piece of fried pork in a bowl with the grease poured over it. That night the bed bugs were so bad he couldn't sleep so he got up early the next morning before the family was awake and he saddled up his horse and kept going until he came to a little country store. He was starved so he bought a big can of sardines for his breakfast. An unforgettable trip!

Quinby remembered one candidate running for Justice of the Peace, saying "He'd promise no justice and very little peace." Another candidate was asked how he stood on evolution and he replied, "Believe I'm alright on that one."

Mr. Bodenhamer has been on the Democratic Central Committee since 1938. He became interested in things political when he was 18 years old.

Mr. Bodenhamer said the cost to a candidate for getting his name placed on the ballot in 1938 was from \$35.00 to \$100.00. Now the fees go to \$1500.00 or higher.

The cost of an election to the county at that time was \$800.00. Now it is \$15,000.00 or more. Pay to the judges in the election at that time was \$3.00 a day. Now the judges are paid \$25.00 a day.

Both Democrats and Republicans are fair in the elections. Baxter County, it is believed, has the most honest elections in the State.

Mr. Bodenhamer told of his Uncle Ben Bodenhamer, who was a staunch Republican. His son Roy said to him once after an election, "Dad, I came very nearly doing something you wouldn't like". "What?" "I came very near voting for a Democrat". His father replied, "yes and you came very near losing your home!"



Another story told by Mr. Bodenhamer was about an old gentleman who was a strong Republican. The old fellow thought he was about to die and had a friend called in. He told him, "I want to join the Democratic Party". "Why?", asked his friend. "If someone has to die it ought to be a Democrat!"

Other stories followed:

One county judge promised a windmill and a water trough for the town square if he was elected. He kept his promise when elected and also added a third story to the Court House in order to keep Cotter from getting the County Seat.

This was an exceptionally good program and enjoyed by all.

October 7, 1980

Our speaker for this meeting was Rev. John McCormack. He was introduced by our Vice-President Quinby Smith.

John McCormack was born August 16, 1908 east of Mountain Home on Tracy Ferry Road near the Norfolk River. His great grandfather, Dale McCormack, came across the Norfolk river with a two-wheeled cart pulled by oxen. They waded across the river and settled at what came to be known as the Big Pond Community. He had come from Tennessee, as so many did. Also North Carolina where a county there is named McCormack County.

John's great grandfather carved out of the rough land a farm and put up a little store. Also the first cotton gin in Baxter County. He threw the cotton seeds out in the back and the cattle started eating them. He noticed that the cows gave more milk so he discovered that the cotton seeds were of value.

The first McCormack the family has record of is James McCormack and they believe he came from Scotland.

John has a drinking cup made from a horn of a cow that an ancestor made and carried with him in the Revolutionary War, fighting with Washington and the Patriots in their fight for freedom in this new country.

His great grandfather joined the Masons at the village of Norfolk below the dam. His name is still on the old record book they have at Norfolk.

When the Civil War broke out, Dale McCormack and his son, John Meeks McCormack, (John's grandfather), and the eldest son of Dale McCormack went to Yellville, Arkansas and joined up on



the Confederate side and fought in the sad Civil War. John Meeks, whose full name Rev. John bears, was wounded at the battle of Shiloh in Tennessee. He was able to return home in the Big Pond Community, but was never able to work much. He made shoes for the family. His son, Campbell Alonzo, (Rev. John's father) drove oxen, cut trees, cleared land and plowed the rocky poor ground to try and help make a living.

When the Civil War ended, poverty, sorrow, and evil characters roamed through the country. They abused, robbed, burned and destroyed so much of what the people had in so many areas. How they lived is more than can be understood. A good God in whom they trusted must have provided in ways beyond understanding.

Rev. John's father married an orphan girl who had been reared by a poor family living east of the McCormack family. She had been to school only 2 months, but could read and write.

John was the youngest of six children. His family homesteaded land adjoining his grandfather's land. At six years of age he started his first term of school at the Big Pond School.

The deed his grandfather received for the land was signed by President Garfield. His parents homesteaded 165 acres of rough, timbered land and they cleared 65 acres of it and built a typical log cabin, adding rooms as they needed and out of rough unpainted lumber.

John saw his parents work from daylight until dark. His mother would can fruit and vegetables without which they would have gone hungry in the long, cold winter months.

They were all of the Christian Faith and ways of life. John felt the call to be a minister at the age of 12. After he finished the little country school, he rode his horse into Mountain Home to school. He took his last two years at the Mountain Home Baptist College where they had 2 years of High School and 2 years of college.

After finishing High School, he married Iva Sanford who grew up 3 miles north of Mountain Home. They then went to college at the College of the Ozarks at Clarksville, Ark., and the college helped them some. It was during the Depression Days and they received their degrees from there.

John then went on to Southern Methodist University and received his BD degree. He has given 52 years to the Methodist Ministry. In the summer of 1958 they were invited to go to England as an exchange pastor. He was also invited for a months mission



in Alaska and received 27 people in the membership of their church. In 1968, he and his wife went to the Holy Land, Athens, Corinth and Rome. God has blessed them beyond all expectations.

John and Iva had four children. They retired from the ministry after 8 years as pastor of the First United Methodist Church at Harrison, Ark. He received 540 people into membership there.

Since his retirement, John has served as pastor of the Lake Norfolk Presbyterian Church for a year as they had no pastor. He has held several revivals and has calls all the time for ministry. He thanks God to be a part of a great heritage of people who may have been poor in material things, but rich in the spiritual things.

We appreciate Rev. McCormack for giving us this good program.

#### November Meeting

Since the first Tuesday of the month fell on Nov. 4th (being election day) we moved our meeting one week ahead, Oct. 28th.

Our Vice-President, Quinby Smith, presided at the meeting. He introduced and interviewed Nellie Mitchell and Virgie McClure about their childhood days in this area.

Mrs. Mitchell's family moved to Mountain Home in 1897 from their farm on Norfolk River. Her father had taken their house down and put it up near where the Gonce Nursery is now. It burned in 1909. Her father, Jim Tracy, had a two building store on the southwest corner of the square.

Nellie went to school where the middle school is now located. There were three months of free school and three months of subscription school. She recalls a red-head professor, Riley Geary, who every one called the "talking encyclopædia". She told of a game they played at night. They would soak a twine ball in kerosene, set it on fire and throw it. Other games were hop-sotch, ring around rosie, baseball and basketball. The girls wore full black bloomers when they played basketball.

Nellie liked to ride horses and when she went to a circus that came to town, she saw a girl riding standing on a horse. She tried this on "Old Fannie" and fell off in a rock pile, hurting herself so she never tried that again.



Her parents went to the Worlds Fair and got the idea of making ice cream cones. So, at the annual Mountain Home picnics they would have a stand and make their own ice cream cones and sell them. Her mother would make a batter something like waffles and roll them for cones and fill them with home made ice cream. Ice was always available.

The Tracys were raised in the Methodist Church.

Nellie's grandmother taught her to make apple dumplings. Her grandmother cooked in a log cabin behind the house and she had a small cook stove on a box. Her grandfather was killed by a bush-wacker. Her Uncle Harry Tracy was rather notorious, had trouble with the bush-wackers and fled to Texas. He returned to Arkansas in 1910.

Nellie said the first deep freeze was on their front porch. In the winter time it would freeze in a low spot and her father would buy rabbits and throw them on the icy porch to freeze. Quinby then admitted that he and Truman Mitchell had put their hands through a loose board and taken a few of these rabbits! Nellie said, "Quinby, I'm surprised at you!"

Both Nellie and Virgie talked about the old time "chivaries" people would have when a couple would get married. They were great excitement.

Virgie McClure was born in the north part of the county about 3 miles north of Gamaliel near the Norfork River. Her maiden name was Feverbaugh. There were 6 children in her family. Her father had to add on to their one room log house. They got their water from a spring one-half mile from their house and it was up-hill getting back to the house. The children were kept busy carrying water. In the winter they washed their clothes with rain water in the house and in the summer down at the creek.

A big event was when a well was drilled in the back yard of their home. She was about 12 or 14 years old then. They still kept their butter and milk in the spring.

The Feverbaugh children went to the Bean School, about one and one-half miles from home. There was 3 months of school in the summer and 3 months in the winter so that children could help in the farm work. There were 10 to 12, sometimes 14 pupils in the 8 grades. She remembered two early teachers, Charles Ballew and Luther George. Virgie played hide and seek and baseball with no rules.



She remembers all her family going to Mountain Home to the picnic and camping out all night. She liked the merry-go-rounds which were turned by hand and sometimes horses.

They drove 3 to 4 miles in a wagon to church on Sundays and would bring 3 or 4 families home with them for dinner, so by the time they finished and visited for awhile, it was time to go to the pasture for the cows and do their chores.

They raised cotton, peas and lots of corn for the hogs. They had a smoke house to smoke bacon and hams with hickory chips to last the year. They also raised cattle and sheep. They dried apples and made their own soap.

Virgie married O. B. McClure and moved to Mountain Home and she and her husband became the early morticians. She recalled many interesting happenings. They went to the homes in their wagon, taking a casket or sometimes people made their own. They did not embalm in the early days.

She recalls one place they were called to that was quite a distance from town. Virgie went to this place alone. A woman had died and the husband wanted the burial the same day without a service. The children said their father would not let them have a service, but Virgie reasoned with him and he finally agreed to let Virgie conduct a service at the graveside. They drove about 2 miles to a small cemetery. She always carried her Bible and a few song books so she read from the Bible, gave an obituary and the people sang a couple of songs (about 12 people) and then she said a prayer. Afterwards the father said it was nice and she would not know what it meant to him.

This was a most interesting meeting which we all enjoyed.

STATE AND LOCAL CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS  
TO CO-SPONSOR SMITHSONIAN EVENTS

Fourteen cultural organizations of Little Rock and the state are presently working with the Smithsonian Institution to bring a sampling of the Institution's cultural and scientific activities to Little Rock. The week of activities is planned for March 24 through March 31, 1981. Highlights of the week will be a FIELD TRIP to Toltec Mounds State Park, one of Arkansas' national historic landmarks; LECTURES ON EXTRATERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE, AMERICA'S ART COLLECTORS, and VITAMIN TECHNOLOGY; a seminar on VICTORIAN GARDENING, a seminar for museum professionals, and a tour of the zoo's nocturnal animals.



While the programs are designed primarily for Smithsonian Associates and members of the co-sponsoring organizations, tickets will be available to the public for most events. Associates and members will be charged \$1.00 per lecture ticket; non-members will be charged \$1.50 per lecture ticket at the door.

For further information, call Gretchen Gray at (501)371-2761.

From: State of Arkansas - Dept. of Arkansas Natural and Cultural Heritage, 500 Continental Building, Little Rock, Ark. 72201.

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IN MEMORY  
Alice Tipton Bean  
June 13, 1901-Oct. 30, 1980

Alice Tipton Bean was born in Mountain Home where she lived the most of her life except for several years in Martin City, Missouri.

Alice was the daughter of Jean Baker Tipton and Dr. "Jim" Tipton, one of Baxter Counties most beloved Doctors.

She leaves four daughters, several grandchildren, two brothers, Robert Tipton of Mountain Home and Vin Tipton of Yellville, one sister, Fanny Mae Ellis of Kansas City, Mo. and many, many friends.

Alice was an active member of the Baxter County Historical Society. She was a kind lady with a sweet spirit. We will miss her.

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R. I. P.

ELEVENTH IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES ON CEMETERIES IN BAXTER CTY.  
BY D. GARVIN CARROLL

BENTLEY RIDGE CEMETERY

This Cemetery is located on Treasure Cove Road about 3 miles off Highway 201 North of Mountain Home. John L. Bentley made a deed of the land for the Cemetery and for the School House.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>BORN</u>	<u>DIED</u>
Charles Bailey	NO DATE	NO DATE
Charles Roy Bentley	59 yrs.3 mo.4 da.	July 14, 1968
J. W. Bentley	NO DATE	NO DATE
John L. Bentley	Feb. 3, 1847	Apr. 25, 1925
Nellie Bentley (Inf.)	NO DATE	NO DATE
Paul Mack Bentley (Ark.Sfc.Co.51st)	Sept.27,1926	Oct. 8, 1960
Otto Bentley (Ark. Tec. 5 537 AAA AW BN CAC WW11)	Jan. 15, 1920	July 11, 1960
Rachel K. Bentley	May 18, 1849	Jan. 2, 1926
Four Unnamed Bentley Stones		
Ella Cranfill	Nov. 16, 1901	May 14, 1928
Five Unnamed Crawford Stones		
Hester A. Davis	July 12, 1819	Oct. 26, 1900
Harrison Eurns	NO DATE	NO DATE
Benjimen Harrison Gibson	78 yrs.7mo.25da.	Nov. 8, 1967
Daughters of Mr. & Mrs.		
Tom Gibson	NO DATE	NO DATE
T. F. Gibson	1881	1937
Twelve Unnamed Gibson Stones		
J. P. Hathcock	NO DATE	NO DATE
Hill-Two Unnamed Hill Stones		
Charles Alfred Martin	March 9, 1897	NO DATE
Grace Ellen Martin	June 16, 1896	Sept.25, 1963
One Unnamed Mayshal Stone		
Daniel Muier	Nov. 5, 1869	March 15, 1950
F.S. Muier (wife of H)	May 30, 1861	Aug. 12, 1921
Henry Muier	1866	1944
Mary Muier	1873	1956
Melvin Muier	NO DATE	NO DATE
Rosy Muier	Dec. 6, 1878	NO DATE
Samuel Muier	1903	1937
Two Unnamed Muier Stones		
One Unnamed Ramsey Stone		
Three Unnamed Rawford Stones		
Six Unnamed Roberts Stones		
One Unnamed Sallee Stone		
Five Unnamed Stone Stones		
Two Unnamed Thompson Stones		



BENTLEY RIDGE CEMETERY CONT.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>BORN</u>	<u>DIED</u>
Everett Trivitt (Son of T.T. & L.)	Sept. 9, 1899	Mar. 21, 1938
Harry Trivitt (Son of T.T. & L.)	March 14, 1905	Oct. 27, 1944
Lula P. Trivitt	Feb. 5, 1879	Oct. 26, 1966
Thomas T. Trivitt	Oct. 12, 1875	Nov. 24, 1944
Vera Maxine Trivitt	Sept. 16, 1942	Apr. 26, 1959
Four Unnamed Trivitt Stones		
John R. Walton	1881	1964
Mary Walton	NO DATE	NO DATE
Wilma J. Wells	NO DATE	NO DATE

I assume no responsibility for error in names or dates. These have been copied from stones that some of which are very difficult to read.

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GENEALOGICAL INFORMATION  
BAXTER CO., ARKANSAS

Joseph and Irma Bloom, Route 6, Box 352, Mountain Home, Ark.

Baxter County Marriages      May 6, 1894 to Nov. 1, 1894

Oscar A. Eatman to Mollie F. Baker	May 6, 1894
Ben F. Love to Cantie C. Hogan	" 6
A. L. Due to Sarah Walker	" 18
F. F. Hudson to Maude Walker	" 27
James Green to Mary Hill	June 3
John A. Messick to Mary E. Dilbeck	" 3
L. C. Alexander to Lucinda A. Vanover	" 3
Oscar Neil to Laura Halpain	" 17
E. A. Farris to Hallie Hurst	" 17
J. C. Reed to Janie Martin	" 17
B. F. Kasinger to Mary A. Barrick	" 18
C. H. McClelland to Martha J. McNeill	" 21
Henry Rush to Emma D. Perkins	" 23
Daniel W. Graul to Sarah Jones	" 24
J. M. Ballard to Mattie V. Andrews	" 26
A. B. Walton to Eliza J. Watson	July 10
T. J. Marill to Flora E. Smith	" 18
W. B. Moody to Delilah Williams	" 19
A. F. Bratcher to Martha Barton	" 29
H. A. Moore to Melvina Minor	Aug. 8
John Parnell to Nancy Bruiofield	" 9



Baxter County Marriages Cont.

John Lovelady to Mary Hutchison	Aug. 9
J. E. Cowart to Docie A. Smith	" 19
S. P. Kasinger to Amanda Lane	" 24
A. J. E. Deatherage to Mattie Hammock	" 26
J. N. Clum to Lou Falburt	" 30
J. L. Johnson to Sallie Layne	Sept. 2
William A. Meek to Virginia Eulands	" 7
James McClelland to Emma Campbell	" 13
J. W. McClelland to Sallie Lee	" 13
W. L. Strait to Belle Knight	" 14
Frank Bean to Martha A. Ross	" 16
S. W. Frammell to Nancy J. Hamm	" 16
C. D. Frammell to Annie Hamm	" 16
Lewis Green to Donnia Russell	" 23
G. W. Walker to M. C. Stapleton	" 24
Charles F. Young to Linicie (?) Napier	" 28
L. N. Dobbs to Laura P. Black	Oct. 3
J. A. Douglas to Idona Johnson	" 7
Horace Lance to Mattie Myers	" 9
Andrew M. Sinor to Malissey E. Reynolds	" 25
Gus Clinton to Alice Walker	" 26
U. G. Fleming to Belle Cunningham	" 30

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THE LIVINGSTON FAMILY

The following is information provided by  
Virginia Livingston Bryant and Mae W. Hamlet

The Livingstons are one of Baxter Counties oldest families. They trace their ancestry back to the 1700s in America. Three prominent members played a major role in the history of our country in its early days.

For five consecutive generations there was a son by the name of Robert. The first of the five generations was Col. Robert Livingston who came first to the Mt. Olive area around 1814. He had a son named Robert who married Polly Finley. He died at the age of 43 years. Polly died three months later at the age of 33. They are buried at McPhearson (now Table Rock Cemetery), which is located in the south part of Baxter County.

Robert and Polly had a son called Robert Franklin who married Harriet L. Stinnet, (a young widow and a native of Henry County, Penn.) in 1872.



Robert Franklin and Harriet were active members of the Baptist Church, politically he was a staunch Democrat. He owned three good farms on the White River.

Robert Franklin, sometimes known as "Casey" Livingston, received his education in the Old Academy conducted by Professor A. J. Truman, in Mountain Home.

Robert Franklin and Harriet L. were the parents of Robert Clifford, born February 20, 1877. He was the only son, but there were three daughters who were: Ophelia (Mrs. Rudolph Brown), Rena ( Mrs. Laura Talbert), and Daisy (Mrs. Edgar Morris).

Robert Clifford (always called "Cliff") was a cattle buyer and raised beef cattle. He owned and operated a 280 acre farm on Pigeon Creek (now inundated by Lake Norfolk). He and his family are the last of the family with the Livingston name to live in Baxter County.

Cliff was a member of the Mountain Home Band. He played a big bass horn. The Mountain Home Band would give Sunday afternoon concerts in the bandstand on the Courthouse lawn.

In 1905 on February 22, Robert Clifford Livingston and Ariel L. Wright (from Kenne, Kansas) were married. To this marriage were born Robert Wright, Marjorie, and twins Vaughn and Virginia.

The Livingstons lived about a block from the Mountain Home Square in a big white, story and a half house which had a porch along the front and extending along the east side of the house. It faced the south and was directly across the street from the Old Hicks Property, where there stood a large two story house. It was situated on the block where the First State Building and Loan Company now is.

At one time there was a barn with a barn lot on the property. Also a big garden spot.

When the children were young, the Livingstons had a gentle old horse named "Dash". All the children in the neighborhood loved old Dash and liked to ride her around the barn lot and slide down her tail.

Before World War II, Robert W. built a brick building on the southwest corner of the property and put in a grocery and meat market. He operated this business for many years, then sold it to Earl Johnson. This building has recently been torn down to make way for the new extension for the First State Building and Loan Company.

Robert Cliff Livingston died November 11, 1942. His wife died in December of 1960.



Marjorie is married to Harold Adams and lives in Mathis, Texas. They have three children.

Virginia married Kenneth Bryant. Five children were born to this marriage. Kenneth died in April, 1970. Virginia lives in Nixa, Missouri.

Vaughn died in the central Pacific while serving in World War II, April 26, 1944 at the age of 27.

When Robert W. sold his business in Mountain Home, he bought property at Gassville and moved there. Later he moved to Nixa, Missouri where he died June 17, 1977, after living there for six years.

Robert Wright was the 5th Robert Livingston of the descendants of Col. Robert Livingston and the last as he never married and Vaughn died without having married. Photos on the following page are described below.

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Photo 1: Mr. and Mrs. Robert "Cliff" Livingston in the early 1900s in a cotton field across from the old Smith Ferry at Henderson, Arkansas. The farm now is inundated by Lake Norfolk.

Photo 2: Harriet L. Livingston - mother of Cliff Livingston.

Photo 3: Scene on the southeast corner of the square ca 1915. In front of the Mooney-Eatman Grocery Store. At the back of the store was another building where Mooney and Eatman had their Ford Car Agency. Rex Bodenhamer, who worked in the grocery store during this time, identified some of the people in the picture. There are:

From left: Sitting in the car is Don Casey, unknown, Elisha Reed, unknown, Dr. Hackler, unknown, unknown, Neil Eatman, Dr. Tipton, standing with hand on car is Kay Horton, children unknown, unknown, Bill Brixey, Standing on ground in front of car is: Dr. Mooney, unknown, Wylie Dyer, and behind Mr. Dyer is Nat Dyer, others standing behind are unknown.





Photo 1. Courtesy of Virginia Livingston Bryant



Photo 2. Courtesy of Zella B. Wolf



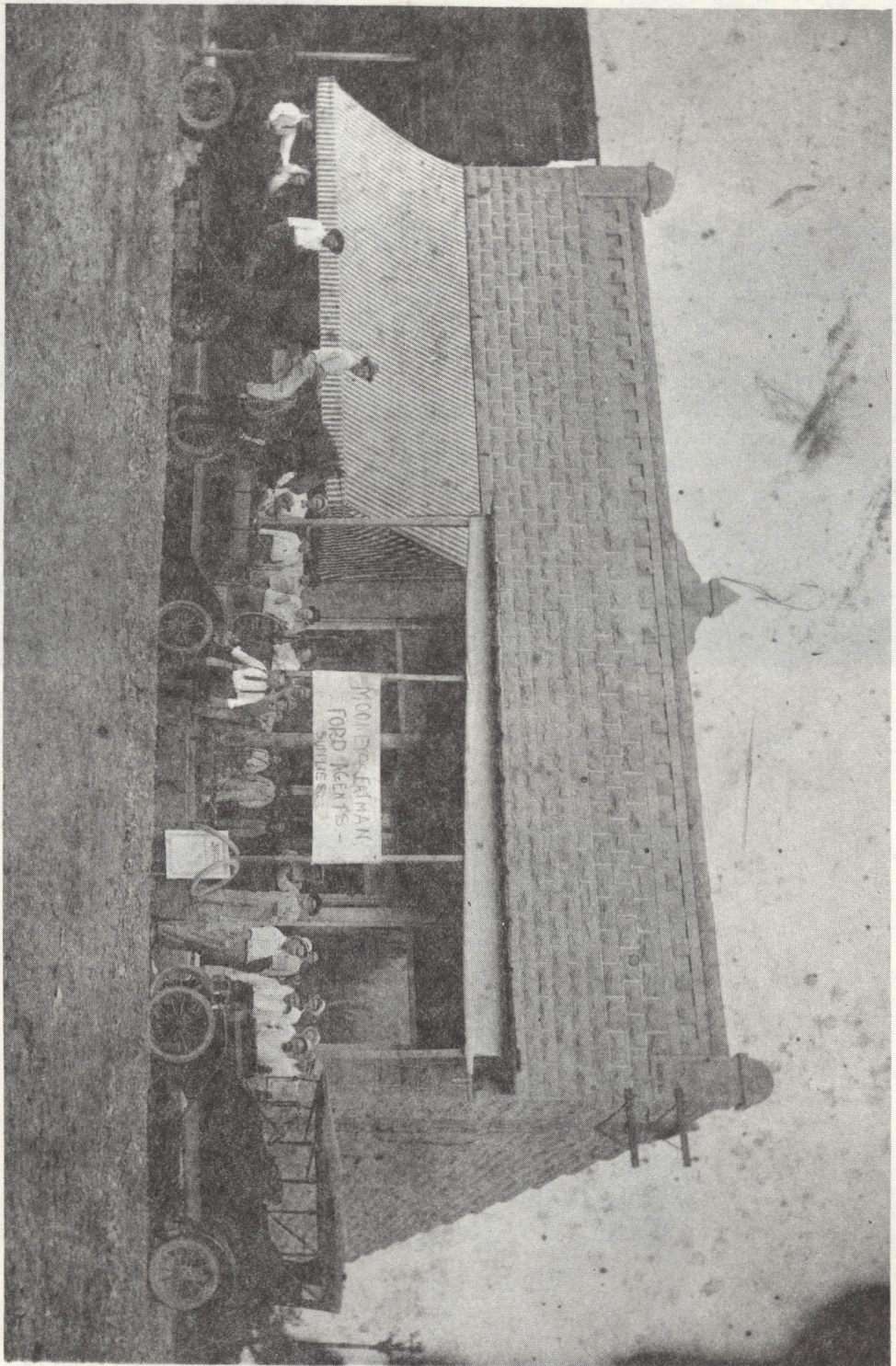


Photo 3. Courtesy of Virginia L. Bryant