

Baxter County History



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

Photo courtesy of Ray Grass

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THE BAXTER COUNTY HISTORY

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Correspondence concerning membership dues, membership, orders for the "History", and other business matters should be sent to the Treasurer. Available back issues are \$ 1.25 each.

Contributions of material for the "History" should be sent to Howard M. Knight. These contributions are very much needed. They may include pictures. The originals will be returned to the contributor.

Neither the Society or the Editors assume any responsibility for statements made by the contributors.

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The fiscal year begins January 1. New Members may join at any time.

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LOOKING BACKWARD - Baxter Bulletin, August 30, 1907

At no time in this section of the country has so much interest been displayed in pearl fishing, not so many at work in this vocation as now. The rivers are full of people scratching up the sluggish clam from their beds, and making him disgorge his riches. It is estimated that \$5,000 worth of these gems have been marketed between Norfolk and Cotter on White River. Pearl buyers come up from Newport every day, there are enough of them to make the competition keen, and on the whole the finders are getting good values for what they sell. Many remarkably rich finds have been made.

James Pogg and wife who live just above Buffalo, found two that netted them \$ 500. John Merrill of Buffalo worked part of each day for three days just above Buffalo Shoals and found three pearls, two of which brought him \$43, and one which he has not sold yet is valued at \$50. Al Hayney, John and Garret Baker, Al Bagwell, Forest Bollen, Bob Horn and Clarence Wilbur have made good finds, besides many others. By far the best finds have been made around Cotter, probably because there has been more interest displayed at that point than at any other place. A man by the name of Roberts, with the help of his family, has put over \$600 worth on the market at Cotter, and several have been found there valued at \$1,000.

About a mile up Buffalo River is a large mussel bed, and from 50 to 100 people are at work there all the time, ranging in age from 2 years to old men and women tempting fortune. The shells are opened on the bank and joyous shouts show the result of a find. The pearl fishing industry has proven a godsend to those who have lost their crops by the extreme dry weather, and these are the ones who are getting the direct benefit from it, as there are few strangers at work here. At the present rate pearl sales are stacking up, \$10,000 worth will be marketed before cold weather.

PROGRESS OF THE BAXTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Hazen Bonow, Historian

December 7th, 1982

Garvin Carroll gave a very interesting program showing slides to illustrate the story of electricity in Arkansas. The slides shown were pictures and drawings. There was an early gas-fired generator, also slides showing progress made through the years, such as a 1950 transformer, substations, workmen, new transformers, AP&L buildings, also a nuclear plant.

The first AP&L building in Arkansas was at Melbourne and Arkadelphia, which was the beginning of the rural system. Eldorado was the first to have both AC and DC currents.

When street lights were first erected they were only on when there was no moon shining. WOK at Pine Bluff was the first radio station.

In the early 20's the hydro-electric dams were being built.

In Mountain the first electric system was operated by Dillon Underhill, but in 1922 he had to abandon the project which was started in 1914. Wyatt Wolf then started an operation financed by merchants. He had 50 customers. There was electricity all day long when dark, a convenience for the merchants.

In 1945 the AP&L was started here. Electricity was on at 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m. There was also one day for ironing. The first electric appliances were lights and fans.

Garvin Carroll was always interested in electricity. From 1940 to 1945 he was in the telephone business. He was taught the electrical system by his father-in-law. Garvin came to Mountain Home's AP&L in 1965 and retired in 1980. He was the first to start the popular all-electric homes and won four state contests for providing the most all-electric homes in Arkansas. He had the first all-electric shopping center - the Ozark Shopping Center. He also had double transformers for use.

There are two nuclear plants in the State. The coal-burning plant at Newark (near Newport) uses 125 carloads of coal per day. Harvin has no fear of nuclear plants and he says they are keys to our future.

The price of kilowatt hours has not increased over the years. It is the use of many electric appliances which makes our electric bills so much higher. The way to reduce our bills is to be more efficient in using our electricity.

There were two electric meters on display, one patented in 1890, the other in 1911, also an old toaster and a popcorn popper. Many of the members could recall using similar early appliances.

"HOW YOU TALK!"

Not every phase of growing up is remembered as the "good old days". We all have times when our shenanigans met with stern disapproval from our parents. The result is the same, but what it's called depends on where you live.

"Peach tree tea" or "hickory stick" (depending on which kind is available for a leg-switcher) is the fate of Arkansas youngsters, at least near Salem where Opal Morris was reared. "Today it would be called child abuse, but many an Arkansas 'youngun' learned the values of right and wrong from a few doses of 'peach tree tea'", she remembers. Theresa Baier of Cullman, Alabama, meanwhile, recalls the switch being called a "hickory stick".

-- Roslyn Rudolph in Grit, December 19, 1982

ANNOUNCING TWO AWARDS IN ARKANSAS HISTORY

The Society received from Walter L. Brown, Secretary-Treasurer of the Arkansas Historical Association the following announcement:

The Arkansas Historical Association awards annually two prizes in Arkansas history.

The first, the Violet B. Gingles Award, established in memory of the late Violet B. Gingles of Benton, Arkansas, carries a \$ 300 prize and a framed certificate. The award is given to the person who writes the best manuscript article on an Arkansas subject. The article can deal with any phase of the history of the state or with any individual connected with its history, and must not have been published previously.

The second prize, the Lucille Westbrook Local History Award, established in honor of a prominent local historian of Nashville, Arkansas, carries a \$ 200 prize and a framed certificate. The award is given to the person who writes the best manuscript article on a local Arkansas subject. It must deal with some phase of neighborhood, city, county, or regional Arkansas history, or some person associated with local history. Edited documents will be considered for this award. Submission may not have been published previously.

Any person is eligible to submit manuscripts for these two prizes.

Manuscripts for both prizes will be judged on the basis of (1) their contribution to expanding our knowledge of Arkansas history; (2) the judicious use of primary sources and an adequate understanding of and appreciation for the secondary literature related to the subject matter of the article; (3) creative interpretation and originality; and (4) stylistic excellence.

Manuscripts for both prizes should be no more than thirty-five pages, should be typed double-spaced, and must be documented. The footnotes, however, should be typed double-spaced on separate sheets at the back of the article. The footnote pages need not be counted as part of the overall text, but should be numbered. The title page should contain the full title, the author's full name, a complete address, telephone number, and the name of the contest being entered, whether the Lucille Westbrook Local History Award or the Violet B. Gingles Award.

All entries, including illustrations, become the possession of the Arkansas Historical Association and will not be returned to the author.

All articles, including the winners, will be considered for publication in the Arkansas Historical Quarterly, although publication cannot be guaranteed.

The winning articles and authors will be announced at the annual meeting of the Association in April 1983. All entries must be submitted in triplicate - an original and two copies - by March 1, 1983, to:

ARKANSAS HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
Room 12, Ozark Hall
Department of History, University of Arkansas
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701

JOHN HENRY MARLER

John Henry Marler was born 11 June, 1864 in Marion County, Arkansas. He was the son of John Earl and Martha Ann Mahulda (White) Marler. His grandparents were Luke and Rebecca (?) Marler and John P. and Minerva E. (Green) White. While living in Boone County, he met and married Rachel Caroline Walker, the daughter of James C. and Julie Ann (?) Walker on 23 July, 1882. Rachel was born 8 May, 1864.

I'm not sure what year they moved to Baxter County, but know it was before 1890. John Henry established his sawmill and blacksmith shop in the Monkey Run community.

He was a Baptist minister for many years and was still preaching in his 80's. His daughter, Lilly Luvena, and her husband, Charles Blufford Gilbert, donated land for the Westside Missionary Baptist Church north of the junction of Highways 178 and 126 Gassville, to be built on, and my grandfather, John Henry, worked diligently to organize the church. His grandson, Isaac Marler, has been interim pastor in the past.

My grandmother, Rachel Marler, died 12 December, 1947, and John Henry died 19 May, 1955. Both are buried in the Pilgrim's Rest Cemetery. They raised a family of eight children, all now passed away except one, my aunt Evie (Minerva Evelyn) Dilbeck. She is 87 years of age and lives in Gassville with her daughter, Thelma Dilbeck. Their children were:

1. James Councillor B. 2 June 1884 M. Mila Luvena Hodges 9 Nov. 1905
D. 11 Nov. 1926 Buried Pilgrim's Rest, Baxter County
2. Myrtie Elsie B. 5 Oct. 1886 M. James Bailey Stafford 13 Sept. 1903
D. 1 Feb. 1950 Pryor, Mayes Co., Oklahoma
3. Irena Bell B. 13 Sept. 1887 M. George Stafford 19 Feb. 1904
D. 10 Mar. 1966 Baxter County, Arkansas
4. Henry Ransom B. 5 July 1889 M. Nancy Pruitt M. ?
D. 5 Sept. 1978 Rio Linda, Cal.
5. Frances Julie Ann B. 7 Mar. 1891 M. Lonie Leonard Green Tucker 22 Nov. 1908
Mahulda D. 28 Apr. 1947 B. San Angelo, Tom Green Co., Texas
6. Minerva Evelyn B. 27 July 1893 M. James Alfred Dilbeck 29 Mar. 1914
Still living
7. William Grant B. 29 Mar. 1900 M. Eula Reynolds 19 Jan. 1921
D. 31 Mar. 1971 B. Pilgrim's Rest, Baxter County, Arkansas
8. Lily Luvena B. 10 Aug. 1906 M. Charles Blufford Gilbert 24 Dec. 1921
D. 12 Aug. 1970 B. Pilgrim's Rest Cemetery, Baxter County

-- Mrs. Nadine Chambless

DESCRIPTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS

These are photographs. from the Lloyd Fisk collection.

Photographs 1, 2, 3 on page 5

Construction of Employment Office and would-be employees,
Norfolk Dam, 1940

Photographs 4, 5, 6 on page 6

Top - Union meeting at Employment Office at Ellis (down hill
from Salesville)

Lower - Early stages of Norfolk Dam construction

THE "ARKANSAS TOOTHPICK"

"They all carry knives, generally Arkansas toothpicks. When in expectation of a row, they begin picking their teeth with the point", reported Sir Richard Levinge, a British visitor in the early Southwest. "Arkansas toothpick" was actually a humorous term for the bowie knife, traditionally held to have been invented by James Bowie's brother Rezin in the early 1820's. Its design was more probably the work of many hands. The blade was 8-15 inches long, curved and double-edged near its point for slashing. Because of its superb balance, the knife could be thrown with accuracy. Popularized by sensational accounts of Jim Bowie's success with it in the Sandbar Duel, the knife became standard equipment for frontiersmen in the American West and was used as an all-purpose weapon and tool. It was the main eating implement not only in camps but in many a cabin. It served to skin and dress all kinds of game, mend saddles, and cut firewood. More than once it was also used to dig a grave on the lone prairie for a fallen comrade.

"THE FATEFUL HOG"

Ozark mountaineers serving in the Confederate Army claimed that some who were killed in action had seen the specter of a monstrous black hog just before battle. One man saw the death sign just before a major engagement but came through unhurt. He laughed at "superstition" and bragged about his escape but was killed the next day by the accidental discharge of a comrade's revolver. (The black hog was none other than Satan himself - he has been putting in periodic appearances in the same guise since time immemorial. An identical critter showed up at a priest's funeral some 250 years ago, and another fateful hog, quite similar to that, presages violent death in Ireland to this day.)

- A Treasury of Southern Folklore,
edited by B. A. Botkin, 1980

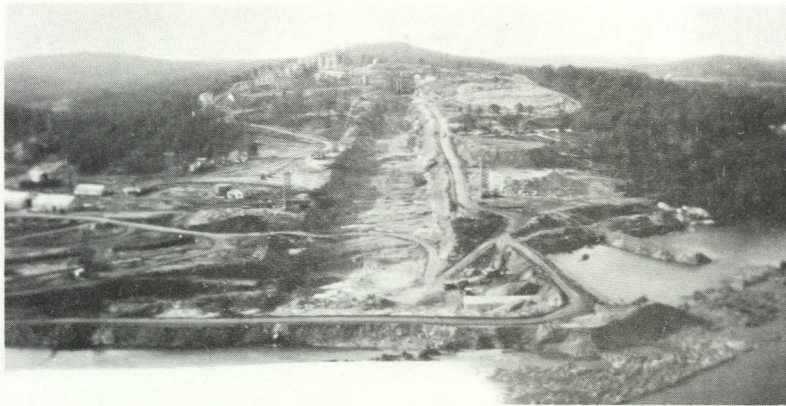
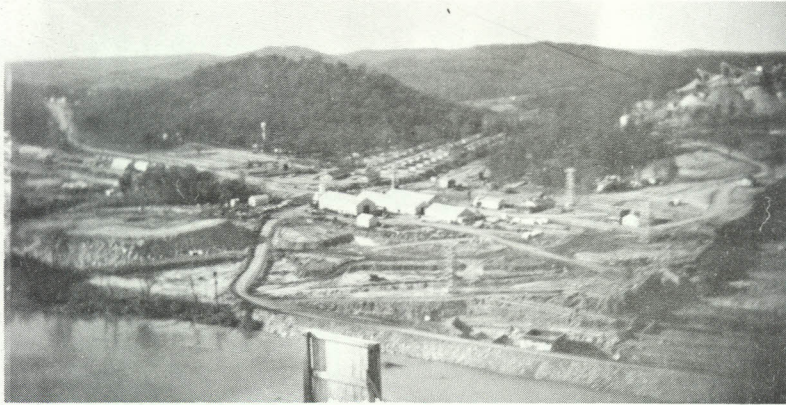
CURIOSITIES WANTED

From the Lexington Missouri Register, March 28, 1867

"A bunch of blossom from a railway plant; the topmost bough of an axle tree; a crust from the roll of the ocean; a feather from the crest of a wave; some quills from the wings of the wind; a lock of hair from the head of a column; the knife used by ringers when pealing bells; a broom for sweeping assertions; a collar for a neck of land; a quizzing-glass for an eye to business; a rocker from the cradle of the deep; a few tears from a weeping willow.

- Missouri Historical Review, January 1979





LETTER FROM MRS. NADINE CHAMBLESS

Mrs. Chambless of 715 Owenson's Drive, Dallas, Texas, submitted information about her grandfather, John Henry Marler, to Mrs. Alyce Marbury of our Society, with the following information about herself:

"I was not raised in Arkansas. My parents moved to Texas in 1911. My father was born in Clay County, Arkansas and his people had moved to Texas in 1896. In 1907, my father took his mother to visit her brother, William Monroe Stafford, in Baxter County and met my mother there. They corresponded for some time after he returned to Texas and then were married in 1908 and lived in Baxter County until February, 1911. They left and went to Stiles, Reagan County, Texas, later moved to Big Lake and eventually to San Angelo, Tom Green County, where I was born. I am the youngest of their six children, born 30 September, 1923. But some of my happiest and most beautiful memories of my childhood are those of the visits we made to see Mama's people in Arkansas. We would go to Monkey Run and walk across the little stream there, go to Grandpa's grist mill and smell the wonderful aroma of fresh ground grain, pick peaches and sit on the porch sharing them. Grandpa would peel them and we'd each have a half. It was our very special time - just he and I. Oh, so many beautiful memories come to mind."

CUSTOMERS OF JOHN HENRY MARLER 1920-21

"I have several ledgers that belonged to my grandfather, John Henry Marler, that he used in his gin and blacksmith shops. Lately, I have been typing up pertinent facts from them to preserve. Time is taking its toll - the writing is becoming very faint and the pages very brittle. This is a list of his customers taken from his gin book. I thought possibly you might be interested in publishing it in the Baxter County History."

Allen Dearmore & J. D. P.	Russel Payne	J. W. Carson	Rue Rogers
Don Crownover	Roy Sorrells	W. F. McNeil	Robert Payne
J. H. Marler	A. F. Cooper	Grant Marler	W. D. Presley
J. B. Stafford	W. W. Stafford	J. T. Holden	Lee Dearmore
W. L. Hargroves	M. A. Holden	J. S. Stafford	J. E. Culverhouse
J. C. Ford	T. C. Killeam	W. H. Lackey	T. E. Reed
A. J. Stafford	S. V. Baker	L. T. Marler	S. H. Hodges
Stafford & Kilgore	M. L. Crownover	Bert Hopper	J. E. Lonon
James Denny	C. N. Tucker	J. A. Gooden	Guy Hargroves
Sanford and Farris	J. W. Hammack	J. J. Davis	Laura Strawhorn
Fred Johman	W. H. Hodges	W. A. Messick	C. H. Stafford
T. J. Meredith	J. E. Marler	John Glycer	T. P. Conley
J. M. Cooper	W. M. Rogers	W. B. Byrd	West & Sewell
W. E. Barber	Levi Reed	E. D. Gilbert	
F. T. Lonon	W. W. Baker	E. J. McCracken	
J. V. Gunter	Lee Reynolds	Aylor Bros.	
William Barnett	B. F. Marler	W. S. Carson	
H. S. Powell	Arthur Cobb	J. W. Wise	
J. C. Stafford	Dilbeck & Co.	John Butler	
T. J. Siler	W. W. Brewer	E. A. Lee	
Rue Rogers	Floyd Morris	Bud Gilbert	
E. H. Powell	Will Robinson	J. C. Marler	
W. H. Fisk	Brooks Reynolds	W. M. Deatherage	
T. J. Crafford	H. R. Messick	Nan Bingaman	
Elza Herron	C. D. Hammack	J. R. Plumly	
J. R. Creel	Jim McGee	Mel Plumley	
White & Messick	J. H. McNeil	R. J. Lonon	
Elmer Bryant	W. H. McGee	Elmer Carson	
Dilbeck & Green	G. W. Bayless	Willie Denny	
C. G. Marler	C. C. Hargroves	Wilson Presley	
Johnnie Brewer	J. W. Cox	W. C. Rice	
Steve McGee	J. A. Hodge		

1912

- G. W. Bagwell
to fit 4 shoes, 30¢
to sharpen 1 plow, 10¢
to fix singletree, 10¢
to fit and set 4 shoes, 65¢
- J. W. Carson
sharpen 1 plow, 10¢
sharpen 3 plows, 20¢
to sharpen and set 2 saws, 50¢
to handle 1 ax, 15¢
- Tom Dilbeck
to make 1 plow stock, \$1.50
sharpen 1 plow, 10¢
to lay 2 plows, 45¢
- Bartly Abner
fix plow, 10¢
- Will Farris
to sharpen 2 plows, 20¢
- J. C. Fisk
sharpen 2 plows, 15¢
to sharpen 1 hoe, 10¢
to set 4 shoes, 30¢
- Wiley Fisk
to sharpen 8 shoes, 65¢
to sharpen 2 plows, 15¢
to sharpen 1 sweep, 10¢
- S. H. Hodges
to sharpen 6 plows, 45¢
to fit 4 shoes and sharpen 5 plows, 70¢
to sharpen 1 grub hoe, 10¢
to weld 1 rod, 10¢
- G. W. Henry
to sharpen 6 plows, 50¢
to make and set 4 tires, \$2.00
to fit and set 8 shoes, \$1.20
- R. B. Hopper
to fit and set 2 shoes, 30¢
to sharpen 2 hoes, 20¢
to set 1 tire, 50¢
- Ed Lonon
to make doubletree & fix breast yoke, 50¢
to fix saw, 75¢
to fit and set 4 shoes, 60¢
- J. E. Marler
to sharpen 3 plows, 25¢
to sharpen 1 hoe, 10¢
2 hoe handles, 15¢
- J. E. Marler, continued
to sharpen & punch 1 plow, 10¢
to trim & sharpen 1 sweep, 15¢
to fit & set 4 shoes, 60¢
Credit by bark, 50¢
- J. B. Marler
to sharpen 2 plows, 15¢
Credit by hauling coal, \$1.50
Credit by molasses, \$ 3.75
to fit 2 shoes & set 4 shoes, 45¢
- Jessie Powell
to sharpen 4 plows, 30¢
to lay 1 plow, 25¢
- Haram Tucker
to fix and tire buggy, \$4.00
- A. P. White
make arm wedges, \$ 1.00
to sharpen 4 plows, 30¢
to lay 1 plow & draw and sharpen 1 plow,
40¢
Credit by mowing hay, \$1.00
to sharpen 1 sweep, 10¢
to lay 1 plow & make 1 clevis, 40¢
to weld ring & thread 1 bolt, 15¢
- J. C. Marler
to sharpen 3 plows, 20¢
to make & arm 1 singletree & fix
1 clevis, 20¢
to sharpen 3 plows and L hoe, 25¢
- H. R. Marler
to sharpen 1 plow & fix heel bolt, 15¢
- S. J. Young
to fix plow stock, 45¢
to fix cotton planter, 25¢
to fit 4 shoes, 30¢
Credit by baling hay, 65¢
- Bennie Young
to burn (temper) 1 plow, 45¢
to fit 4 shoes, 30¢
to fix cotton planter, 25¢
to sharpen 1 plow, 10¢
Credit by work, 40¢
- J. B. Stafford
to sharpen 3 plows, 20¢
to make 1 plow stock & beam 2 plows, \$2.25
to make 1 grass rod, 25¢
to sharpen 4 plows & 12 hire teeth, 20¢
to fit 2 shoes, 15¢
to sharpen 1 sweep, 10¢

John Henry Marler's Blacksmith Ledger, continued

- J. T. Reynolds
to make and arn 1 singletree, 35¢
to fit and set 2 shoes, 30¢
to sharpen 5 plows, 45¢
- Louis Pruitt
to fit and set 8 shoes, 90¢
to sharpen 6 plows, 45¢
- Will Manual
to fix gun lock, 15¢
- W. E. Ware
to sharpen 4 plows, 30¢
fit and set 2 shoes, 35¢
to sharpen 1 plow and 1 sweep, 15¢
- J. E. Calverhouse
to sharpen 10 plows & 1 hoe, 80¢
to sharpen 2 grub hoes, 15¢
to beam & handle 1 double shovel, 50¢
- G. W. Bayless
to fit & set 2 shoes, 30¢
to lay 1 plow, 20¢
sharpen 2 plows, 15¢
to fit 4 shoes, 30¢
to arn 2 singletrees, 35¢
- J. R. Stafford
to sharpen 2 plows, 15¢
to trim & sharpen 1 plow, 10¢
- J. B. Stafford
to sharpen 3 plows, 20¢
to make 1 plow stock & beam 2
double shovels, \$2.25
to make 1 grass rod, 25¢
to set 2 shoes, 15¢
to sharpen 2 sweeps, 15¢
- J. T. Davis
sharpen 4 plows, 30¢
- J. F. Martin
sharpen plow point, 10¢
to lay & sharpen plow point, 25¢
to fix plow beam & make 2 plows, 75¢
to make strap for moer(mower), 40¢
to point & sharpen pick, 25¢
- Will Abner
to fix chain, 25¢
to make 1 cant hook and fix chain, 50¢
- Will Hodges
to weld & set 2 tires, \$1.00
- Abb Stafford
to trim & sharpen 3 plows, 25¢
to fix brake, 10¢
to make buck head, 20¢
to fix D.S. & sharpen & punch plow, 20¢
to sharpen 1 sweep, 10¢
to halling, 75¢
- J. E. Powell
to fit 6 pare shoes, \$2.00
to lay 2 plows, 45¢
sharpen 5 plows, 35¢
to fit 16 pire shoes, \$ 2.00
to fix rod, 15¢
- A. J. Stafford
to fit 4 shoes, 25¢
to fit & set 4 shoes, 60¢
- Lee Reynalds
to sharpen 2 plows, 15¢
- Hen Cooper
to sharpen 1 hoe & fix rod, 15¢
to sharpen 3 plows, 20¢
to sharpen 5 plows and 1 hoe, 45¢
- L. A. Barnhill
to sharpen 2 plows, 15¢
to lay 1 plow, 20¢
Credit by work, \$1.00
- J. C. Cooper
to lay 1 plow & sharpen 1, 25¢
- Albert Hamack
to sharpen 3 plows & 1 hoe, 30¢
- C. W. Anglin
to set 2 shoes, 10¢
to make cuffs, 45¢
- J. T. Anglin
to sharpen 8 plows & 11 hire teeth, 85¢
- Will Hamack
to sharpen 8 plows, 60¢
- Evin Fisk
to fit 4 shoes, 30¢
Credit by bayling hay, 30¢
- J. L. Lonon
to fit & set 4 shoes, 60¢
- L. T. Marler
to fit 4 shoes, 30¢

John Henry Marler's Blacksmith Ledger, continued

Claud Read
to lay arm & punch 1 plow, 25¢

A. J. Cooper
to fit & set 4 shoes, 60¢

J. E. Powell
to trim and sharpen 1 plow, 10¢
to fit 6 hoes, 40¢

S. W. Marler
to set 1 shoe, 10¢

W. A. Messick
to sharpen 2 sweeps, 20¢

M. Tanksley
to fit & set 4 shoes, 65¢

P. H. Gear
to sharpen drills, 40¢

J. E. Calverhouse
to make 1 single tree clip. ;5¢

Will Farris
to fix wagon, 35¢

Nathan Farris
to ballance & fix wagon, 50¢

Dan Anglin
to fit & set 4 shoes. 70¢

L. A. Barnhill
to fix laith straps and shovel, 40¢

C. W. Bagwell
to set saw, 15¢

Bennie Lamb
2 hoes, 60¢

Tom Dilbeck
to set saw, 10¢

S. H. Hodges
to fit 4 shoes, 25¢

A. P. White
to fix brake, 25¢
Credit by timber, \$1.50

A. B. McGee
to fit 2 shoes, 15¢

Will Abner
to fix saw, 50¢

B. M. Marler
to fit 8 shoes, 50¢
to set 8 shoes, 60¢

Simp Henry
to file & set 1 saw, 25¢

Dan Anglin
to fit & set 4 shoes, 60¢

B & M
to fit 16 shoes, \$1.00

J. W. Carson
to fit & set 2 shoes, 15¢

C. M. Stafford
to fit 4 shoes, 25¢
Credit by halling, 50¢

(These items are but samples of the types of work done and the prices paid in 1912 to Mr. Marler. From the details on these pages and the numbers and frequency of plows sharpened, the Ozark rocks must have been hard on them. Some of his customers paid almost daily visits to the smithy. Perhaps the need for fitting shoes or sharpening plows and hoes was only an excuse for neighborly chats!) -Editor

BAXTER COUNTY HISTORY

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