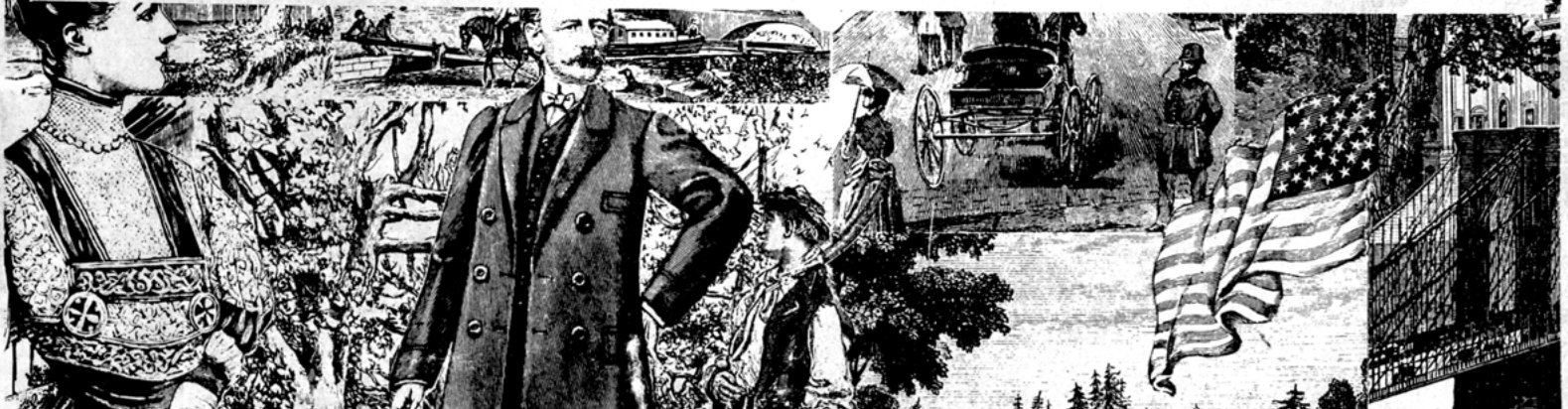


1900 - 1975
VILLAGE OF

DIVERNON

DIAMOND JUBILEE
MEMORY BOOK

JULY 16 - 20, 1975



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CONTENTS

The Village of Divernon 1900 - 1975	3
Divernon Citizens	6
If You Remember These Things: You're Getting Old.....	20
Divernon In General	25
Churches.....	25
Schools	26
Business of Divernon	27
Clubs and Organizations.....	32
Dusting Off Divernon	36

THE VILLAGE OF DIVERNON 1900 – 1975

An Early History of The Town Business, And General Population

Written by Effie P. Johnson, September 1955

The Village of Divernon has had a turbulent career, but stands undefeated. Her head, if bloody, is still unbowed... she sits placidly by Brush Creek and plans shrewdly for the future.

I came here from East St. Louis in 1900 as the bride of Dr. Simeon Ryerson Johnson, who, with a fresh diploma from the University of Illinois, had been lured to the place by the opening of the splendid big mine by the Madison Coal Corporation. In the 55 years I have lived here I watched the settlement grow from a huddle of houses, with planks laid down in the mud for sidewalks, to become a roaring mining town of 3000. I not only saw but experienced the spectacular rise and also the heart-rending fall of the village. I saw the mine, of which we were all so proud, close down in 1925 after 27 years of prosperity, when a good payroll averaged \$50,000 a month and which the miner's wives spent as fast as their husbands earned it.

The Illinois Central Railroad passenger trains would stop in those days to allow a whole carload of Springfield shoppers to alight, lots of Divernon money went to Springfield.

MINE CLOSES:

I saw 800 men suddenly rendered jobless, 600 of whom lived in the 123 houses which composed the mining camp... I saw those neat houses demolished or moved away, saw the huge miners' boarding house razed stoically watched the two Banks fold and the Building and Loan collapse.

Many stores close. The school attendance was lowered but not the educational standard. For Divernon was named for a hardy heroine in Sir Walter Scott's "Rob Roy" Diana Vernon, whose friends affectionately called her Di; and like her intrepid name-sake Divernon wasted no time on bemoaning the past, but began immediately to plan for a different future.

Incorporated in 1900, the village really came into being in 1866 when Charles G. Brown, and Joseph Burtle laid out the original plat with D. H. Starkweather assisting with the surveying.

The Post Office was established April 25, 1887 with Charles G. Brown as Postmaster and C. H. Barnes as assistant in charge. The first piece of mail received was by Anna C. Mason. The first days collection was 48 cents. Cancellations for the month was \$9.34.

Naming the Post Office caused considerable discussion. Springfield was first suggested, then Brownsville, in honor of its founders. Both were rejected as having previously used in the state. When Squire Barnes suggested Di Vernon, it was immediately accepted but the capital V was eliminated.

Since the site of the village was carved from a wheat field and was surrounded by some of the richest land in central Illinois, the Divernon Grain Company was one of the earliest industries.

The first business house was erected by W. W. Taylor in 1887 near where the elevator of the Divernon Grain Company now stands. R. S. Frye and family were the first residents of the village proper... other builders of the same year were Edward Lewis and George Henry... these buildings are still in good repair.

OPEN HERLAN LUMBER COMPANY!

The second business house opened was the Hardware and Lumber Store of R. S. Brown, on the present site of the Post Office building of the E. Herlan Lumber Co. In 1895 Ernest Herlan bought the property, approximately 350 by 624 feet, store building and stock included for \$500. Today the plant now operated by the Herlan Brothers, sons of Ernest Herlan, comprises 6 warehouses, 3 lumber sheds, one planing mill and a hardware store and office building. The sales of lumber, hardware and all types of building material are no longer confined to the local community, but are extended over a radius of many miles.

The Divernon Grain Company is now owned by Mrs. Ethel O'Keefe with Don Easley as manager. The present capacity is around 50,000 bushels. They handle yearly from 800,000 bushels to 900,000 bushels. They also fill and unload grain for the Commodity Credit Corporation, which has a bin site south of town which holds approximately 500,000 bushels. Corn is trucked to southern states. They have a good trade in sacked feed and are planning a new building to house a grinder and mixer for feed, and a grain cleaner.

In August, 1887, the first Blacksmith Shop was put in operation by Ernest Rettberg, in the building in which his son Harry and his grandson, Robert still carry on an extensive business. They don't shoe horses anymore, but they sharpen sweeps of tractor cultivators and can fix just about anything on earth—electric or otherwise. Harry Rettberg was the first boy born in Divernon, Robert, the third generation Rettberg, a graduate of Bradley University, is an expert plumber.

Covi's General Store is a survival of the early days. It was built in 1899 by John Covi, and after his death, the business was continued in the same building by his two sons, Joseph and Albert. Since Joseph's recent death, Albert supervises. William Peerce and Thomas Beynon also conduct grocery stores. Divernon once possessed a Grange Store — opened in 1888 by N. L. McTaggart.

In 1887, Charles Clayton opened a Livery Stable on the site now occupied by Andy Crick's Service Garage. In 1905, the first automobile came to town. It was an Autocar Roadster driven by Dr. S. R. Johnson. This year, 349 cars and 89 trucks were registered. Mrs. Mary Burgess operates a Chevrolet Salesroom and Garage; Virgil Boblitt conducts a Service Station and Motel at Sundown Corner where Divernon's Paved Spur crosses Route 66, Hay Brothers operate a garage and drive two school busses.

Once owning her own Electric Light Plant, the village is now serviced by the Central Illinois Public Service Co.

Divernon's first Telephone System was self-owned and it was a forerunner of the dial plan. In 1902, 50 phones were installed, each having a dial with 50 numbers, and a ring-it-yourself method of operating. This soon proved inadequate, and after various changes the General Telephone Co. of Illinois took over with Mrs. Virginia Emerson in charge of the local office.

Divernon's first newspaper was edited by Rev. M. H. Andrews in 1887 and was called the Divernon Star. Rev. E. M. Snook changed the name to the Divernon News in 1898, and three years later it passed into the hands of Ira T. Maupin. On January 1, 1905 I. S. Dunn took over and made a new record in country journalism. Since his death, his son, T. P. Dunn, has continued and improved the literary work of his father. Dunn also edits the Auburn Citizen with residence in Divernon and office and machinery in Auburn. A sub-office is maintained in Divernon in the same building in which the Divernon News was first published. This building also served as a Post Office in the early days and a small rectangular opening cut in the weatherboarding to serve as a letter drop may still be seen. The present Post Office is well housed in the old bank building, with John Rettberg as Postmaster. This is a third class office.

FIRST SCHOOL BUILT IN 1888:

Education has always been important in Divernon. The first school house was built in 1888. The first directors were J. F. Burt, N. E. Kenny and D. H. Starkweather.

The Divernon Grade School was built in 1901. Directors being L. C. Watt, C. F. Dickerson and E. Rettberg. Divernon had the first Township High School in Sangamon County. It was built in 1911 and still serves the community. The first school board included: Dr. S. R. Johnson, President; Malcolm Rogers, Clerk; John Easley, Clarence Davis and A. E. Starkweather.

A second Grade School was built, and after the financial crash, it was torn down to build a High School Gymnasium. A Kindergarten was opened last year.

The memory of Charles G. Brown is enshrined in the hearts of Divernon Citizens, for his generosity and forethought in planning for the village. He gave the ground for the City Park and deeded it forever to the people of Divernon. He supervised the planting of the magnificent Elms, some of which have survived for more than 50 years.

He also gave the land for the Presbyterian Church and Manse.

The Presbyterian Church is the oldest church in Divernon. The original building was built in 1870 on the bank of Brush Creek, and was shared by the Methodist, who assisted with its construction. It was destroyed by fire two years later, but was promptly rebuilt. In 1887, it was removed to its present site in the village. Numerous improvements have been made. The late Charles Drennan gave the Electric Chimes. Rev. O. G. Mann is the Pastor.

The Methodist Church was built in 1895. The present pastor is Rev. Marshall Ervin.

The Baptist Church was erected in 1904. Rev. Paul Miller is the pastor.

The Sacred Heart Catholic Church was dedicated in 1912. Rev. Cullen O'Brien is pastor of the Parish.

Another historical landmark is the Abell Hotel which was built in 1887 and began life as the Divernon House. It has 11 rooms and hall upstairs, 10 rooms and hall on the first floor and four basement rooms. It was purchased in 1891 by Edward Abell and since his death various decendants have carried on. William Abell and his sister, Miss Pearl, are in occupancy at present.

WOMENS CLUB ACTIVE:

The Divernon Woman's Club has played an important role in the cultural life of the village. The 50th Anniversary was celebrated last year during the presidency of Mrs. Lucille Watkins Brown. Mrs. Hayward McMurray now occupies the chair. The new modern bridge which spans Brush Creek was christened with elaborate ceremonies last year, in appreciation of which the Township authorities attached to the bridge a bronze plaque, commending the act of the Divernon Woman's Club. Different club presidents have planted Spruce trees in the park, which are illumated at Christmas. Mrs. John Williams in 1927, Mrs. S. R. Johnson in 1934, Mrs. Ernest Rettberg II in 1951, Mrs. Alexander Smith and Mrs. Lucille Brown in 1953.

The American Legion Club house faces the square. In the Legion Park is a Brick Memorial erected to veterans of World War II. Earl Waters is the Legion Commander.

The Divernon Sportman's Club has developed a picnic area adjacent to Lake Madison. The president is J. Boros.

The Masonic Lodge celebrated its 25th Anniversary last year. Earl Dossett is Worshipful Master.

The Order Of The Eastern Star is very active. Mrs. Roy Black is Worthy Matron.

VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT:

A volunteer Fire Department is available under fire chief Sam Currie Jr. The wives have an organization called the Fireflies, headed by Mrs. Leland Boblitt.

The P.T.A. works under the direction of Mrs. Alva Bearden Jr. Hot lunches are served at school.

Mrs. C. G. Bramley's garden adjacent to Bramley's Funeral Home, make a gorgeous spot of color at the entrance to the village.

In September 1948, Thomas R. Beynon and his parents purchased the Joseph Ballog grocery store on the south east corner of the square. Mr. Ballog has been in the grocery business twenty-five years in Divernon. Beynon's store will become associated with IGA Food Stores.

Rettbergs Radio and Electric Shop supplies and services radios, television sets and all General Electrical appliances, also Pittsburg Paint. Proprietor is Ernest Rettberg III, an Ames Graduate and Radar expert in World War II.

The Cardinal Products factory features the silk screen procession of textiles, along with other lines. George Netznik is the manager.

Mrs. Anne Barnwell serves the eating public at Anne's Cafe.

Mrs. Dorothy Seppi tempts feminine shoppers with fetching frocks and frothy lingerie at the Connie Lynn Shop.

Cecil Moseley conducts a Tonsorial Shop — But there's no Barbershop Quartet.

Two Beauty Shops are supervised by Mrs. Eva Nichols and Mrs. Norma Sanders.

At the first village election in 1899, Ernest Rettberg was elected President of the Governing Board: W. W. Taylor, Clerk; Trustees were C. F. Dickerson, Charles A. Ford M. L. Colliflower, Lafe Molohon, E. Herlan and Thomas Vass. Mr. Ford is the only surviving member of this group. He lives with his daughter, Miss Mabel, in the home which he built at the turn of the century.

Leland Boblitt is now President of the Village Board; Harry Hackard, Clerk; Robert Bramley, Treasurer; Robert Rettberg, William Sittig, Alva Bearden Jr. James Stogsdill and Murrel Haire, Trustees.

Divernon's population now numbers 1000. It is becoming known as a good place to live. Retired farmers have settled here. Springfield families with small children like the country quiet, and have sought residence here. Rent is cheaper, commuting the 17 miles on Route 66 to jobs is not unpleasant, and the schools are good. Gordon Wixom and a corps of 17 teachers see to that. Many men and women residing here work in Springfield.

Divernon is no longer a roaring mining town, but a peaceful country hamlet—a nice place to live.

DIVERNON CITIZENS

BRAMLEY FAMILY HISTORY

Mr. and Mrs. Chester G. Bramley, with their 3 daughters and 1 son, moved from Palmyra, Illinois, to Divernon on June 1, 1924, and established the Bramley Funeral Home. Mr. Bramley remained very active to the time of his death on February 17, 1967, Mrs. Bramley was very active helping in the business and community affairs until her passing on January 30, 1971. Their only son, Charles Robert, went into business with his father after graduating from the College of Mortuary Science, St. Louis, Missouri, in June 1948, and has continued the business with his wife, the former Carolyn Rettberg.

The daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Chester Bramley are: Mrs. Bryce (Eloise) Barnes who lives at R. R., Chatham, Illinois, and is a registered nurse at Memorial Medical Center Springfield, Illinois; Mrs. Kenneth (Jean) Ball who lives in Divernon and is a registered nurse at Memorial Medical Center, Springfield, Illinois; and Mrs. Chalmers (Betty) Ford who lives in Divernon and is employed by Panhandle Eastern Pipe Line Company, Springfield, Illinois.

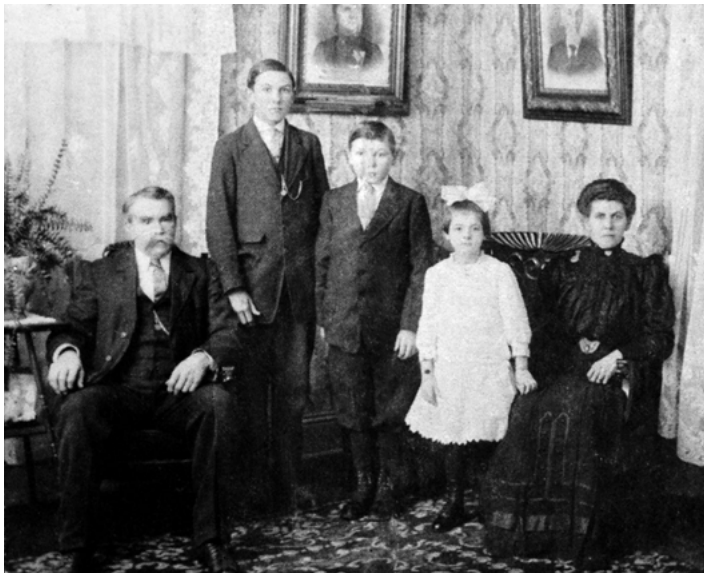
PARE FAMILY HISTORY

The Clarence Pare family moved to Divernon June 1936. Mr. Pare, a carpenter became interested in Bee Keeping as a hobby and has developed that into a thriving business. At age 80 he continues with the bees and bee supplies, furnishing many people with honey.

The Children attended Divernon Schools. The two sons after graduation served in the armed forces during World War II. Besides the four children Mr. Pare has 11 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

C. A. FORD FAMILY HISTORY

Charles Arthur Ford was a pioneer resident of Divernon. He was engaged in farming in this community from 1894 to 1942. Mrs. Ford was the former Nannie Harris. This picture was taken of the Ford family in 1910 at their home at 133 Springer St., Divernon where Mabel Ford resides.



The Ford family from left to right are Charles A. Ford, Earl C Ford, John W. Ford, Mabel V. Ford and Mrs. Charles (Nannie) Ford.

All the above are deceased except Mabel.

MCTAGGERT FAMILY HISTORY

The N. L. McTaggart family was one of the oldest families in Divernon. Mr. and Mrs. McTaggart came to Divernon shortly after they were married and opened a grocery store on the corner which was once a tavern. Their five children were, Irving, Louise, Marguerite, Gertrude and Dorothy. Irving McTaggart and Louise Hoy live in Chicago and Marguerite Foster Schwartz resides in Carmichael, California. Gertrude and Dorothy are deceased.

OLAH FAMILY HISTORY

Mr. and Mrs. Gabor Olah came to Divernon in the year of 1913 from the country of Hungary.

Mr. and Mrs. Olah had two sons and two daughters. One daughter Isabell still lives in Divernon.

Mr. Olah worked in the local coal mines.

SZOKE FAMILY HISTORY

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Szoke Sr., came to Divernon in the year of 1911 from the country of Hungary.

Mr. and Mrs. Szoke had six sons and one daughter born in Divernon.

Mr. Szoke worked in the local coal mines till 1932 when they moved out on a farm southeast of Divernon and worked on the farm for the Albert Sage family.

In 1936 Mr. and Mrs. Szoke and family moved on to a farm north of Riverton, Illinois were later on they purchased some land to farm.

One son Kolman stayed in Divernon where he worked for the Kline and Burgess Garage till he left for service in April 1944 till October 1945. In 1946 he married Isabell Olah.

Kolman has been Fire Chief since 1956, Village Trustee since 1959 and on the Brush Creek Cemetery since 1947, which he is now President.

PAPAI FAMILY HISTORY

Victor Papai Sr. came to Divernon in 1902, sent for his bride to be Maria Pangracq in October 19, 1903, were married at Sacred Heart Church in Springfield, as there was no Catholic church in Divernon.

To this marriage 11 children were born all in Divernon, five daughters, six sons. Mary Harray of New York; Elizabeth Burg, Divernon; Ann Oggero, Florida; Theresa McGee, Oklahoma; Laura Suarez, Springfield, Steve Papai, South Bend, Indiana; Ernest Papai, Forth Worth, Texas; Alfred Papai, Springfield; Louis and William, Divernon; Victor Papai Jr., Divernon, deceased.

Mary retired from American Airlines after 45 years; Theresa retired from American Airlines after 30 years; Steve worked at Studebakers for 35 years; Louis retired from Fiat-Allis after 36 years; Ernest has been with Montgomery Ward for 35 years still working; Al Papai was a professional baseball player for 17 years including 4 years in World War II.

Mr. and Mrs. Papai celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary October 19, 1953. Mrs. Papai is now 91 years old, she spends part of her time in Divernon and Springfield with daughter Laura.

Their entire married life was spent in Divernon.

CINCEBOX FAMILY HISTORY

The Cincebox family originally moved to Divernon, Illinois in 1936. Glenn's wife's name was Augusta Blanche and they have two girls and four boys.

Glenn's occupation was that of a carpenter. He inherited this trait from his grandfather who was a shipbuilder. Glenn's father Charles and his Uncle Harry were also carpenters who traveled around the Pawnee, Divernon area by horse and buggy doing carpenter work.

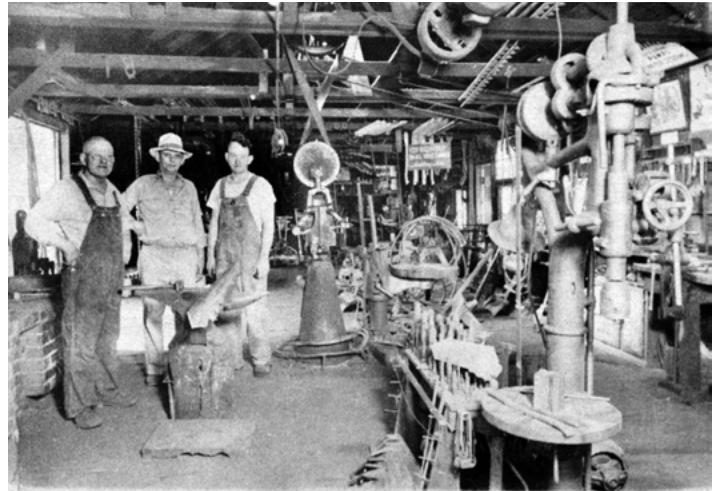
When the girls Blanche and Freida were young they used to help their Dad hang paper and paint. Later on when the boys got older they helped him in the construction business. He taught them the trade as soon as they were old enough to work.

Freida has one son named Kevin, he will be the fifth generation of carpenters in the tradition.

Glenn died in January of 1962. The boys have carried on the occupation in the Divernon area ever since.

RETTBERG FAMILY HISTORY

In August, 1888, the first blacksmith shop was put into operation by Ernest Rettberg at the northeast corner of 1st and Dodds, where the Township Building is now located, later moving to the east side of the square at the present site of Viola's Tavern and then to the present site of the Hambelton Repair Shop on the southwest corner of First and Kenney. His son, Harry, the first boy born in the village, later carried on the work there assisted by his son, Robert.



The senior Mr. Rettberg served as a director of the first grade school established in 1901, and Harry and Robert both have served as Trustees of the Divernon Village board. Robert now serves as the Water Commissioner of Divernon, a job also previously held by his father. Robert is also Divernon's first representative to the ADGPTV Water Commission, the new source of water supply from Otter Lake since 1965. Prior to that time, the supply came from Lake Springfield since 1934.

Harry's daughter is Mrs. Robert (Carolyn) Bramley, the wife of the local funeral director.

Other members of the Rettberg family have been long-time residents of the village. John, now deceased, served as Postmaster from 1940 until his retirement in 1958. His descendants are Col. Don F. Rettberg, USAF, and Mrs. Gary (Lois) Warrington, both residing in Texas.

Ernest Rettberg, deceased, operated the Red and White Store here for many years. His descendants are Ernest, Jr., now operator of the Rettberg Radio and Electric Store here, and Mrs. Roy (Maida) Robbins, of Petersburg.

Charles (Chick) Rettberg, who at one time operated Blacksmith Shops here and in New Berlin, now resides in the Soldiers and Sailors Home in Quincy. His daughter, Margaret McGrath, resides in Colorado.

Fred Rettberg, a retired butcher, spent most of his adult life in Lafayette, Indiana, and now resides in the Soldiers and Sailors Home there. His son, Jack, lives in the Washington, D.C. area.

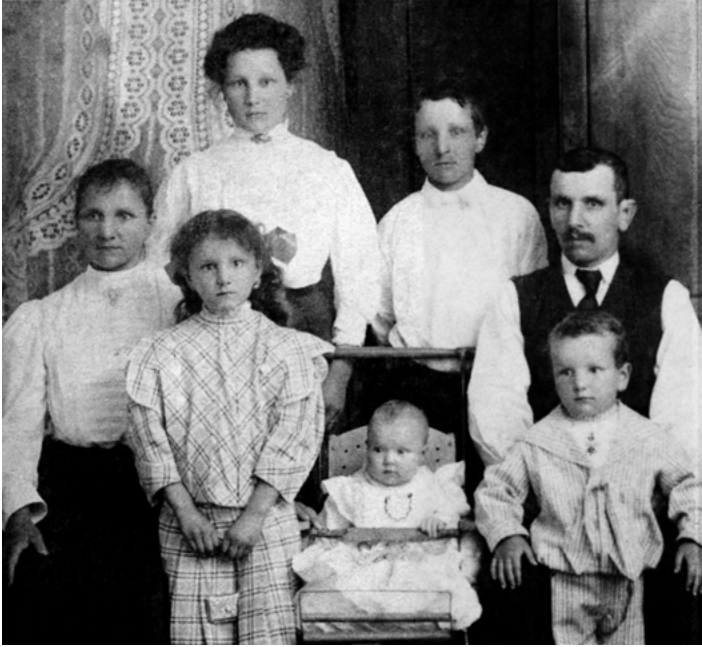
Janet Rettberg Lewis, another member of this pioneer family, resided here for many years in the Rettberg family home adjacent to the Blacksmith Shop. Her son, Ernest Lewis, reared a family in Divernon and most of them still remain in this area. Other children of Janet and Morgan Lewis include: Mrs. Fannie Curby, of Chatham, Mrs. Rachel Doocy, of Arcadia, California, Mrs. Marion James, of Elmhurst, Mrs. Carrie Motley, of Taylor, Michigan, and William F. Lewis, of Colfax.

Another daughter, Margaret Rettberg Bodenhammer, deceased, lived in Springfield her adult life and reared a family of four.

FIAUSH FAMILY HISTORY

John Fiaush born in Ajka, Hungary, in May of 1868 came to America in 1905. Arriving in Springfield, Illinois, he went to the home of friends; later coming to Divernon to work in the new mine. A miner all his life, Mr. Fiaush began to work in the mines at the age of 12 years.

Mrs. Fiaush and four children, Mary, age 13; John, age 11; Grace, age 6; and Tony, age 3; arrived in America later, coming directly to Divernon. A daughter, Ann, was born in Divernon in 1908.



Mr. Fiaush worked in the Divernon Mine until its closing in 1925. He remained here until his death in 1954 at the age of 86. His wife, Mary, preceded him in death in 1953, at the age of 81.

Daughter Mary, the oldest child, married Joseph Hartman. She was the mother of nine children, all born in Divernon. One son, Ernest, still lives in Divernon. Mary lived in Divernon until her death at age 76.

Son, John, started work in the Divernon Mine at the age of 16 years, working at the mine until it closed. He married and moved to Springfield, Illinois, where he still resides. He is the father of three children.

Daughter, Grace, began work at the Neeson Store and later worked at the Farmers State Bank and the First State Bank of Divernon. She married and moved to Springfield, Illinois and later to Chicago, Illinois. She returned to Divernon and operated a Drug Store and Ice Cream Parlor for several years. She now resides in Springfield. She is the mother of three sons.

Daughter Ann, attended the Divernon schools, married and lived in Springfield, Illinois until her death in 1953.

Son, Tony, graduated from Divernon High School, Class of 1922. He worked in the Divernon Mine until its closing in 1925. Later he was employed at the Illinois Foundry in Springfield, Illinois for 17 years. He married Almina Whalen of Thayer, Illinois, in 1928, and lived in Springfield where daughter, Rosemary, was born. He returned to Divernon in 1932 which is now his present home. Daughters, Patricia and Antoinette, were born in Divernon; both still reside in Divernon. All three daughters graduated from Divernon High School. He has three grandchildren, Michael Maurer of New Berlin, Illinois and Brenda and Brian Kern who are students in the Divernon Elementary School. Tony retired from Allis Chalmers in Springfield after twenty-six years service.

EMERSON FAMILY HISTORY

The John Joseph Emerson family moved to Divernon in 1909. Including wife, Elizabeth (Buckley) and two sons; William J. and Elmer (Babe) J. John worked in the mine.

The family left after a few years and then returned again in 1920. A third son, LaVerne was born in 1911.

John and his two older sons worked in the mine until it closed. John lived in Divernon from 1920 until his death in 1937. His wife died in 1960.

William married Virginia (Morgan) and raised two sons; William D. and Richard J. William worked on the railroad and is retired and he and his sons and families still live in Divernon. His wife Virginia ran the Divernon Telephone office for 35 years.

Elmer (Babe) was town board trustee, Village Marshall, and precinct committeeman. In 1944 he joined the State Highway Police, and retired as Sargent in 1969. He and his wife Hazel (Williams) raised two children; Leonard C. and Linda I. All of the families reside in Divernon.

LaVerne was janitor of Divernon High School, and is retired from the Farm Supply Co. He married Wilhemina (Curby), they have two sons, John J. and Robert. John and family reside in Thayer; Robert in Springfield.

WARRINGTON FAMILY HISTORY

Frank and Harriotte Farnsworth Warrington came to Divernon in 1900. They were the parents of 10 children: Elizabeth Warrington Barrowman, Robert T. Warrington, Mary Warrington Zatyko, Wm. E. "Ned" Warrington, Janet Warrington, Sarah Warrington Boycott, Joseph Warrington, Frank Warrington, Harriett Warrington, Klista Warrington Ritchie.

KEISER FAMILY HISTORY

Lee Roy Keiser son of Louise Paxton Keiser and Michael Keiser was born in Divernon on August 16, 1902. In the year of 1925 he was married to Elizabeth L. Cuthbert who was born on December 23, 1907 in Divernon. They are the parents of these daughters: Mrs. Charles (Betty) Hott of Matton, Illinois, Mrs. Eugene (Marilyn) James of Auburn, Illinois; Mrs. Don (Louise) Myers of Springfield. They have five grandchildren.

Lee Roy (Toad) worked as blacksmith at the Madison Coal Mine in 1918 till the mine closed down in 1925. He also worked at Spring Creek Mine in Springfield and Hoosier Mine in Mt. Olive Illinois for many years. Then he went to Weavers Mfg. Co. in Springfield where he worked 37 years. He retired in 1969.

He was Village Clerk, and also township clerk for many years.

Toad passed away on June 29, 1973.

WORTH FAMILY HISTORY

We came to Divernon February 9, 1951, my wife, Elnora and I and our three sons, Robert Jr., Jack and Webb.

During the years the kids were home I was Police Magistrate for about nine years. My folks Rev. and Mrs. Victor Worth came here to live also in 1954.

In the winter of 1971 I became interested in bees again. We bought 20 colonies. I thought it might make a good hobby and retirement income in a few years. We had a good crop the first year and our honey was well accepted here and elsewhere. I found some good sale outlets in other cities. Our business has increased. My hobby has become a year round business. We call it Bob and Elnora Honey Sales.

At present we are putting up a new building to house some equipment to make room for processing and building bee supplies. We thank everyone who has helped make our venture a pleasant one,

MCGINLEY FAMILY HISTORY

Owen and Christina McGinley moved to Divernon from Pana about 1902. The house, which they built, is located on the corner of First and South Streets (southwest corner). Mr. McGinley was a coal miner in the mine in Divernon. Three of their children, Louis, Alice and Lucille were born in Divernon. They were the parents of 10 children: John, Thomas, Nellie, Katherine, Owen, Christina, Martin, Louis, Alice and Lucille. John, Thomas and Nellie were deceased at an early age. Katherine (Mrs. Clyde Boblitt) was the mother of two sons: Clyde A. was lost in action at sea during World War II and Dr. Delbert resides in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Mrs. Boblitt was deceased in 1955.

Owen McGinley resided in the family home with his sister Alice and family until the time of his death in 1948. Martin (Bud) McGinley died in Ohio in 1959. Christina (Mrs. Thomas Carmody) lives in Springfield with her husband Tom. Louis lives with his wife, Mary in Chicago and is retired from Commonwealth Edison.

Alice (Mrs. Homer Reynolds) lives in Springfield and has one son, Donald, who also resides in Springfield. Lucille (Mrs. Llewellyn Watkins) lived in Divernon until the time of her death in 1966. She had one daughter, Shirley (Mrs. James Westfall) who lives in Divernon.

GARRISON FAMILY HISTORY

March 1916, my husband and I came to Divernon from McLeansboro in Southern Illinois.

We lived for awhile on the George Davidson farm, later moving to a farm near Loami. Early in 1918 we moved to the Brown Bros. farm near Divernon and in October of 1920 we moved into Divernon. At that time Divernon had a much larger population than now.

My husband worked for the Madison Coal Company until the mine closed down. He then worked a few years for the Village. Later he was Township Road Commissioner for a number of years.

Our sons, Gene Garrison and Gerald Garrison both graduated from Divernon High School and then went to I. S. U. at Normal Illinois, for further training, both became teachers.

Gene only taught a few years. He has been an Engineer for the L. O. F. Company at Toledo, Ohio for 24 years.

Gerald has stayed with teaching. He is now with the Pekin School system.

LUESCHEN FAMILY HISTORY

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Lueschen were married on January 30, 1902 at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Schultz.

Mr. Lueschen was employed at the local mine.

They were the parents of four children, Fred Lueschen, Jr. (deceased) Mrs. John H. Lueschen, John Lueschen, and Mrs. Everette Hay.

The Lueschens resided in Divernon until the time of their deaths in 1954 and 1965.

BENCE FAMILY HISTORY

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Bence came to Divernon from Rabapatons, Hungary in the year of 1905. They had four sons all born in Divernon and two daughters also born here.

Mr. Bence worked in the local coal mines while they were in operation.

BRINOCAR FAMILY HISTORY

Mr. and Mrs. Joe Brinocar bought the Old Millard Burt place, west of Cumberland Cemetery in the summer of 1938. In March of 1939 they moved in and have been there ever since. At that time it was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Earl Estill. Other former occupants were Bud Redeford and wife Bessie.

The Brinocars have two daughters, Joanne of Peoria and Myrna Yates of Normal.

The Brinocars retired in December of 1973. Since then Ted Dowson and his two brothers do the farming

FENSTERMAKER FAMILY HISTORY

On December 5, 1878 John and Rebecca Gross bought a parcel of land from William Humphrey, when the area was then in Auburn Township — 97 years ago.

Mae Gross was born on this farm and in 1893 she married John P. Fenstermaker in the farm house that is still standing. In this same home Roger L. Fenstermaker, Sr. was born in 1898. He married Rosetta Watkins in 1927 and they lived on this site for a short while.

The homesite, which was built in 1880, was occupied by the Fenstermaker family until 1958, the year Mae Fenstermaker died.

The farm is now owned by the fourth generation of the same family, Roger L. Fenstermaker, Jr. of Springfield, Illinois.

ANDERSON FAMILY HISTORY

On November of 1919, after four years of marriage, we moved to Divernon with two boys—Calvin and Charles. This was just a return home for my husband, who moved here as a small boy and lived with his parents on a farm. However, this was a new town to me, for I came to Divernon from Iowa.

My husband worked at the coal mine until it closed down. He then worked for farmers, as a carpenter, and finally at Allis-Chalmers, where he was employed until he retired.

We had two more children after moving to Divernon. All of our children attended the Divernon schools and graduated from Divernon Township High School. Calvin graduated in 1935 and now lives in Chatham; Charles graduated in 1936 and now lives on a farm near Mechanicsburg; Viola graduated in 1939 and is presently living here in Divernon; and Bill graduated in 1943 and is now living in Springfield.

FORD-HAIRE FAMILY HISTORY

On October 10, 1897, Ruth Ford was born to Fred and Pearl Edlin Ford. Mr. Ford was born in Glenarm and coming to Divernon with his brothers, Charles, Elec, Frank — still living, and a sister Fannie Ford Armstrong.

Mrs. Ford came from Kentucky, and her sister was Mrs. Ollie Woodyard.

Ruth, was the eldest of the Fred Ford family, a sister Irene Harrop, brothers, Fred, and Cecil of Gardner, brother, Bob in Chicago, a brother Lenn (deceased).

Mr. Ford was a blacksmith in the Divernon Mine, Ruth recalls carrying his lunch bucket to him many a day, she also got to go down in the mine.

Ruth, was born in what is now the Clarence Westfall home, and was then located where the duplex on the northwest side of the square is now.

Ruth married Murrel Haire of Pawnee, June 27, 1914. Murrel teamed in Divernon for 21 years, and served on our Town Board for nine years. They are the parents of Mrs. Valeria Barnes, Miss Isabella Haire, Springfield, Mrs. Violet Saurer, Chicago, Mrs. Mary Jane Minder, Mrs. Geraldine Pape, Pawnee, Lenn Edward Haire and Wanda Mae Haire, (deceased). There are ten grandchildren, fourteen great-grandchildren.

Ruth resides in the home her father built in 1901 (which was located across the street from the old grade school) in which she remembers the school going up and saw it torn down.

Murrel Haire passed away October 19, 1966.

BECKER FAMILY HISTORY

George C. and Henry J. Becker opened a Dry Goods Store known as Becker Brothers on April 23, 1904. Previous to that time they were clerks in Myersteins Store on the north west corner of the square in Virden, Illinois. They ran the business in a building on the north west corner of the Divernon Village Square, which later was moved by Boblitt and Ford and became Sun Down Corner. In 1936 when they bought the Dean building on the east side of the square, now Vi's Tavern. In 1945 Henry Becker died and George ran the business another couple years, then retired after 43 years in business. Henry had two children, Robert, a C.P.A., and Dorothy, a dietitian, both living in Columbus Ohio.

George Becker had one son, Harold H. who married Edith LeMar, formerly of Pawnee. They farmed 2 miles south of Divernon, for 41 years and retired in 1973. They had three sons, Harold R., and James L. who live on the home place and G. Donald lives in town.

MONROE FAMILY HISTORY

Mr. and Mrs. Frank S. Monroe residing in Pawnee, 6 miles east of the settlement that is now Divernon. Since it was a new settle ment being surveyed and laid out in building lots, Mr. Monroe walked over to this new Town as he being a contractor and carpenter, knew this was a big opportunity for some one in his line of work. Purchasing 3 lots, for \$30.00. The land was owned by the late C.G. "Uncle Charles" Brown. Wheat was planted on these lots, each buyer was ask to only cut enough to afford space for the dwelling. He built a one room cabin boarded up and down on the outside, the site was across the street, east of what was later known as Doctor Johnson's home. So he and his wife moved there in 1887. In June 1888, a son Roy E. was born to Mr. and Mrs. Monroe, he was the second boy and the third child born in the Village. Later 2 girls was born to Mr. and Mrs. Monroe, (Tracy and Evelyn) Tracy lives in Florida and Evelyn in Springfield. Mr. and Mrs. Monroe and Roy E. are deceased.

MOTTERSHAW FAMILY HISTORY

The George Mottershaw family came to Divernon in 1906 to work in the coal mine. In 1910 they bought the restaurant on the east side of the square from Owen McGinley. In 1913 they built the Bakery on the west side of the square.

James Mottershaw, one of his sons and a long-time resident of this village, worked in the bakery from 1917 – 1928. He and his wife will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary in August, having been married in 1915. They are the parents of three children: Bill of Troy Michigan; James of Phoenix, Arizona; and Ednamary Grimes, of Lexington, Illinois.

BURNOSKI FAMILY HISTORY

In 1907 Louis Burnoski settled in Divernon. He worked for the Madison Coal Corporation as a machinist and loader. On Jan. 11, 1912, he was united in marriage to Margaret Samodai.

To this union five children were born, Louis, now living in South Bend, Indiana, Margaret Bertacchi of La Grange Park, Ill., Harriet of Divernon, Ernest of Muskegan, Michigan and Elsie Peregrin of Divernon.

Mr. Burnoski became a citizen of the United States, as well as his wife Margret on July 8, 1914. He was called to serve his country during World War I, but before he was inducted, the war had ended. After the mine closed its operations in Divernon, Mr. Burnoski worked for the Corporation in Glen Carbon until it closed its operations. During World War II, he served his country while working for the Aviation Division of Studebaker Corporation in South Bend. After the war, he returned to Divernon and was employed by the Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative Co. until he retired, due to ill health. He died July 7, 1960.

Mrs. Louis Burnoski still maintains a home in Divernon, and is still active at the age of 88

WAGNER FAMILY HISTORY

Jacob Wagner, Sr., of Glenarm bought the Wagner Brothers farm from Walter Gatton in 1912. In 1913, he built a house on the farm site. The farm was leased to Owen Molohon, who lived in the house until 1931, when Steven and Joseph Wagner, with their sisters, Miss Lucy and Miss Mary, moved to the farm from Glenarm to live.

In 1940, Miss Lucy went to Pawnee to live with their aged parents; where she remained until their deaths in early 1957, at which time she moved back to the farm with her brothers and sister.

Steven Wagner passed away in May of 1967.

The house built in 1913 completely burned in May of 1973. A new house was erected the same year.

Joseph, Lucy and Mary still reside there and Joseph is still actively engaged in farming.

SHEARS FAMILY HISTORY

James Shears of Ashington, Northumberland County, England, arrived in America in 1901. He lived with his brother, William of Athens, Illinois for several years while working in the coal mines in that area.

He later sent for his wife, Elizabeth Ann and his two children, William L. and Hilda Mary who arrived in Athens in 1904.

Another daughter, Olive Isabell, was born in Athens in 1904. In 1910 the family moved to Divernon, Illinois.

A son, Alfred Irving, was born in Divernon in November of 1917.

William L., and airport engineer, retired from the Illinois Department of Aeronautics and he and his family reside in Divernon.

Hilda M. Rooker and Olive I. Rooker and their husbands, who spent many years with the Illinois Central Railroad, are now retired and reside in Minonk, Illinois.

Irving, retired County Superintendent of schools in Kendall County, and his family are living in Plano, Illinois.

NAGY FAMILY HISTORY

Mr. and Mrs. Julius Nagy arrived in Divernon in 1909. Their six children were all raised here. They are Julius, Frank, Louis, Nellie, Joseph, and Margaret. All graduated from Divernon High School, and now living elsewhere in the U.S. Nellie and her parent are deceased. Mr. Nagy a long time businessman of our community, engaging in various businesses. Let's not forget the good times that were had in Nagys Hall.

Mr. and Mrs. Matt Rizzolo arrived in Divernon 1919. Their children are Joseph, Louis, Marchelina, Gisella and Silvio, all raised in Divernon. Both parents, Marchelina, Louis and Silvio are now deceased. Joseph and Gisella live in the Detroit area.

BYRUM FAMILY HISTORY

Cecil came to Divernon in 1915 from Missouri. Lived in a tenant house on the Ed Dickey farm. Attended High School in Divernon and then farmed for his mom and three step brothers.

We came to Divernon in 1916, Dad was a Mine Examiner in the Divernon Coal Mine. We lived in company homes known as the New Addition.

I graduated in June of 1930, married Cecil in July of that same year. The first 7 years of our married life we lived on a farm east of Divernon. In 1931 Eleanor Jane was born. The year of 1933 our only son Cecil Edwin Jr. was born, he passed away in 1938.

In 1937 we moved to town and that same year Hale Bumgardner, my husbands half brother was killed in a car accident.

In 1941 we moved to the north end of town. Our present home. In the old days it was known as "Christian Hill".

Eleanor Jane & Louise started school and completed their education in the Divernon School system and lived in this house until their marriages. Jane has since made her home in L.A. Calif. but Louise only made her move from the north end of Divernon to the south end.

TYLER FAMILY HISTORY

Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan E. Wall, who had migrated from Wales and settled in Grundy County, Illinois moved to Divernon with their eight children in 1902, when the coal mine known as Madison Coal Corporation Mine No. 6 started operation. Many of the early settlers of Divernon made the same move at about the same time, among them a young man named Basil Tyler, whose parents Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Tyler had migrated from England and had located in the Grundy County area. With the exception of Basil, they and their other five children elected to remain there, although later another son, Charles and a daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Coles moved to Divernon during World War I.

In 1903 Basil and Blodwen Wall, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan E. Wall were united in marriage by Judge Weaver in Springfield, Illinois, and resided most of their 53 years of married life in Divernon.

They were the parents of five children, Basil Jr. being the first who with his wife the former Mildred Lambert now reside in Divernon. Then came Elizabeth the only girl in the family who married David F. Bushman, now deceased and she continues to reside in South Bend, Indiana. Clifford was next to arrive and he with his wife, the former Ella Taylor now reside in Divernon. Clifford was followed by Jonathan now deceased and survived by his wife the former Louise Campbell and last came Charles, who with his wife the former Louise Dickey reside in East Dubuque, Illinois.

Mr. Tyler passed away in April 1956, and Mrs. Tyler in December 1960.

JAMES WAGNER FAMILY HISTORY

James and Bonnie Wagner, their five children, James Jr., Anne, Christine, Denise and Nancy moved to the Divernon area in January of 1964, on a farm which is part of the Margaret B. Sikes Estate, located one and one-half miles southwest of Divernon on the cemetery road. A daughter, Gail, was born that same year.

The whole family has been active in church and community activities, such as school board, church, Women's Club and 4-H Club.

Another daughter, Amy, was born in 1972.

At this time, two of the children, James Jr., and Anne, have graduated from high school and plan to farm and enter nurses' training, respectively. Christine has plans to go into the field of education, when she finishes high school next year. The rest of the family is too young to have settled on career choices yet.

GROVE FAMILY HISTORY

John A. Grove at age nine came to Sangamon County. John married Etta M. Vancil in 1888. At that time they made their home in Divernon where John died in 1940.

John and Etta were the parents of two children, born in Divernon. Lela M. was born in 1889 and died in 1969, she never married. Floyd A. was born in 1893 and spent most of his life in the Divernon community. Floyd was married to Opal McElfresh, November 1, 1916. Opal died in 1970. Floyd continued to reside in Divernon until his death in 1974. Floyd and Opal were the parents of three children: Howard E. Grove, Calif.; Walter A. Grove, deceased; Mrs. Donald (Donna) Steele, Waggoner.

Floyd was Township Assessor for several years, charter member of the Divernon Sportmens' Club, Brush Creek Cemetery, Board Township and auditor, and worked as assistant road commissioner for more than 30 years.

LADAGE FAMILY HISTORY

This information is concerning the farm on which Logan and Virginia Ladage and family live. The family consists of John and Shirley Mae (Ladage) Emerson and daughter Alicia Johnelle Emerson, Thayer; Logan Ladage Jr. Peoria; and Barbara Elyn Ladage, a student at Western Illinois University. William Ladage Sr. purchased this 160 acres in 1901 from Jasper Cox of Virden. This farm home is located about 5 miles southwest of Divernon. William Sr. and family moved from Woodside Township to this farm in 1911. William Ladage Sr. and Gertrude (Mullett) Ladage were parents of William Ladage Jr. (deceased), Carl Ladage, (deceased), Edward of Waverly, Logan Sr., Francis (deceased) and Gertrude (Ladage) Luedke.

In about 1941 — 120 acres was purchased which lies to the north of the above 160 acres. This 120 acres was bought from the Henry Noll estate by Logan and Francis Ladage. This land was formerly owned by the Ridgley family of Springfield.

In 1959 Logan and Virginia (Linkinhoke) Ladage purchased 183 acres from the John W. Allgood estate. This is just across the road on the east side of the Ladage homeplace. It is located in the Divernon Township.

JESSUP FAMILY HISTORY

Lewis and Hannah Jessup moved into the area from Lowder, Ill. in 1907. A son, Scott and Ester now deceased, farmed in this community. Another son, Charles and his wife, the former Elsie Reichert, lived on a farm 3 miles south of town, once known as the Stone farm. Their son, Lewis and his wife, the former Mary Ingils, and family live on a farm south of town.

Also their daughter, Henrietta Ladage and family live on a farm south of town.

BOROS FAMILY HISTORY

John Boros was born in 1880. At the age of 17, he left Hungary, as the next day Russians were to come and take him for the army. He came to the United State in 1897 and then came to Crescenti, Ohio, where he met Anna Csillag. They were married on Jan. 27, 1908 in Barton, Ohio. Three children were born in Ohio, Frank, Julius and Elizabeth.

John came to Divernon in 1914 where he secured a mining job with the Madison Coal Company. He brought his family to Divernon in 1915. Three more children were born to the couple, Joseph, John and Jenö. Both received their United States citizenship. John received his on May 17, 1937 and Anna on January 4, 1938. John died on December 1954, Anna died in September 1956.

DAMBACHER FAMILY HISTORY

Claude Dambacher and family moved to the Divernon area from Farmersville, Ill. in March 1946, to farm the Everett Chance farm north of town. This farm is being farmed today by Claude and his two sons.

In 1952 the Dambacher family moved to the Kenney farm just west of the Chance place. This place was purchased from the Kenney heirs, Charles and Arthur Kenney. The Ellis Peden family had lived here in previous years, and during that time in the 1940's a lime and rock quarry was in operation on a part of this farm.

The farm operation grew to include some 1620 acres of land here in the Divernon area being farmed by Claude and his sons, David and Robbie—some of it owned and some rented land.

To identify some of the land as the old Dodd Haire land at Cimic, Robert Brown land west of town and the Lewis farm known as the Ed Welsh place north east of town. Years ago Claude's grandfather Jacob B. Dambacher and his family lived and farmed this place. William Dambacher, the father of Claude, farmed for awhile in this area years ago.

David and his family live on the Charles Drennan land north west of town, this land is a part of the rented farming operations.

Robbie and his family live in Divernon.

PATTON FAMILY HISTORY

The Patton farm, about 2 miles west of Divernon was homesteaded by Colonel James Patton in 1820. This land has been owned by five generations of direct descendants, and is now being farmed by Robert Brackebusch, a great, great, great grandson of the original owner.

James Patton's son, Matthew, and his wife, nee Margaret McElvain, inherited the farm from his father. Matthew deeded the "west 240" to his three sons; and one, Charles M. Patton, bought his brothers acreage.

After the deaths of Charles M. and Susan Wrightsman Patton, land became the property of their three children, Lottie, Matthew, and Grace, and a grandson, Charles Nathan Patton, whose father, Asa, was deceased. At the present time this 240 acre tract, which has been in the Patton family for 155 years, is owned by Matthew Patton and Arthur Brackebusch.

Another parcel of Colonel Patton's land, the "east 160" was purchased by Mr. Charles G. Brown. Later Mr. Brown (Uncle Charlie, gave this property to Mrs. Matthew Patton, nee Lillie Kestler, a foster daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Brown.

After 1937, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Brackebusch, nee Betty Patton, assisted her parents with the operation of the farm until Mr. Patton's retirement. For a few years Art and his son Bob farmed the ground until Art was forced, because of ill health, to "slow down a bit". In 1962 the Brackebuschs built a house on land across the road purchased from Flossie Kenney Patton.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Brackebusch and three children now live in the bungalow on the original site and farm all of the Patton land, former Kenney land and the Anna Duer land now owned by the Harry Pulliams. The Duer property was for thirty-two years the home of Mr. and Mrs. Matt Spurlock. The Spurlocks kept Divernon residents well supplied with wholesome milk and fresh eggs, delivering regularly to Kreppert's and John Lewis Store.

WATKINS FAMILY HISTORY

Gomer and Elizabeth Wilson Watkins and two children Rosetta and Gomer moved from Braceville, Illinois to Divernon, Illinois in 1900. Mr. Watkins was employed by the Madison Coal Corporation as night mine manager until its closing.

After coming to Divernon two more daughter were born, Sara and Nellie.

Mr. Watkins was very active in helping new arrivals to the United States who settled in the Divernon area to secure their citizenship papers. He was also active in farming and participation in the Divernon Community Band.

Mrs. Watkins passed away in 1923 and Mr. Watkins in 1943.

TAKACS FAMILY HISTORY

Anton Takacs immigrated to Divernon from Hungary in 1903. After obtaining employment at the local coal mine he sent for the former Mary Papai. They were married in Springfield, Ill. January 14, 1904. They were the parents of six children, all presently living. Two sons still reside in Divernon.

BREWER FAMILY HISTORY

Calvin and Helen Brewer have lived in Divernon since 1943 engaged in construction and farming.

William C. and Blanche (Turner) raised their family here. Evelyn, William Jr. have moved from the immediate area. Daughter Eloise Cherry and her husband and two children reside in Divernon as well as Larry.

Alvin J. (Shorty) and Goldie (Knight) reside in our village with their only daughter, Carolyn and her husband and two children. Three sons Donald, Dean and James live in surrounding towns. Shorty and Bill both worked many years for the Divernon Grain Co. Fanny married to James Hill and her four children reside in Divernon. James Jr. is married to Gale Evans and is presently serving in the Air Force.

The remainder of this family Glen, John, Al lee, Samuel, Mary, Alta Lou and Howard all live in cities throughout this great country.

VISSER FAMILY HISTORY

In the spring of 1918, Mr. and Mrs. Herman E. Visser and their family, moved to a farm situated on the Sangamon County line southeast of Divernon. The family consisted of eight children. The oldest daughter, Ella, the oldest son, Robert or "Bob" as he was usually called, was in the service of World War I. The other children were; Ernest, Bertha, Frieda, Carl, Henrietta and Frances.

Ernest began employment in the coal mine in Divernon as an electrician and worked there until after the mine closed. Later building Woodpecker Camp on old 66, which will be remembered for its dances and picnics and all around good times.

Bob returned to help with the farming and as a mechanic at Hendricks Brothers garage in Farmersville.

Lucille was born in the summer of 1919.

The younger children all attended Griggs Grade School, and later, Divernon High School, going there by horse and buggy. Bertha and Frieda became employed at the Franklin Life Insurance Company, and they remained there until their retirement.

Along with the farm land nearby, Mr. Visser began to rent part of the ground belonging to the Schoper's of Carlinville, formerly known as the Lewis Thomas Place. In the spring of 1929, the family moved from their home on the county line into this large 3-story brick mansion still located on Route 66, south of Divernon, and began farming this ground. A few years later they acquired part of this ground along with the big house.

Henrietta worked in the office of Dr. Hayes in Farmersville. Carl and Frances each married and moved to their homes nearby, but still helped with the farming on the home place.

In January of 1941, Mr. Visser passed away. Mrs. Visser remained on the farm, and continued her active life with the help of her children.

Carl left the farm for a time to enlist in the Army during World War II. Soon after the war was ended, Lucille also married.

In the summer of 1954, Mrs. Visser passed away. Several years later, the farm was sold and Bob and Frieda moved to Auburn.

As of this writing, Ernest, Ella, and Frieda have recently passed away. Bob, Bertha, Carl, Henrietta, Frances and Lucille are living in the surrounding areas.

BEYNON FAMILY HISTORY

William Newell and his wife Margaret Lloyd Beynon immigrated from Wales in 1886, arriving in Divernon by way of Streater, Illinois in 1898 with four young children David, Margaret, Louis and Mae. The two elder sons William J. and Thomas arrived a short time later.

In 1907 William J. assisted by his wife the former Lucy Spiers of Braceville, Illinois established his first business, a notion and confectionery store on the north side of the square. In 1912 W. J. built the Divernon Opera House which housed most of the lodges and later the Anti Horse Thief Association on the second floor.

The Beynon name became synonymous with business and recreation. Billards, a bowling alley, the movie and long time financial support and coaching of the Divernon Merchants baseball team were all part of W. J.'s contribution to the village. He was known as a humanitarian; philanthropist and well known political figure in Sangamon County. His annual Christmas party and treats for the children are still remembered.

Margaret Beynon Sylva (Mrs. Arthur) became a successful Beauty Shop Owner and held U.S. patents for beauty equipment. David was a well known Mutual Life of New York prize salesman, and Louis married Emma Squires. He was associated most of his life in his brother's business. Their children are Gwendolyn (Mrs. Edward (Leonhard), Gerry (Mrs. Ted Murzynoski) and Lloyd. Mae, (Mrs. William Peerce), was active in the Divernon Woman's Club and in business with her husband, William Peerce. Their sons are Newell and Norman. Thomas's sons Thomas R. operated Beynon's IGA, and is now in Real Estate. Tom's mother Florence still lives in Divernon and his wife was the former Alice Shea.

W. J.'s children Yvonne, (Mrs. Robert Furry), Jeanne (Mrs. Samuel Currie), and Margorie (Mrs. Thomson Currie), remain nearby. His sons William and John A. reside in Chicago.

STARKWEATHER FAMILY HISTORY

Daniel Harvey Starkweather and his wife Sarah Ann came to Divernon to a farm one-fourth miles east of the village boundary in 1866 from Green County.

Their children were: Emily Starkweather (Hulett); Bessie Starkweather (Dyson); James and Ernest.

In 1901 Emily, who had been living with her parents, moved her family to the village. Helen Hulett was the first child to cross the threshold when the new Divernon Grade school opened its doors.

Surviving are Helen H. White, three Dyson and Three Starkweather grandchildren.

The Starkweathers were charter members of First Baptist Church.

BUKANTOS FAMILY HISTORY

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Bukantos moved to Divernon, Illinois in 1911. They had four children. Two sons died as infants while living in Pennsylvania. One son, Thomas and one daughter Helen were born in Divernon.

In 1914 they bought a home at the corner of First and Madison Streets, and lived in that home until they both passed away.

Mrs. Bukantos died in 1965 at age 83. Mr. Bukantos died in 1972 at age 90.

Thomas Bukantos lives in Divernon and Helen Bukantos Hanes lives in Decatur, Illinois.

GRAHAM FAMILY HISTORY

The Exie Graham family moved to Divernon in 1948. They arrived with their three daughters Sandra, Mary Jane and Jenny, their occupying the old Pack resident.

After 27 years the Graham family has remodeled the home extensively and seen Divernon go through many changes.

Sandra and husband Donald Crouch with their two daughters reside in Lenexa Kansas. Mary Jane resides with her parents and is employed at Memorial Medical Center, Springfield. Jenny after completing nurses training resides with husband and two daughters in Madison, Indiana.

Exie retired in 1969 from Henry Nelch and Son, Springfield. After 35 years of service Exie's wife Delilah is still employed with the State of Illinois.

HARTMAN FAMILY HISTORY

Joe Hartman was born in Urkwt, Hungary, July 17, 1884.

In search of work he came to Divernon a prosperous mining town. He worked in the mine til it shut down.

He married Mary Ann Fiaush, daughter of John and Mary Fiaush.

They were parents of nine children; Carl, Kathryn, Helen, Joe, Ernie, Mary, William, Theresa and Bob.

He was Janitor at the High school, also he put mail sacks out twice a day for mail train. Joe Hartman died Oct. 17, 1952.

Carl married Lucille Bloome from Atwater. He lived in Divernon with his wife Lu and two daughters, Henrietta, and Margaret Ann. Carl worked at Allis Chalmers. Carl passed away Oct, 63.

Katie Hartman married Steve Durako of Springfield. They have five children. Mary Ann, Bob, Kathy and Jim at home. Steve at South Bend, Indiana. Steve Sr. passed away April 71.

Helen entered the Franciscan Convent at Riverton. She died in 1940. She was known as Sister Gertrudine. Joe and his wife Margaret lives in Springfield. They had two sons, Richard and Douglas.

Mary Ann entered the Franciscan Convent. She was known as Sister Giles. She was at St. Johns Hospital, Springfield, Litchfield, Hospital, Mother Superior at Mother house, Belleville. She passed away January 72.

William entered the Navy, after his tour of duty he went to Peoria and works at Caterpillar. He and his wife Theresa have three sons John, Tom and Tim.

Theresa Hartman served in the Waves. After her discharge she married Walt Fechner, they have a son Mike, daughter Donna. They live in Modesto, California.

Robert served in the Navy after his discharge returned to Divernon. He now lives in Springfield.

Ernie and his wife Renelva still reside in Divernon. They have three children; Ed and wife Jane live at Auburn, Illinois.

Pauline at Springfield, Michele Ann at home.

Mary Hartman lived in Divernon for 63 years till her death Sept. 9, 1971 at the age of 76.

KISH FAMILY HISTORY

The Kish family will be remembered in Divernon. They operated a store on the north side of the old grade school for many years. It was a place for the school children to purchase their penny candy at recess.

The Kish children are Madgline, Katie, Harriet, Elsie and Steve. Steve is the only one of the family residing in Divernon.

Steve's wife Eunice (Beck) came to Divernon with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Beck in 1918. Eunice worked for many years in the Post Office. The rest of the Becks, Dorthy Hulett and son Floyd, and grandson Ethan D. Hulett all reside in Calif.

CHANCE FAMILY HISTORY

Everett Chance was raised in the Divernon area. In 1920 he and his wife Harriet purchased their farm north of Divernon, where many people remember it as "Chances Grove". This was a famous place of the area for picnics and weiner roasts.

A son Harold preceded Everett who passed away in 1949. Their daughter Lucille married Fred Siegel after attending the U of I. They are frequent visitors of Harriet at the home place on the northwest corner of the square here in Divernon, the farm is presently farmed by Claude Dambacher.

DICKEY FAMILY HISTORY

Mr. and Mrs. Ed Dickey and their six children (Arlo, Otha, Geraldine, David, Louise and Nellie) moved to the Stout farm located two miles northeast of Divernon in 1920. In 1923 Nellie, the youngest, died of complications from the measles. Within several more years, three more children were added to the family (Dorothy, Robert and Blanche). Of the eight living children, they all attended the Grade School and six graduated from the Divernon High School. In May 1951, Mr. and Mrs. Dickey built a new home in Divernon on High School Street and moved from the farm, retiring in 1965. This didn't mean

he sat down and folded his hands. His theory was "it's better to wear out than it is to rust out." This also meant he had more time to work for the Lord. The Dickey's felt the Lord had truly blessed them with a wonderful family. On Thanksgiving Day in 1969, the 100th descendant was added to the Dickey family, having 8 children, 35 grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren. On Feb. 14, 1969 the Dickey's celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. On December 5, the same year Mrs. Dickey passed away. Shortly after her funeral Mr. Dickey passed on, ending a love story here on earth. Arlo is Mayor of Pawnee and retired, Otha lives in Loami, Geraldine resides in Gibson City, Dave farms northwest of Pawnee, Louise lives near East Dubuque, Robert lives in Chatham, Blanche now resides in Ashland, Ohio, and Dorothy lives in Divernon. A granddaughter and family, Cheryl and Robert Dambacher, now reside in the Dickey residence located on High School Street.

JUTELIS FAMILY HISTORY

James K. Jutelis came to Divernon in 1910 and worked in the Madison Coal Corporation Mine. His wife and small daughter (now Mrs. Victoria Nye) joined him in 1911. Their son, Algird, was born in Divernon May 24, 1912.

In 1911 William J. Beynon offered to loan Mr. Jutelis the finances to go into business for himself. At different times he operated a tavern, a general merchandise store on the east side of the square, and feed and flour warehouse near the I. C. tracks.

After Big Jim as he was called retired at the age of 72, his son Algird, inherited and operated the tavern until his death in 1948. Jim died in 1956 and his wife in 1963.

Mrs. Nye taught in the Divernon High School for 42 years before she retired in 1973. Mrs. Nye has one son, John L. Nye.

SMITH FAMILY HISTORY

Alexander (Sandy) and William Smith arrived in Divernon Nov. 1907. The following year their families arrived coming from Ayrshire, Scotland. Alex's family, wife Marion, daughter Katherine and son Alex Jr. who still lives in Divernon. William's family, wife Annie, sons Alex and Robert, and daughter Margaret. Both brothers worked in the mine.

Born to Alex (Sandy) and wife, Veronica were William and Anna Marion, deceased. William and Annie later had two children, Marion and William Jr. Sandy helped build the Catholic church and placed the cross on the steeple. Years later when the cross was replaced Sandy's grandsons, James A. and Damon placed their hands on the old cross.

Katherine married John Aughton were parents of Robert and Marion.

Alex Jr. married Marie Wooderchak, parents of James A. who married Sandra Barnes, they have twin sons, Steven A. and Stewart Jr. who reside at what was once the old Patton School. Damon married Betty Jo Fishburn, and are parents of Damon C. and Craig S. they reside in Beardstown, Ill.

William married Pauline Klien, they are parents of Albert, Sandra, William Douglas, Robert, they reside in Detroit.

William and Annie's children live in Michigan. Alexander Sr. home was 1st house south of the Catholic church. Williams home was 1st house west of the Catholic church. Katherine and Alex Jr. worked for Kreppert Bros in their early years, while later Bill worked for Pierce Ice and Coal Co.

DRENNAN FAMILY HISTORY

Charles Drennan, the oldest of eight children, was born January 6, 1869 to Benjamin H. and Anna Wheeler Drennan, who lived on a farm East of Chatham, Illinois.

Kate Haire, the seventh of eight children, was born August 31, 1867 to Johnston and Margaret Lindsay Haire, who lived on a farm about 2 miles east of Divernon.

Charles and Kate were married October 11, 1894 in the Haire homestead, where Hayward McMurry resides, which was built by her father in 1863. The young couple settled on a farm north of Divernon where their first child, Donald H. was born January 13, 1897.

They then moved to 80 acres of land given to Charles by his father. Here their second child, B. Homer was born January 31, 1901. Their third child, Katie Margaret Anna, was born here August 30, 1902, where David Dambacher lives. The children were raised here, and Mr. and Mrs. Drennan remained in the homestead the rest of their lives, Mrs. Drennan's death occurring December 20, 1936, and her November 19, 1949.

The children graduated from Divernon Township High School—Donald in the class of 1913, Homer in 1918, and Kate in 1919. After attending college, the boys joined their father in the operation of the farms in the vicinity of Beechley Station and Pawnee Junction.

Their son Donald married the former Helen Buxton, of Fayetteville, Arkansas in April 1926. He died in July 1966 and is survived by his widow, who presently resides in their Divernon home.

Homer married Christine Durham, of Carthage, Illinois, in June 1925, and are the parents of a daughter Janeann, and a son, John Charles. Homer is a retired school teacher and lives in Chicago.

Daughter Katie married Jesse A. Peck in February 1924. They owned and operated the Springfield Stationery Company, Inc. prior to Mr. Peck's death in December 1964.

REICHERT FAMILY HISTORY

Benedict Reichert migrated to this country in 1852. In about 1860 he bought 420 acres in Pawnee Township. Part of this original farm plus later acquired acreage is still owned and operated by his grandson Benjamin F. Reichert. Mr. and Mrs. Reichert and his sister and her husband, Mr. Charles Jessup, are still actively engaged in farming. His late brother, Lawrence, also farmed until his death in 1967. The fourth generation of this family and their spouses still farming in this

area include: Mr. Reichert, Mr. and Mrs. A. Leo Goleman, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis F. Jessup, Mrs. Henrietta Ladage and Mr. and Mrs. Robert B. Reichert. A fifth generation is also beginning to take an active interest in farming.

TAYLOR FAMILY HISTORY

W. W. Taylor came to Divernon in September 1, 1862, with his parents and settled on a farm located at Pawnee Junction. He then moved to Divernon when the village was a wheat field. He built the first business house in Divernon. He was elected the first collector of the township and was first village clerk. He served as Postmaster for approximately 33 years beginning in 1897.

He was married to Mary Thomas Smith on Dec. 21, 1887. From this union the following nine children were born: William (deceased), Clarence (deceased), Dale (deceased), Owen (deceased), Mary Mildred Taylor (Aldrich), Lula Rebecca Taylor (Barber), Thomas (deceased), Lawrence Vernon (deceased) Leah Virginia Taylor (deceased).

Of these nine children there are only two living — Mary living in Springfield, and Lula who lives in Lebanon Missouri.

Thomas Ulysses Taylor lived his entire life in Divernon. He was married to Bess Davis of Hurst, Ill. on July 7, 1937. From this union the following two children were born: Mary Jane Taylor (Cody) and Mildred Lu Taylor.

Tom Taylor was very active in the community. He was a member of the Presbyterian Church of Divernon serving as Elder; a charter member of the Divernon Lodge; a member of the Divernon Lions Club. He served as tax collector for the township for 16 years.

Tom Taylor owned and operated the Thomas U. Taylor Insurance and Real Estate Office for approximately 22 years prior to his death on Jan. 21, 1967. His wife Bess D. Taylor followed him in death on May 28, 1969.

Mary J. Taylor married Paul F. Cody on Jan. 2, 1959, of this marriage three children were born: Shari Lynn Cody, Diana Jayne Cody, and Paul Thomas Cody.

Mr. and Mrs. Cody and family lived on a farm located near Pawnee Junction, the same homesite on which Mrs. Cody's grandfather W. W. Taylor first settled when he came to Divernon.

BARNES FAMILY HISTORY

Henry C. Barnes was born in Devonshire England, March 18th 1835. Mr. Barnes grandmother Mrs. Elizabeth Clark Adams, was a cousin to John Quincy Adams, second President of the U.S.

Mr. Barnes came to America in 1847 and went to Canada where he stayed a short time and then went to Jerseyville, Illinois, where he grew to manhood. He attended Shurtloff College at Alton and the Jackson Berean College, where he completed his course. He taught schools in Alton and Jacksonville.

Without mention of Mr. Barnes, the history of Divernon Township and Village could not properly be written. He was the moving force that organized and won the separation of Divernon Township from Pawnee. He drew up and headed a petition in 1899 for the organization of the Village of Divernon.

In 1887 a post office was established under the name of Springer but it was necessary to change the name because there was already a Springer Post Office in the State. After many names were suggested and rejected Mr. Barnes suggested the name Divernon and it was at once adopted by the Post Office Department.

Mr. Barnes established a farm machinery and harness business in 1887. He was Justice of Peace for 35 years and in that time gained a profound knowledge of law.

In 1861 he married Elmina Jane Dobbs and to this union were born 6 children, one being Arthur E. who was born in 1866 living his entire life in the area. In 1897 he married Ida May Jones. They had one son Carl H. Barnes who still resides on the family homestead. Mr. Barnes' great granddaughter Mr. John B. (Beth Ann) Smith also lives in Divernon Township.

Mr. Barnes was still in business at the time of his death June 6, 1913.

INGLIS FAMILY HISTORY

In 1922, Thomas Inglis and Margaret Gray, both from Scotland were married and settled in Divernon. Thomas worked in the coal mines of the area, later working for the R.E.A. Thomas passed away in January 1962. Two daughters, Mary and Jessie were born of this union.

The eldest daughter Mary is married to Lewis Jessup. The Jessup's are engaged in farming. They have five children Margaret, Mary, Bonnie, Fred and Karen. Margaret, recently married, teaches in Seoul, Korea, Mary is employed at the Marine Bank, and lives in Springfield, Bonnie is a student at Eastern University, Fred is farming and Karen is a student at the elementary school in Divernon.

The younger daughter, Jessie, is married to Robert Drury. Jessie is a secretary-bookkeeper at the City Day School of Springfield, Springfield, Illinois and Robert is a bookbinder at Frye-Williamson Press, Springfield, Illinois. He also operates a knife and tool sharpening business in Divernon. They have three sons, Thomas who is employed at the Illinois National Bank, who resides in Springfield, Terrence, who was recently married and is employed by Fiat-Allis and resides in Springfield and Todd who is a student at the Divernon High School.

KESSLER FAMILY HISTORY

Joshua Kessler moved his wife and ten children to the Divernon community from Bond county early in the 1870's.

His son, Irvin was united in marriage to Fannie Wilson, whose father came here from Kentucky in the 1830's. Three boys and a girl were born to Fannie and Irvin while they lived north of Divernon.

In 1907 the family moved to the James Tilson farm one more daughter was born there.

In 1922 Irvin had rented the Bughley farm to move his family in March, 1923. Just before moving day he suddenly died. Fannie and her family made the move that Irvin had planned.

The oldest son, Arthur married Elizabeth Dodds in 1919. They have three sons in their family. Art died in 1973 but Elizabeth lives in Rochester. Chester the second son, married Mildred Matthews in 1952. They have one daughter. Mildred died in 1973. Chet and Connie still live near Pawnee. William, the youngest son married Dorothy Crane in 1932. They have two sons a daughter and several foster children. Bill and Dorothy still live on the homeplace northwest of Divernon.

Susie Kessler married L. D. King in 1929, they have two children. "Sis" died in 1973 but "King" lives west of Auburn. Frances, the youngest child of Fannie and Irvin Kessler, married Cecil Gerhard in 1945. They live in Auburn and have one daughter.

BOBLITT FAMILY HISTORY

The first member of the Boblitt family to arrive in Divernon in 1900 was Henry Boblitt. He helped sink the Divernon Coal Mine. His family Rosso and wife Pearl, Clyde, Ennis and daughter Marie arrived in Divernon. Both Rosso and Clyde and their families resided in this area for many years.

In 1924 Rosso was elected Road Commissioner for the Divernon Township, serving 15 years.

Mr. and Mrs. Rosso Boblitt were the parents of two sons; Virgil and Orville.

In 1939 he purchased a farm in Pawnee Township and he, his wife, son Orville and his wife, the former Frances Hall moved to the farm.

In 1923 Virgil married Juanita Hackl. They have three sons; Gerald, Leland and Gene.

In 1924 Virgil became the owner-operator of a garage and service station. In 1933 he formed a partnership with Earl Ford. The business became known as the Boblitt & Ford Garage. They operated the business until 1935, when he purchased the Becker Bros. Dry Goods building located at the present site of the post office building. The building was moved to Route 66 and Divernon Road. Virgil operated the service station at this location, assumed ownership of the tavern Sundown Corner in 1938. He operated this business until 1970 when interstate 55 took over the location. He is now retired and lives in the village.

In 1953 son Leland Boblitt was elected President of the Village Board. Leland was instrumental in achieving Natural Gas for the village of Divernon.

In 1959 son Gene was elected as village trustee.

At the present time three generations of Boblitts live in Divernon. Virgil Boblitt, Gerald Boblitt, Leland Boblitt, grandson Gary Boblitt.

DRAPER FAMILY HISTORY

Frank and Laura Reed Draper moved from White Oak to a "Billy" Brown farm two miles east of Divernon about 1890. They had at that time the following children: Altha, Arma, Lottie and Roy. Here Lester and Gladys were born.

They moved to C. G. Brown farm about 2 miles west of Divernon in 1900.

On July 4, 1904 Lottie married Harry Pack. He had come to Divernon to work in the mine, where he was when the mine closed.

Lucille married Wm. Shaw. They lived most of their lives in Overland Park, Kansas. They had two children Wm. Jr., and Robert. Lucille now resides in Springfield.

Ellsworth (Bus) married Mildred Crouse and lives in Lowder. He died in 1965.

Altha married Charles Young, they lived all of their married life on a farm between Auburn and Chatham. The farm is now occupied by their son Lee Roy.

Roy worked in the mine, later married Blanche Price, they lived on a farm south of Auburn. He died in 1941.

Leola married Wm. Englehardt.

In 1910, with Lester and Gladys at home, the Drapers again moved to a C. G. Brown farm southeast of Divernon.

In 1918 Lester went to war and the family left the farm and moved to town.

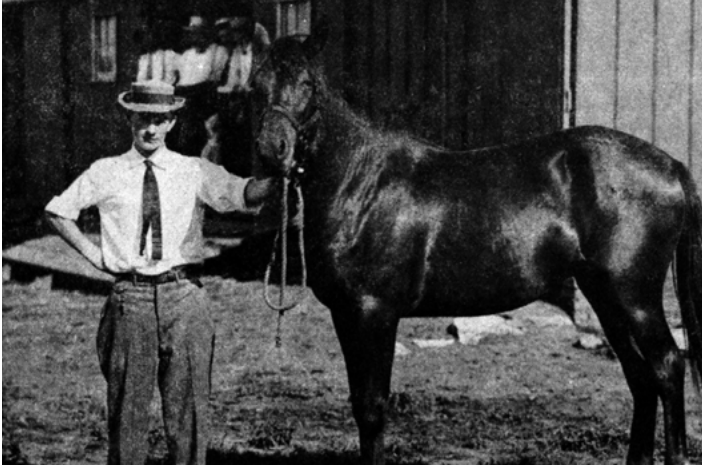
Lester after his service became custodian of the high school. In 1924 he married Jane Greenwalt and they move to New City, where he died in 1969.

Gladys attended U of I, graduated in 1922. At Iowa State she met and married Ralph E. Lindsay in 1924. She now resides in Bryan, Ohio.

Frank Draper died in 1924, and Laura in 1931.

BROWN FAMILY HISTORY

This is a picture of my father, David H. Brown in front of our old barn which burned to the ground in the summer of 1929. This is his race horse "Thurston" which he raced at fairs in Ill. and Ind. in 1919.



This barn was built by his Uncle – Samuel Brown who was a bachelor, and the barn was completely built with wooden pegs instead of nails. The present large barn replaced it, and was built in 1930 on "Evergreen Farm". This name was given to the farm because of the two rows of evergreen trees that were planted by my Grandfather, William Springer Brown after he purchased the farm from his brother in the late 1890's.

The 160 acres south of the home place was purchased by my mother and father from George Harvey Brown who was an Uncle, and the grandfather of "Bud" and Allan Brown.

Charles G. Brown donated the land for the village and he also helped found the Presbyterian church along with my great grandfather Reuben Springer Brown in 1870.

David Harold Brown II is presently farming the land for his mother Lucille W. Brown.

Dedicated To Charles "Chuck" Turley

Well known throughout the community for many years, Chuck will be remembered for participation in the Homecoming Parades. In earlier years when people would come and go by train or bus, Chuck would spread the word who came to town or left town. He was a one man reception committee during World War II, when the 2:15 and 5:00 o'clock train left a GI off for a furlough in his home town. He was a regular drug store cowboy. Having spent many hours at any good loafing place. Chuck was always someones right hand man and errand boy.

IF YOU REMEMBER THESE THINGS: YOU'RE GETTING OLD

It was a regular Saturday morning chore to carry out furnace ashes from the basement.

Tennis was regarded as a sissy game, only the wealthy played golf, and only the poor went bowling.

You treated a heavy cold by greasing your chest and covering it with a piece of heavy flannel.

Every kid in a large family had an insurance policy that cost a dime a week.

A girl knew you were really and truly in love with her if you bought her a double-dip ice cream cone.

We stayed up half the night trying to get Pittsburg on our new Crystal set.

Cars had running boards.

The height of sophistication in a teenager was to own a yellow slicker on which was painted in big black letters, "OH YOU KID!"

Children took their baths in a big washtub in the kitchen on Saturday night.

Doctors charged \$2 for an office call and \$3 for a house call.

Half the ministers in the nation were denouncing rumble seats as a moral peril to the young.

Horses were still the bane of street sweepers.

Men wore two piece bathing suits... a fellow who showed up in nothing but swim trunks was ordered off the beach.

A cat was a useful pet... it was expected to at least earn part of its living by catching mice.

Half the people in town still kept chickens in the back yard, and it was a childhood delight to go out and collect the eggs.

You couldn't buy a ticket to the Burlesque theater unless you were old enough to be in long pants.

THOSE WERE THE DAYS!



ABELL HOTEL BEFORE REMODELING



BECKER BROTHERS STORE BEING MOVED FOR SUNDOWN CORNER



SUNDOWN CORNER



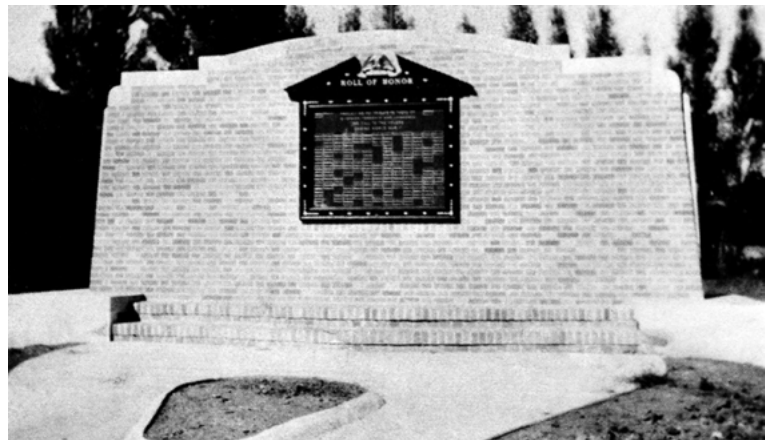
NORTHSIDE OF SQUARE 1915



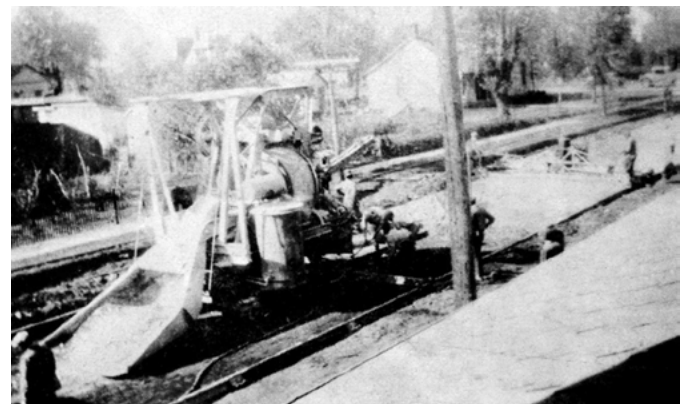
MINE HOUSES ON EASTSIDE NEW ADDITION



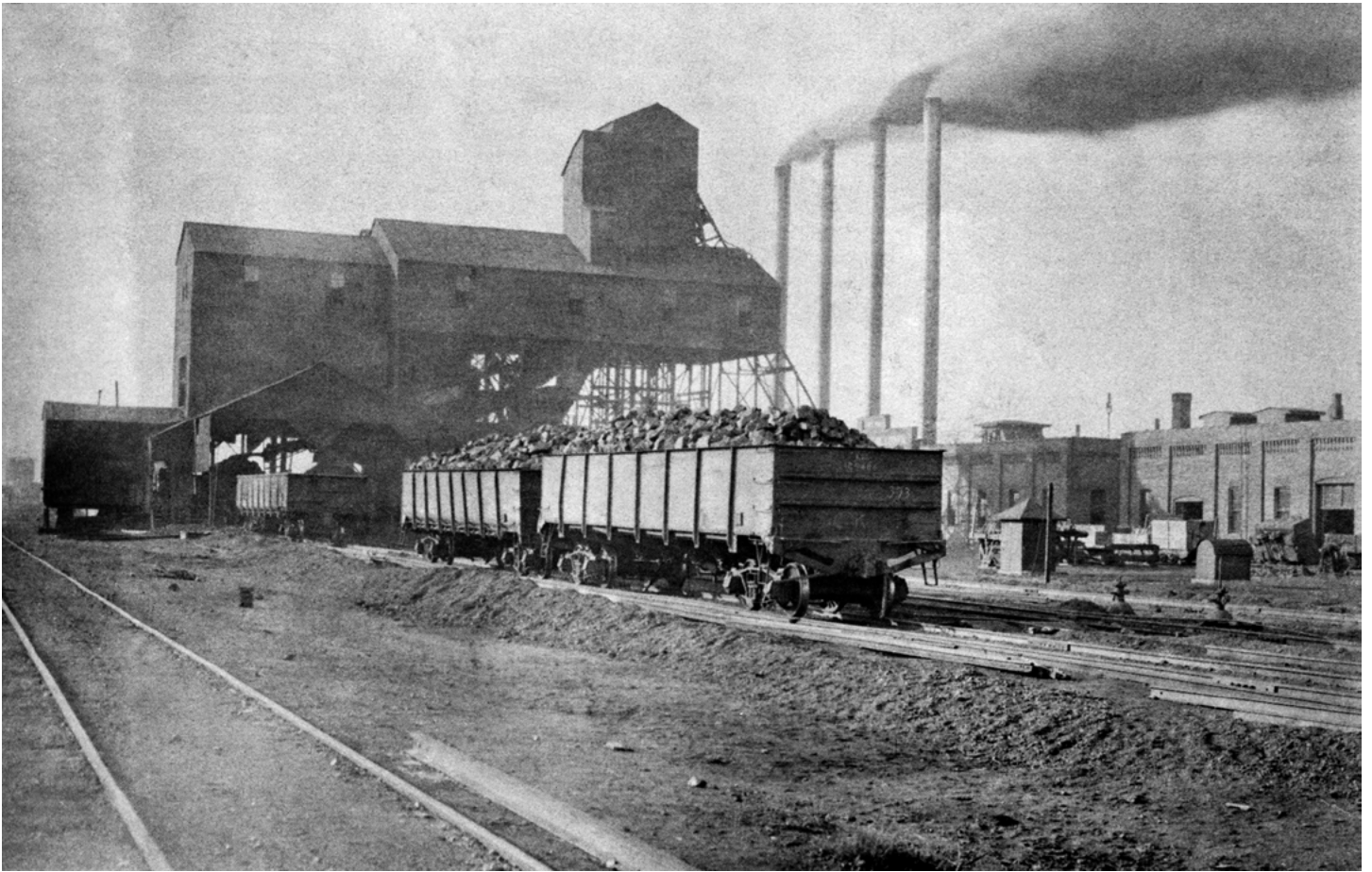
FIRST CAR IN DIVERNON (DOC. JOHNSON)



VETERANS' MEMORIAL



WORKERS LAYING HARD ROAD TOWARD SQUARE ON FIRST STREET PASSING ABELL HOTEL IN 1930



DIVERNON MINE



ABELL CONFECTIONERY



POST OFFICE



BEYNON'S STORE FEB. 1951



GRIFFITHS BUILDING

DIVERNON IN GENERAL

Its Churches, Schools, Businesses, Organizations and Citizens.

CHURCHES

1ST BAPTIST CHURCH

The First Baptist Church of Divernon, Illinois had its origin in the minds of a few Baptists who had moved to Divernon and who had a vision of starting a Baptist Church in the community. On June 8, 1902, a meeting was called for this purpose, and the name, First Baptist Church of Divernon, was selected.

On June 19, 1902, the Welles Hall was leased for a meeting place for Sunday School and Church. The cost was \$75.00 a year for the building, janitor, fuel and lights. The building was to be opened every Sunday morning and Thursday night, as well as two Sunday evenings each month.

On July 20, 1902, the call was extended to Rev. Alexander, of Auburn, to become the first pastor of the newly organized congregation.

The contract for the present church building was made on July 25, 1902 for \$3443.30. The church building was constructed and the dedication service was set for the first Sunday in July, 1904. The parsonage was built later and was apparently completed in August of 1911.

The first recorded revival meeting was held in December 1917, and there was good attendance. The speaker was Rev. F. M. Dunk, and several people were saved during the meetings.

During World War One, several of the men in the church were called to serve their country. On Sunday, March 24, 1918, a Service Flag was presented to the church by the "Anti-Cants" of the school, in honor of those men serving their country.

Over the years, several improvements and additions were made to the church building. The dedication of the new church basement was held on August 26, 1951, the annex was completed in 1962, and in 1972 a new parsonage was purchased. In 1973, the old parsonage was torn down and the space was made into a parking lot.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Divernon Methodist Church was first organized in a school house in 1892 with Rev. Knox as Minister. The pulpit was an orange crate on which the Bible was placed. The school was vacated and Church was held in Wells Hall over the Grange Store. While in Wells Hall, Mr. Frank Monroe built a maple Pulpit and presented it to the church, and it was used until the new Chancel was built in 1957.

The services were held in Wells Hall until the present church was built and dedicated, June 30, 1895, debt-free by Bishop Wilder.

A Sunday School was organized in 1895, also the same year the Epworth League was organized and The Ladies Aid.

The first parsonage was purchased in 1910.

The church was raised and a basement built in 1921.

A new Hammond organ was installed in November of 1951. Mrs. Goleman organized a Youth Choir for Easter in 1958 and has worked with our Adult Choir ever since.

The Womans Society of Christian Service was organized on September 10, 1940.

The W. S. C. S. Prayer Group was organized by Mrs. Bramley in January, 1951.

A 42' x 26' addition was started in August, 1956, on the church for an Educational Building and Church Chancel. The Altar, Pulpit, Lecturn and Kneeling Rail were installed then.

The church was covered with Aluminum siding in 1974. During the fall of 1974 and summer of 1975 several projects have been completed, new sanctuary pews, choir robes, Sunday School partitions and florescent lights in the basement.

SACRED HEART CHURCH

Beginning July 5, 1903 the Catholics of Divernon held their worship services in Wells Hall until 1910. With J. R. Abell and Thomas Hill helping to organize the congregation, they secured the present property at Lincoln and Kenney Streets. At the end of September the foundations and basement of the present church were completed and used for church services. A year later the church was finished and still serves the congregation. The first resident pastor, the Reverend Monsignor Patrick Fox, who came to Divernon direct from his stint in the American Army during the first world war built a residence next to the church in 1920.

1ST UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

On December 31, 1870, a building having been erected, the church was organized with nine charter members present. The site of the new church was on a knoll in the midst of Brush Creek Cemetery and was named The Brush Creek Presbyterian Church. This was seventeen years before the Village of Divernon was laid out.

The nine charter members of the organization were: Charles G. Brown and his wife, Virginia A; Reuben S. Brown and his wife, Sarah; John Brown and his wife, Mary A; William Poe and his wife, Margaret Ann; with their daughter, Annie Howard Poe.

July 11, 1872, the church building was destroyed by fire. Two years later the second church was built on the former foundation and dedicated.

In 1887 the church was moved to the Village of Divernon, being the first church to begin religious work in the village.

In 1889 the pastor began printing a monthly religious newspaper, The Divernon Star. This paper, after moving to several locations and having several editors, became "The Divernon News".

The Woman's Missionary Society was organized in February 1888. In January 1890 the Sunday School and The Christian Endeavor Society became active. About this time a Manse was built on the corner one block west of the church.

Though located in Divernon, the church was still called the Brush Creek Presbyterian Church. Action was taken to change the name to the First Presbyterian Church of Divernon. The church was not incorporated until July 6, 1920.

On April 13, 1901, the Ladies Aid Society was organized. During the summer of 1905 the Annex was built.

The Pipe Organ was installed in 1919. Andrew Carnegie donated \$500.00 to the cost of the organ.

Before the Divernon Township High School had their present building, the Church Annex was used for High School class work.

During the first 50 years of its existence 496 members were received into the fellowship of the church.

On September 1, 1920, a kindergarten was opened in the Annex with an enrollment of 46 children.

On March 13, 1967, Mrs. Ernest Rettberg presented plans for a garden north of the church, to be in memory of her husband, who had worked in the church for many years. The Rettberg Memorial Garden was dedicated February 20, 1968. Many others, in memory of loved ones, have planted trees and shrubs and made contributions to beautify the garden.

The church continues to serve its members and the community with religious, social and service activities.

SCHOOLS

Records show that there were schools in the Divernon area prior to 1874. However, the first four-room grade school was built in 1901. In 1917 four rooms were added to the existing building, plus two wooden buildings were constructed to house the lower grades. These wooden buildings were later torn down. In 1920, there was an enrollment of 530 children in the grade school and another four-room building was constructed on the west side of Divernon. This building also was eventually torn down and the bricks were used in the construction of the high school gymnasium, which was built in 1937.

The country schools consolidated with the Village of Divernon in 1948 and the unit district came into being this year also. A very modern elementary building was constructed in 1968 next to the present high school. This building was in use during the 1968-69 school year. Grades kindergarten through the eighth grade are in this building, plus a cafeteria, all-purpose room, music room and classrooms for special education students.

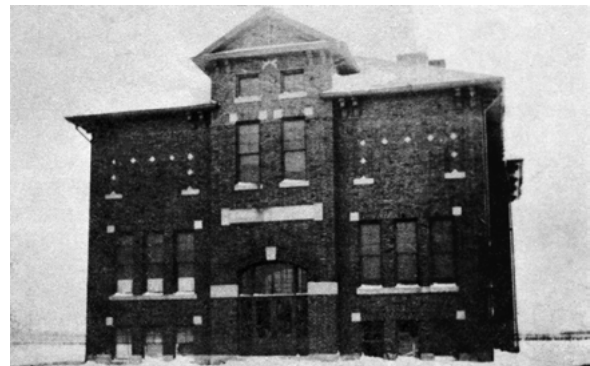
The high school was built in 1912 at a cost of \$30,000. The records show that it was one of the most modern and finest buildings in the State of Illinois. The first person to graduate from the Divernon High School was in 1904, eight years before the present building was erected. The enrollment was at its peak in 1922 with a total of 150 students. A very modern industrial arts workshop was added to the present building in 1956.

The continued interest of the community in their schools was demonstrated in 1967 when a bond referendum for \$292,000 was voted to build a new elementary school. Children of the district now attend this modern facility.

On October 20, 1973, the community supported the Capital Area Vocational School building referendum by voting 3 to 1 in favor of the proposal. On July 20, 1974, the voters of the district voted 2 to 1 to raise the Educational Fund tax rate from \$1.60 to \$2.20.



DIVERNON GRADE SCHOOL BEFORE BEING RAZED



EARLY VIEW OF HIGH SCHOOL

BUSINESS OF DIVERNON

SCHAAD SHACK

Edward D. and Ladonna K. Schaad, purchased land January 9, 1972. Obtained county zoning for restaurant August, 1972, began building's foundation March 26, 1973. 1st day open for business was August 4, 1974.

THROOP & SONS TREE SERVICE

Throop and Son's Tree Service was founded in 1929 by Roy F. Throop. He has two sons that are in tree work with him. Earl L. Throop moved to Divernon in 1972, and Roy Throop Jr., resides in Springfield, Illinois.

COMMUNITY BANK OF DIVERNON

Late in the fall of 1962 a committee from the Divernon Lions Club had an appointment to meet Attorney, Conrad Noll, Jr., and that proved to be the start of the organization of the Community Bank of Divernon. Mr. Noll had been in Divernon on numerous occasions, and it was his firm belief that Divernon needed a bank and could support one. He was so convincing that the committee on returning home made contacts with other citizens of the community to see what the general opinion was, and who would be interested in serving on a committee to help in the organization of a bank for Divernon.

After much discussion and informal get togethers, the first official organization meeting was held Feb. 7, 1963. Thomas R. Beynon, Julius Boros, Charles R. Bramley, Noel LeGrand, Conrad Noll, Jr., Joel F. Parker, Basil Tyler, and Jack Warrington being present and agreeing to serve on the committee to help establish a bank in Divernon.

Realizing that it would take the efforts of the entire community to make the bank a success, the name of The Community Bank of Divernon was chosen with a Capitol structure of \$150,000.00, consisting of 6000 shares with a par value of \$10.00 per share.

On Feb. 11, 1963 a Mr. Charles McCall from the State Dept. of Financial Institutions explained in detail the steps necessary in the organization of the bank.

On Feb. 18th a permit was filed to organized with the State Dept. of Financial Institutions.

After considering several buildings to house the bank, the building now occupied was selected and an option to buy same from Mr. and Mrs. Paul Dunn was executed on Feb. 21, 1963.

On Feb. 25, 1963 an application form for FDIC insurance was received. Shortly after receiving the form, a Mr. Harlan Sarsfield, a field director for the FDIC made a tour of the community, and explained more fully the requirements, one of which was the employing of a cashier so they could investigate him and pass on his qualifications. After interviewing several prospects Mr. Marceau Criquelion was chosen and he became one of the Organization Committee on April 15, 1963.

Having met the other requirements necessary pursuant to filing the application, the organization committee hand delivered it to the Chicago branch of the FDIC along with a large number of letters from business men, civic groups, fraternal organizations and churches expressing the need of a bank in Divernon, and urging that the application be acted on favorably.

On May 20, 1963 another meeting was held with Mr. Sarsfield, and Mr. Harold Boede, field representative of the State Dept. of Financial Institutions, which in essence was the go ahead to sell the stock.

On June 8, 1963 applications to purchase stock were mailed to all area residents, and an immediate campaign was started to sell the stock, which meant of course the collecting of the purchase price, the proceeds of which were placed in trust at the Capitol Bank of Springfield, pending the sale of all stock and the issuance of a State Charter. With the cooperation of the entire community, especially the Divernon Lions Club, the task was completed and the sale of stock was closed on Aug. 14, 1963, and a formal application was made to the State Dept. of Financial Institutions for a Charter on Aug. 31, 1963.

Since much had to be done in remodeling the interior of the building and the installing of fixtures and equipment Oct 15, 1963 was set as a target date for the opening.

The first stockholders meeting was held on Aug. 29, 1963 and The Community Bank of Divernon at last came into existence and after much hard work and many meetings the Organization Committee saw their dream come true and at the pleasure of the stockholders the members of the committee were elected as the first Board of Directors of the Community Bank of Divernon, a bank which has now grown to over four million dollars in assets.

BOURNE COIN LAUNDRY

Bourne's Coin Laundry was opened in March, 1970. Mr. and Mrs. Leo Bourne, Jr. purchased the building at 109 Dodd St. in December 1969. Mr. Bourne, being a carpenter, extensively remodeled the building and installed laundry equipment. Having an office space in the front of the laundry, a beauty shop was open there in September, 1970. Mr. and Mrs. Bourne and their four children then moved into the upstairs apartment from the farm where they had resided since 1960.

Feeling the need for more space for the beauty shop, the Bourne's purchased the adjacent building, occupied by the Wilson-Smith Insurance Agency (formerly Thomas U. Taylor Inc.). The Wilson Bros.-Smith Agency moved to the office in the laundry building, and the beauty shop opened in April, 1972 at the new location. Mrs. Lois Helmkamp is Prop. of the Touch of Gold Beauty Shop. Mrs. Lois Bourne is the representative for the Wilson Bros.-Smith Agency.

BEYNON REAL ESTATE

Thomas R. Beynon Real Estate, has been buying, selling and building homes in Divernon for the past fifteen years. A subdivision bearing his name is in the "new addition," the place where the Madison Coal Company houses were on the east side of Divernon. They deal in farm, commercial as well as residential property. Beynon has worked with the local contractors Cincebox Brothers, M. A. Clayton, Ben E. Herlan and Robert F. Patton, building new homes for a better and progressive Divernon.

SPEAS GUNSMITH

Upon moving to Divernon in August of 1971, I have had a Gunsmith Shop in my home. I am a experienced gunsmith having graduated from Colorado School of Trade in 1962. In addition to repairing guns I also have a small engine and lawnmower repair shop in my garage at 218 West Springer Street. I am open for business and free estimates every day except Sunday. My home phone number is 628-3863.

DIVERNON NEWS

In May 1889 Mr. Ambrose, the Presbyterian minister, began printing a monthly religious paper. The Divernon Star, was its name and his son, Austin was the printer. The paper was devoted to the moral and material interest of Divernon.

It was an eight page sheet, 8" x 11" 3 columns. One page was assigned to local news, less than two pages for advertising, and the remaining space was devoted to religious items of news.

The paper had a circulation of 300 at the rate of 30 cents per annum. Generous space was allotted to the Presbyterian church work, its Sunday School, its Christian Endeavor Society and all other organizations.

The publication after moving to several locations with as many publishers finally became "The Divernon News," with I. S. Dunn as editor and publisher, who was succeeded by his son, T. P. Dunn.

In June, 1959, the Divernon News was purchased by Joe Michelich of Detroit, Michigan from Ted and Ella Dunn. In addition, Michelich purchased the Auburn Citizen.

Michelich, who changed the paper's format from a seven column paper to eight during the first 10 years he owned the paper, also has started three other local area newspapers. The first was the Chatham Clarion in 1962, followed in 1965 by the Pawnee Post and in 1975 by the Rochester Times.

In February, 1973, News, along with the other papers printed by Michelich's Auburn Printing Co. converted to the offset process of production.

DAVE'S BARBER SHOP

In 1924 Albert Klein opened a barber business on the north side of the square in Divernon. The 1st picture of Al Klein in 1938 shows Jocko Ford sitting in the barber chair. The 2nd picture taken in 1947 shows Bill Kessler receiving Al's Tonsorial services while John, Bill's son sits in the kiddies chair obviously already a happy and satisfied customer. Al ran his business until he passed away in 1949.



The shop was vacant until 1956 when Cecil Mosely opened the business and operated till 1966 when it was sold to Gene Hill.

In 1968 Gene sold the business to the present proprietor David Punke.

SPRINGER INSURANCE

The Springer Insurance Agency began in 1918 and was operated by Herman H. Springer of Pawnee. Providing services for Southern Sangamon County and surrounding Counties with all forms of Insurance, William Springer joined the Agency in 1965. In 1973, the Charles E. Kline Agency of Divernon was purchased with an office located in the Emerson Press building. The Agency is a member of the Independent Insurance Agents Association and the Illinois Farm Insurance Agents.

JOHN FORD OIL PRODUCTS

John (Jocko) Ford, married to Ina K. Dunn, started his oil business on February 14, 1932. Selling Conoco products for many years, later changing to Phillip 66 products in 1949. He serviced Hay Bros. Garage and area farmers from the time he started until November 1, 1964 when he sold the business because of a heart attack. He also supplied Glenarm Grain Co. and the Phillip 66 station in Glenarm.

THROOP'S HIDEOUT TAVERN

Mr. Kreppert started his business as a Butcher Shop and Groc. Store.

Then John Lewis ran a Groc. Store.

Then the building became a Theater and was operated by Earl Anderson.

The building was then purchased by John Burns. He operated it as such until his death. It was left in a will to Vera Gay and Clarence Siebert. They operated it for some time then closed it.

Then it was sold on contract for deed to Mel Hughes, who operated it as Mel's Mint Tavern.

Then Mel Hughes sold it to Fitzgerald from Auburn, Illinois, it was known as the Fire Side Tavern. Then was closed again.

It was then sold by Mr. Siebert to Mr. Carl Morris who operated it as Mary's and Carl's tavern.

Again it was sold to a Barb Cook who then operated it as the B & S Lounge.

Once again it was sold to a Mr. Roy F Throop Sr., who now operates it as Throop's Hide Out Tavern.

DORIS'S BEAUTY SHOP

I attended beauty school at Modernistic Beauty School in Springfield.

Opened my shop October, 1966 at 200 East Dodd. Sold my home in 1974.

My shop is now located on the square on West Dodd.

GEORGIA'S BEAUTY SHOP

Georgia's Beauty Shop is owned and operated by Georgia Bukantos.

Mrs. Bukantos graduated from Modernistic School of Beauty in 1939. She was the co-owner of the Venetian Beauty Shop in Springfield, Illinois for several years, then operated a shop in her home while living in Springfield.

She moved to Divernon in 1957 and started her shop in her home in 1958.

KREPPERT MEAT MARKET

Charles Kreppert purchased in 1906 a meat market from E. Lake. His brother Wm. F. Kreppert worked with him and joined him as a partner in business two years later; and the market was known as Kreppert Bros. Meat Market. Later groceries were added and a complete food store was operated. After the untimely death of Charles Kreppert, the store was owned and operated by Wm. F. Kreppert.

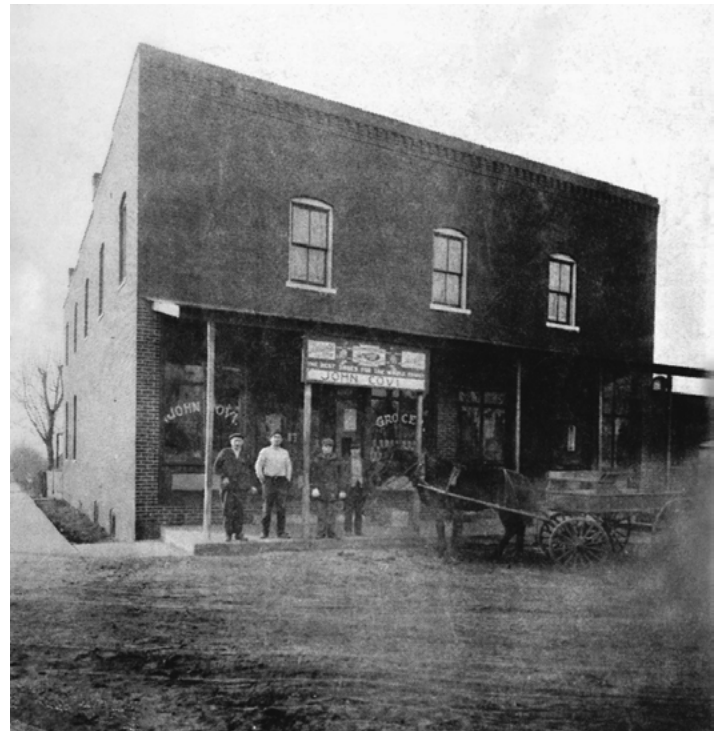
John Lewis, a nephew of Mrs. Kreppert, became associated with the market in 1930. He and his wife bought the store in 1938 and operated it as "Lewis Market" for 10 years. They sold the business to Wm. and Mae Pierce and it was then known as "Pierce Market".

COVI'S STORE

Mr. and Mrs. John Covi and family moved to Divernon, Illinois in the spring of 1900. They came here from Clyde Patch, Illinois, a small mining town near Litchfield, Illinois. Mr. Covi was in the grocery business in Clyde Patch. The coal mine in Divernon was a new mine and a big one.

Mr. Covi had a large brick building built, large enough for the family home and the General Store. They carried groceries, dry goods, shoes, work clothes for the miners.

Mr. John Covi passed away in July 1922. His two youngest sons Joseph and Albert carried on the grocery business. Joseph passed away in May 1955. Then Albert carried on the business until July 1963 when he retired.



This picture was taken in January 1917 of the store and home place.

Left to right — Mr. John Covi, Joseph Covi and Albert Covi, and a neighbor. The horse hitched to the spring wagon was named old Charley and the Covi boys delivered the groceries in the spring wagon.

DIVERNON LIBRARY

In 1966 the Divernon Womens Club voted to start a local library as a club project.

Mrs. Kenneth Ball, president, appointed the following committee: Mrs. Fred Herlan, Mrs. Leland Boblitt, Mrs. Sam Currie, to ask members of the community to donate books, shelving and furniture to get the library started. The club in turn raised funds to support the library. This paid the rent, utilities and supplies needed to keep the library in operation. Several members donated their time as librarians.

On April 4, 1967, the people of Divernon Township voted for it to become tax supported. The following board of directors were also elected. Mrs. Fred Herlan, Mrs. Leland Boblitt, Mrs. Rosetta Fenstermaker, Mrs. Basil Tyler, Mrs. William Shears and Mrs. Earl Ford.

Since that time the library is known as the Divernon Township Library.

In 1974 the library board of directors were able to hire a full time librarian, Mrs. Alice Pare.

The present library board of directors are: Mrs. Fred Herlan, President, Mrs. Leland Boblitt, Vice-President; Mrs. William Shears, Secretary; Mrs. Harold Argue, Treasurer; Mrs. Basil Tyler, Rolling Praires Representative; Mrs. William Shoup and Mrs. Robert Reichert.

FORD'S GARAGE

A veteran of World War I, Earl C. Ford, spent his entire life in Divernon. He married Pearl Mitchel a school teacher, who taught in Divernon Grade School for many years.

Earl was a garage owner and a dealer in Chrysler products and car sales. Because of gasoline sales his place of business remained open evenings and it became a place for loafing, especially for teenage boys, and good employment for many young men.

During World War II it was from here that many a GI was sent away or welcomed home from military service.

Earl retired after nearly a quarter of a century in the garage business.

EMERSON PRESS

Emerson Press began as a part-time venture by Leonard Emerson in 1967.

The first shop was in the garage behind his home at 333 S. Lincoln St. In 1968 an addition was added and it became a full time business.

In 1973 the building, which was formerly Blondy's Tavern, was purchased and is now Emerson Press.

IDEAL CASH MARKET

The Ideal Cash Market became a Divernon landmark in the middle 1920's. It was owned and operated by Ernest Rettberg, Jr., with the assistance of Mrs. Rettberg. When the Wells store here was closed, Mr. and Mrs. Rettberg opened their own store

in a small building on the west side of the Divernon square. Here Mrs. Rettberg learned to cut meat, sack sugar and dip lard right along with her husband, while the children delivered groceries before school in a little red wagon.

In the early 1930's the Ideal Cash Market had outgrown its small quarters, so when the CIPS vacated the building in the middle of the north side of the square, the Rettberg store was moved to the larger building. About this time it became affiliated with a buying group, after which it became a Red and White Store. During these years the store became noted for its attractive window displays, and throughout World War II it was the headquarters for the Junior Commandos, who were the young boys who collected everything from used grease to empty toothpaste tubes to assist in the war effort. After the war was over, in the spring of 1946, Mr. and Mrs. Rettberg closed the store, but they continued to be active and loyal Divernon residents.

Ernest and Elizabeth Rettberg's years in the business life of Divernon saw the complete cycle of change in this community. Starting in business in the Golden Years of the Coal Mine, they saw the decline and eventual closing of this enterprise. Then came the Great Depression, when a quarter's worth of pork steak and a ten cent loaf of bread constituted a fair-sized grocery order. During these years when the hobo was still a part of the American scene they frequently stopped at the store for a handout. Ernie never refused any one, but always insisted that some chore be done in payment. Sometimes the front walk was swept four or five times in a single day. Then came the years of World War II when economic conditions gave way to concern about the sons of his customers who were away in the fighting. Finally they emerged to see Divernon become the beautiful residential and business town that it now is. Even after his retirement, Ernie was pleased to be able to help in the development of his community, being active in Church, Lodge, and the Lions Club.

CINCH'S KENNELS

Cinch's Kennels was founded in 1960. Don Cincebox owner was determined to have the best pointers in the world.

In 1966 he purchased a Champion female named Our Nominee from Ray Burto of Princeton, Illinois. Cinch's Kennels was on the move, their dogs proceeded to beat the best from Canada to Georgia. Cinch's Dynamite won Illinois Dog of the Year, Chief Up Ike got runnerup award for Illinois Dog of the Year. Five years in a row the Divernon dogs were in the top five in the state.

In 1973 Cinch's Supreme won Illinois Derby Dog of the Year.

In 1974 Cinch's Lou now named Clardy's Lou, because she was sold in Illinois Derby Dog of the Year.

There has been a demand for Cinch's pups from all over the U.S. even as far as Alaska and Japan.

Cinch's Kennels has the best winning record in the U.S. considering number of dogs raised and money spent on them.

BALLARD FOODLINER

In September 1973, Beynon IGA Foodliner sold to Marvin D. Ballard of New Berlin, after twenty five years. Mr. Ballard has been in the food business for many years.

In 1975, Mr. Ballard sold the business to Red Fox Corporation.

THE RED & WHITE STORES

These Prices Effective Friday, December 8 and Saturday, December 9, 1933

BAKE A CAKE SALE

Red & White CAKE FLOUR, Large 2 3-4 lb. package	23c
CHOCOLATE, Red and White Premium Baking, 1½ lb. cake ..	19c
BAKING POWDER, one pound can	19c
VANILLA, Pure—Red & White 2-oz. bottles	19c
POWDERED SUGAR, Two lb. packages	15c

FLOUR

RED & WHITE 48-lb. sack	\$1.89
RED & WHITE 24-lb. sack97
GREEN & WHITE 48-lb. sack	\$1.77
GREEN & WHITE 24-lb. sack91

BISCUIT FLOUR, Red & White Large 40-oz package	29c
RED BEANS, 16-oz can 4 for	19c
R S P CHERRIES, No. 2 can 2 for	29c
HOMINY, Red & White No. 2½ can, 3 for	25c
BEANS, Choice hand picked, 5 pounds only	21c
CATSUP, made from red ripe Tomatoes, 14-oz. bottle, 2 for ..	25c

CHOCOLATE COVERED CHERRIES, 1 pound box	29c
COCOANUT MACAROON COOKIES, choc. coated, lb.....	23c
TEA, Blue & White, Orange Peko, 1-4 lb. only	14c
COFFEE, NIGHT & DAY, A mild Santos, pound	19c

SOAPS

SOAP CHIPS, Blue & White 5 lb. package	35c
SOAP, Green & White Laundry, 16-oz bar, 4 for	19c
TOILET SOAP, Lady Godiva, 3 bars	14c

HAMBURGER, 3 pounds	25c
BEEF ROAST, per pound	10c
LUERS LARD, 3 pounds	19c

FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

POTATOES, Fancy Quality, Red River Ohios, peck	27c
ONIONS, Fancy Minnesota, Red or Yellow, 4 lbs.	13c
GRAPEFRUIT, Florida Dun- cans, 8 oz. each	5c
BANANAS, Firm Yellow Fruit, 3 lbs.	20c
APPLES, Fancy Idaho Jona- thans, dozen	15c

Kreppert's Market

Ideal Cash Market

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

LIONS CLUB

Chartered December 2nd, 1958.

Thirty-three members chartered, first president, Burt McIntosh. Eleven charter members still active in club. Many activities have been completed by the club in the last 17 years.

Built a \$28,000 Medical Building for doctor and community.

Many eye glasses donated to people in Divernon.

High School Athletic Banquets.

Banquets for Senior Citizens.

Fruit Baskets for elderly at Christmas

Built structure in park for people of Divernon.

Helped Little League Ball Programs.

Built Little League Ball Park at high school.

Auction sales, Pancake and Sausage Suppers, Light Bulb Sales.

Sold Medical Building to village for municipal use and Library.

GIRL SCOUTS

Most Girl Scouts know the story of how, in 1908, Sir Robert Baden-Powell founded the Boy Scouts in England. They know, too, how a charming American woman named Juliette Gordon Low brought the idea from England to the United States in 1912, the idea that grew into the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.

Since that time millions of girls from seven through seventeen years of age have enjoyed what Baden-Powell called the "The game of Scouting." Our troop is part of a movement in the United States that has over three million members — girls and adults. In troops and camps, they too are exploring new ideas, learning new skills having fun, and giving service to others. Together, we are making Girl Scout history.

And so now we come to Divernon's own Girl Scout history. In 1923 Divernon's Scouting program started under the leadership of Josephine Brown Turner, Miss Mabel Ford and Mrs. Pearl Ford, and remained active for five years. From 1929 till now scouting in Divernon was kept active by concerned individuals. Presently our scouting program in Divernon has reached its greatest achievement by having all levels of scouting available.

We belong to the Land of Lincoln Girl Scout Council and have active girls in Brownie, Junior and Cadette levels. Brownie Troop 279 under the leadership of Mrs. Louise Garner and Mrs. Linda Speas has a membership of 24 second and third grade girls.

Our Junior Troop 266 has 16 girls with Mrs. Carol Griffith, Mrs. Cheryl Lewis and Mrs. Pat Troutt as leaders.

Miss Luanne Currie and Mrs. MaryBeth Seltzer have 11 7th, 8th, and 9th grade girls in Cadette Troop 13.

SPORTSMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The Divernon Sportsmen's Association was organized under the leadership of Rev. Edward Mehl, who also served as the 1st president. The club was incorporated April 20 1946 listing 82 charter members, those who have remained active throughout the years are: Julius Boros, Jeno Boros, H. H. Becker, Thomas Bukantos, Ralph Hay, Steve Kish, "Ollie" Lewis, Herman Podshadley, Wayne Sullivan, Clifford Tyler, Clarence Westfall, Jim Westfall, James Woolum and Andy Victor, Sr. Members have voted Honorary Life membership to: Frank Hay, Floyd Grove, deceased; Alfred Duval, Jr. and Julius Boros.

The object of this club is to promote civic, social and recreation activities for the betterment of the community. Fishing from a stocked pond, swimming, picnic area and primitive camping is available to the members and their families.

At the 1974 Annual meeting the members voted to have the levee repaired in the Northeast pond. This is a big undertaking, however, the officers and committee are at work on "Ways & Means" and hope to have the project completed this fall.

In 1946 Mayor "Skeets" Sieders, Supervisor Clarence Westfall and Postmaster John Rettberg were the first to stock the ponds with bass and other game fish.

Brush Creek Cemetery

Brush Creek Cemetery was surveyed in May 1904 by Mr. Jacob Orr, and was incorporated on August 4, 1904.

The Cemetery Board was re-organized in 1947, with a new Board of Trustees and President.

In 1959, the large draw in the middle of the eleven acres of land was filled with dirt to even it up with the rest of the land and a new fence was put up on three sides of the Cemetery.

The wrought iron fence in the front of the Cemetery was installed in 1966.

Arthur J. Quick Post No. 278, The American Legion, was deeded a space in the front and center of the Cemetery with a monument for services on Memorial Day. It has been landscaped and a flag pole was installed in 1971.

Brush Creek Cemetery is now a pretty and well-kept Cemetery due to much hard work and donations of many persons who have been interested in its upkeep.

WOMAN'S CLUB

The Divernon Woman's Club began September 28, 1903 and is still in existence today.

This club has played an important role in the cultural and civic life of the village. The 50th Anniversary was celebrated in 1953 during the presidency of Mrs. Lucille Watkins Brown.

Different club presidents have planted spruce trees in the park, which are illuminated at Christmas: Mrs. John Williams in 1927, Mrs. S. R. Johnson in 1934, Mrs. Ernest Rettberg II in 1951, Mrs. Alexander Smith and Mrs. Lucille Brown in 1953.

The Woman's Club was responsible for the annual "Mardi Gras" which was the social event of the year for Divernon. This was the idea of Mrs. Ernest Rettberg, Sr.

In recent years, the Woman's Club has helped the Divernon Township Library, donated a park bench for our park, started the Effie P. Johnson Scholarship, which gives \$200.00 to a senior student, donated money to the Girl Scout Troop, helped to pay for shoes and clothing for needy families at Christmas, and many other worthwhile projects.

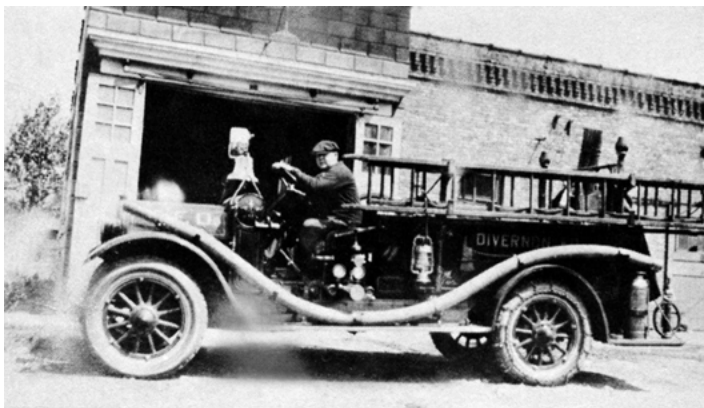
FIREFLIES

The Divernon Fireflies were organized in the early 1950's. Their purpose was to help make money and help support the volunteer fire department. They meet the second Tuesday of each month. At the present time there are only eleven members, four of these are charter members, and they are Mrs. Leland Boblitt, Mrs. Al Duval Jr., Mrs. Lucille Hartman and Mrs. Kolman Szoke. Other members are: Mrs. John Pennington, Mrs. Edward Peregrin, Mrs. Louis Bolash, Mrs. Jeno Boros, Mrs. Carl Yates, Mrs. Alan Brown, and Mrs. Robert Murphy.

This organization was preceded by a group called the Divernon Fire Ladies. It was organized in 1925 with an organizational meeting held at the home of Mrs. William Kreppert, with Mrs. J. P. Covi as the first President.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

In the early days the Village of Divernon had horse drawn fire equipment. Then in 1921 a Reo-open cab truck was purchased. In those days water was pumped out of wells or Brush Creek. Very little equipment came out on the trucks then. Charles W. Kreppert was the Fire Chief.



In 1945 the people of Divernon township donated money for a new truck.

In 1955 a fire district was organized by a group of men, and it was voted upon and passed to be supported by taxes.

In 1956 a new three truck fire house was built. 1962 was when the first new up to date fire truck and all new equipment was purchased and had a 750 gallon water tank to carry water for rural fires.

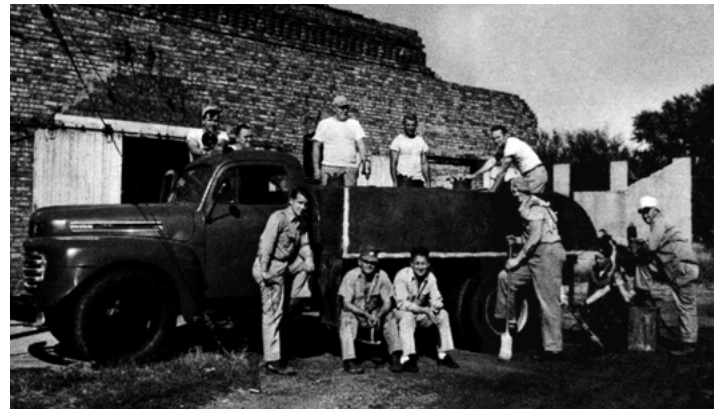
1972 saw the second new truck and equipment purchased out of tax money.

The fire district also takes care of the fires at Glenarm.

A new mini high pressure pump truck with a four wheel drive and

foam is being looked at for the 3rd piece of equipment.

There are 30 volunteer firemen and they have a meeting once a month with Fire Chief Kolman Szoke.



MASONS

On Dec. 7, 1927, the Divernon Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons was recognized under the dispensation given by Louis L. Emerson, Grand Master of Masons in Illinois, with 51 members. Previously most of those making up the membership had been associated with the Lodge at Pawnee.

The first Worshipful Master was William F. Kreppert, Senior Warden, Arthur L. Aldrich, Junior Warden, Fred W. Stutsman, Secretary, Henry J. Becker, Treasurer, John W. Rettberg.

Through the years the Lodge and its members have endeavored to support the principles of Masonry and to promote the welfare of the community both as Masons and in cooperation with other civic-minded organizations.

The present officers are Worshipful Master, John Kessler, Senior Warden, William Dozier, Junior Warden, William Moore, Charles Bell Jr., Secretary, Chester Kessler, Treasurer.

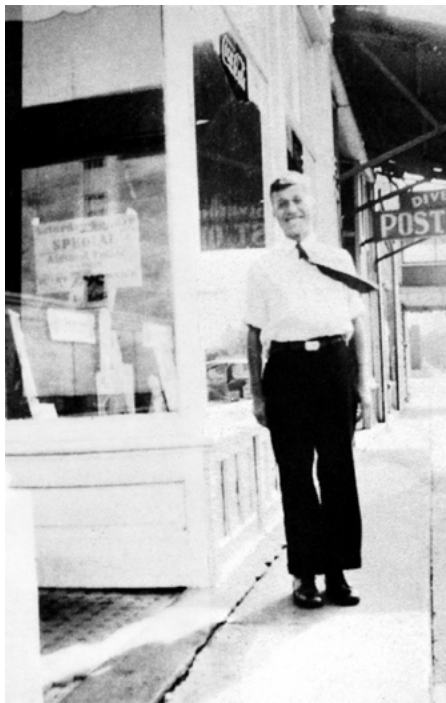
The Masons extend congratulations to Divernon at this time of celebration and pledge their continued efforts toward the advancement of our community.



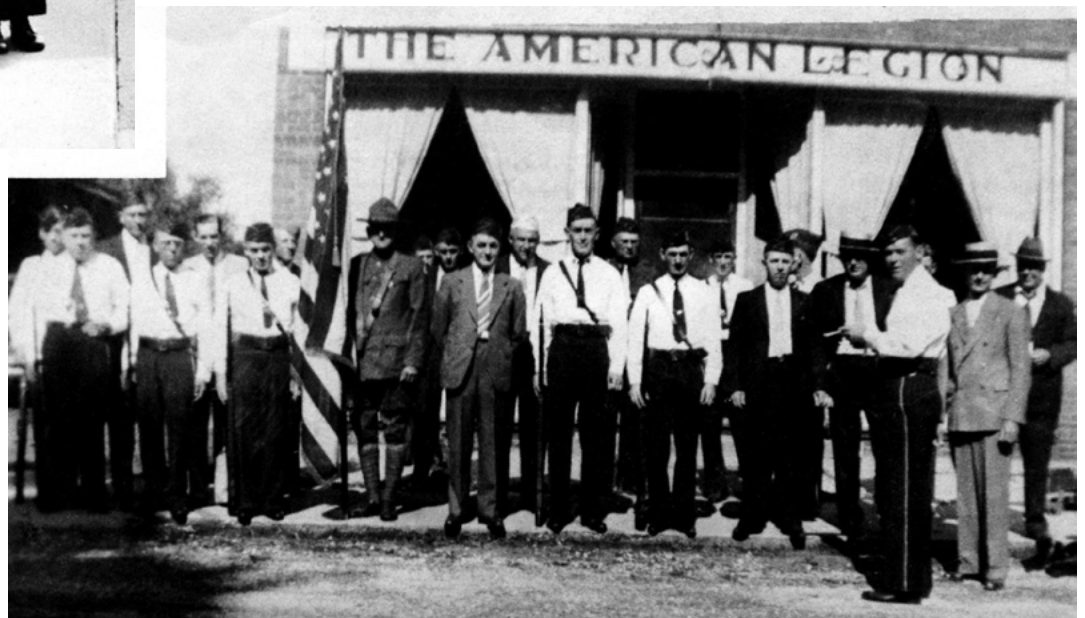
JOHN KISH STORE



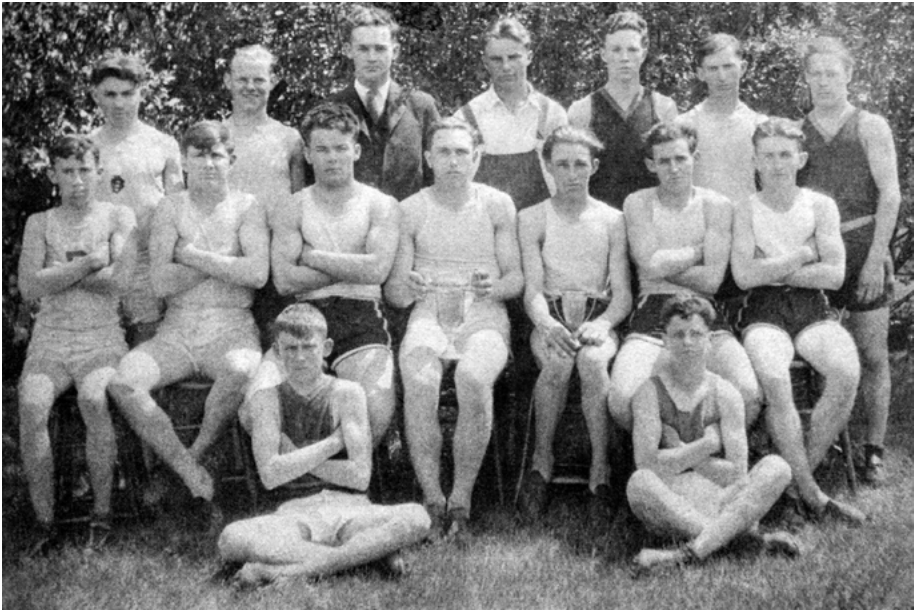
8TH GRADE 1919



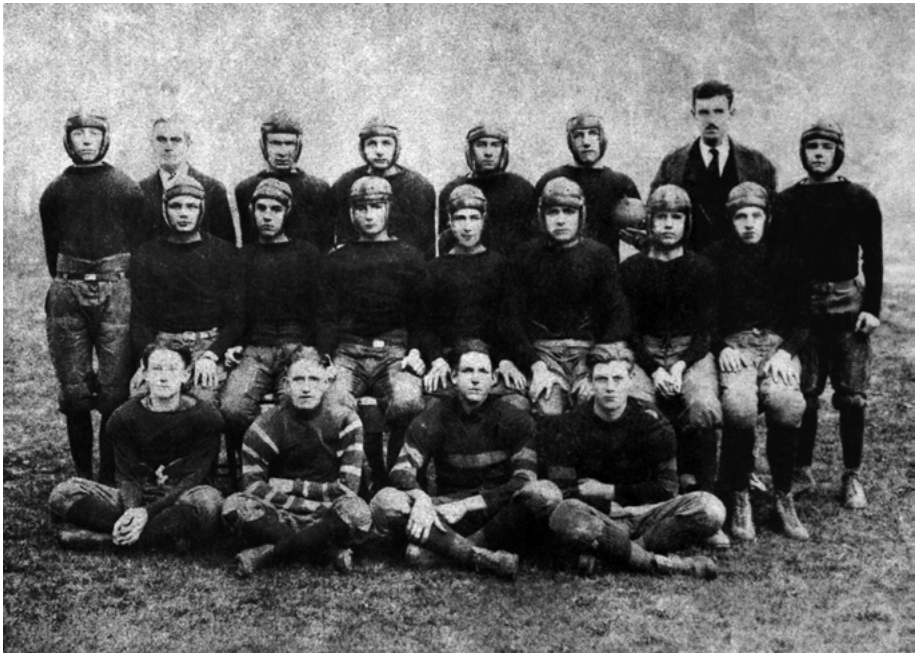
EVERYBODY'S PAL
CHUCK TURLEY



AMERICAN
LEGION 1938



DIVERNON TRACK
TEAM 1928



EARLY DIVERNON
FOOTBALL TEAM



EARLY DIVERNON
BASEBALL TEAM

DUSTING OFF DIVERNON

Written By Ryerson "Joe" Johnson, June 15, 1975

Mr. and Mrs. Chester G. Bramley, with their 3 daughters and 1 son, moved from Palmyra, Illinois, to Divernon on June 1, 1924, and established the Bramley Funeral Home. Mr. Bramley remained very active to the time of his death on February 17, 1967, Mrs. Bramley was very active helping in the business and community affairs until her passing on January 30, 1971. Their only son, Charles Robert, went into business with his father after graduating from the College of Mortuary Science, St. Louis, Missouri, in June 1948, and has continued the business with his wife, the former Carolyn Rettberg.

The daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Chester Bramley are: Mrs. Bryce (Eloise) Barnes who lives at R. R., Chatham, Illinois, and is a registered nurse at Memorial Medical Center Springfield, Illinois; Mrs. Kenneth (Jean) Ball who lives in Divernon and is a registered nurse at Memorial Medical Center, Springfield, Illinois; and Mrs. Chalmers (Betty) Ford who lives in Divernon and is employed by Panhandle Eastern Pipe Line Company, Springfield, Illinois.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bramley have three children: Mrs. Thomas (Marcy) Burrus, of Arenzville, Illinois; Miss Ginny Bramley, a graduate of Illinois College, Jacksonville, Illinois, this spring; and Tim who finished his junior year at Divernon High School in May; Two grandchildren, Lori and Gail Burrus, of Arenzville, Illinois. I have been asked to do a piece about my father and mother, who were identified with the town of Divernon during the whole of their family and professional lives. I'd like to do this, and if I can get in a little of the flavor of Divernon in those early days, I'd like to do that too.

Dad and Mom arrived here, newly married, from Litchfield, in 1899. Mother—Effie May Potts—was born and raised on a farm near the town of Honey Bend. Graduated from Litchfield High School, and worked on Litchfield and Mount Vernon newspapers—one of the first professional newspaperwomen in the country I guess.

My father—Simeon Ryerson Johnson—was a downeaster. Born in the state of Maine. He came to Litchfield when his doctor father—Charles Warren Johnson—came there from Philadelphia to practice medicine. Dad went to De Pauw and Cornell Univ. and received his medical degree from University of Chicago.

The Madison Coal Corp. was opening up in Divernon at about that time, and rather than share an office with my grandfather in Litchfield, Dad settled in Divernon. He was the second doctor here, being preceded by Dr. Mathews, who also spent his life practicing in Divernon. (Interesting side item: now when it seems impossible for Divernon to get even one doctor, for many years we had three.)

Divernon on Brush Creek and the Illinois Central Railroad was a roaring town in those days. A coal and farm town. Rich, fertile farms all around. The corn and wheat lapped at the very edges of the town lots. And the coal mine with its steam hoist, and electrified below, and with "shaking and revolving screens" claimed to be the most modern in the world. Four churches, and about a dozen saloons I'd say, and the same number of grocery stores and meat markets—from Covi's big red brick building in the South End, to smaller ones scattered here and there throughout town and around the square.

I can remember a couple of pool rooms, a bowling alley, Pete Sherlock's Shooting Gallery, Bill Beynon's Opera House, two livery stables, Able's and Mottershaw's bakeries, Twist's grain elevator, Herlan's Lumber Yard, Thomas' Music Store, J. N. Paul's Harness Shop, Trihey's Hardware Store, Mrs. Dave Wall's Ladies Hat Shop, Becker Brothers Dry Goods Store (they also sold fresh eggs they took in for trade), hotels boarding houses and restaurants, and for a while two banks. These are just off the top of my head to give you the idea.

Divernon was no pleasantly slumbering suburb of Springfield then. It had a robust, colorful individuality. Especially for a couple of years when we were the only "wet" town in the county... We voted every few years as to whether we would have saloons in town or not. Local option, they called it. The town went back and forth between being wet and dry. The only difference I could see was that during the dry periods they took the name: SALOON, off the front doors and wrote SOFT DRINK PARLOR instead. And they put curtains over the windows to hide the soft drinks.

Well... Dad set up his first doctor's office upstairs in the building that housed Haug's Drug Store I think, on the north side of the square. Dad and Mom lived in the house on the northwest corner of the square (where Rettberg's store is now). It had a black iron fence all around it. Kids used to run by, clicking a stick on the iron rods.

That's where I was born, right about where Rettberg's cash register is now I think. We moved soon afterwards to a house that Dad had built a half block north—the house that is still standing on the hill. There wasn't any name to the street. I don't know if there is now. But everybody knew Johnson's Hill because it was the only elevation in town that you could call a hill. We were right across the street from Squire Barns' farm implement sheds and feed barn and sales office.

My sister, Adelaide, was born in this new house... and then Marion... and then Warren. Under the big maple trees, it was a wonderful house and yard for kids. We pounded across the grass on our bare feet in the dusty, droning summer. We stamped through the leaves in the fall, and the mud in spring

and snow in winter. All the kids in town came to slide down the hill in winter. And in the summer we slammed down the hill in Sears Roebuck “express wagons”; and after we had cement walks, on roller skates.

Yes, it was a good life under the maple trees and the apple trees and the grape arbor. Just one incident: we had a long rope swing in the yard. On the day I’m remembering, Leslie Wall, Pete Samuloff, and Colis Gordon were there. A young man and woman passed our house in a leisurly walk. We knew everybody in town, but we didn’t know them. Strangers. And kind of cityish. They just about had to be two of the people playing in the vaudville show at the Opera House. In addition to the moving picture show every night—Perils of Pauline and Charley Chaplin and Wm. S. Hart and all that—Mr. Beynon would often bring in live talent.

When she saw the swing in our yard the girl said, “Oh look!” and her eyes grew big.

The man who was with her smiled and asked, “Is it all right if I swing my girl in your swing?”

He didn’t ask it of me, but of Colis Gordon who happened to be standing closest to the swing. Colis looked at me and I shrugged, and he said, “Sure.”

So they swung each other for a while in the swing, and when they left, the girl said to Colis, “Thank you, little boy... and here is a free pass to our show tonight.”

And it was MY swing; where’s the justice?

Dad had his office in the house. I remember the signs: DOCTOR IS AT SUPPER—PLEASE TAKE A SEAT. DOCTOR IS AT DINNER... DOCTOR IS AT BREAKFAST... People came mostly at meal times, they frankly said, because they were more sure of finding him home. Otherwise he’d probably be out on call somewhere, town or country. In those days I think you could truly say that doctors were dedicated healers. They certainly didn’t go into it for the money. An office visit was \$.50. A house visit was \$1.50. A house visit at night was \$2.00. You’d think, with that extra half dollar facing them, people would try to get sick in the day time. But no. Many were the occasions I got up at night to hitch old Bonny to the buggy for a house visit in the country. The obstetrical fee in the County Medical Society rate of charges for 1904 was \$10. Raised later I think to \$20. That included pre and post natal care, as well as delivery. The Johnson family lived high off the hog in those days because Dad often got paid in country hams and bacons, head cheese, tender—loins, sometimes a whole side of pork. Also chickens, ducks, eggs, garden and orchard products. And once a hive of bees.

How natural and almost casual the business of being born seemed then. Hardly anyone thought of going to a hospital. Most of the occasions were in the home, with everybody pitching in to help. I have one of Dad’s old day-books. There

are references like: “Born to John and Mary Doe... girl 6 ½ lbs... 4:15 A.M.... \$5.00 on account. There might be two of those listings on the same night. In all, I guess Dad delivered around 12 to 15 hundred Divernon babies.

One of the warming experiences to me is when I come back to Divernon to something like a high school alumni occasion, and people I haven’t seen for 40 or 50 years come up and say, “Don’t you know me? I’m so-and-so. Your father brought me into this world.”

The coal mine in Divernon cast its dark shadow—as well as it’s bi-monthly greenbacks—over the town. Old timers will remember the sound we always dreaded, and were always braced for: the “death whistle”, or the “black whistle”, as some called it. A special whistle blast they blew when someone was killed in the mine. As I recall it happened several times a year. Everybody would quit work and come on top, and they didn’t go back until the miners’ union had the funeral, with everybody slow-marching to the graveyard. In some ways it was a little like war to work in that coal mine—or any coal mine. Bosses or miners, nobody knew when they went down, if they would be picking up their life-check at the end of the shift to toss in the bucket before getting on the cage to go up again. The Kentucky mines were even worse; they didn’t have a union to enforce observance of even a semblance of the safety regulations.

And then there were all those accidents that stopped somewhere short of being fatal. These flowed through Dad’s office, or Dr. Mathews’, and in later years, Dr. Wright’s. Sometimes I helped. I can remember Dad sending me on the jump to the kitchen to get Mom’s flour sifter. He’d put some gauze in the bottom of it, and then while he was cutting and sewing, doing what he had to do under the circumstances I’d hear his calm voice, “Pour a little more in, boy.” And I’d trickle a little ether or chloroform, I forget which, into the gauze at the bottom of the flour sifter.

Usually I got so sick I had to go outdoors and put my head between my knees. Those were rugged days. Now you pay quite a few hundred dollars extra for an anesthetist, don’t you? You got it free with me. That wouldn’t be legal now. I suppose it was then? And anyhow everything always turned out all right, and nobody sued us.

Something to remember was Divernon on a payday. As much as \$70,000 was paid out sometimes. I think I’m right about that figure. And in cash. I know I’m right about that, because that’s how I got it, and I remember Malan Cauliflower sitting up high above the bank’s tellers with a loaded shotgun across his knees. He never had to use it.

The streets, the stores and saloons were crowded with miners. And with beggars and drifters of all kinds who came down from Springfield. At night there’d be a big public dance in one of the lodge halls. Card games day and night in the saloons, and crap games down the tracks and sometimes in the park.

The only times that were more exciting were when the Redman or the Modern Woodmen of the World put on a celebration and brought a big carnival in. The carnival would set up in the streets around the square, often overflowing into the park. All those ding-aling rides and honk-a-tonk shows, and fast food stands and pitchball and wheel-spin concessions—terrific! I can still re—member the good smell of greasy, paper-thin hamburgers, and the merry-go-round music, and the bell that bonged if you hit something hard enough with the mallet to shove the marker to the top. You won a very bad cigar if that happened. And “the cane you ring is the cane you get.” And the motordome and the western dancehall gals... I really don't think they have carnivals like that any more.

We usually had a balloon ascension to top it all off. I don't know anything more dramatic in the way of entertainment thrills. They dug a big hole in the ground in the park, and built a big fire in it. They put in something to make lots of smoke, and put the mouth of the balloon over the hole. Slowly she filled. It took most of the afternoon, I seem to remember, for that big flabby brown canvass bag to swell out and be ready to go up. Then, about 20 men who had been holding it down, let go the ropes, and the man in black tights would run along the ground holding on to his trapeze. The balloon lifted him off his feet and he performed tricks on the trapeze while he was going up. High in the air he cut loose and came down in a parachute. The big balloon turned slowly on its side, belching smoke, and slugged on down somewhere. One time the balloon man, hanging to his parachute, came down in a cherry tree in Ross Boblitt's yard next to ours.

A carnival specialty that Divernon—and only Divernon—had, was Alf Coles' jumping dog. Mr. Coles trained a little fox terrier to jump off of higher and higher ladders. Alf and his sons would fasten the sections of ladders together, and peg the long guywires into the ground to hold the ladder almost straight up in the air. While the band played, and people's necks creaked back, Alf Coles' dog would climb the blue-painted ladder to a platform high on top. Then he'd jump off into a square of canvass held by a bunch of men on the ground. I mean it was a long jump. You could hardly see the little dog up there, he was so high. He seemed to like to do this. But I was never quite sure about that.

There was always a band concert too—all afternoon and at night. And every Saturday night that it didn't rain in the summer and fall we had a band concert in the park, with the church ladies selling ice cream cones. Flash: my grandmother, Albertina Johnson, piling the ice cream high in a cone for me, and one of the other cone-fillers behind the counter giving her a certain tight-lipped appraising look. It must have made Grandma feel a little guilty about special treatment to her grandson, because I remember her saying defensively, “It's hard to get five cents worth of ice cream in one of these little cones.” And her dour-faced co-worker replying, “Well, you're not supposed to put five cents worth in 'em. The cone's a penny, and you put four cents of ice cream in. That makes the five cents.”

Incidentally, I think our concerts were something pretty special, Joe Sindler was the band leader, and he was a crack musician and director. At least, that's what I heard the grown-up say. A band was a band to me. And incidentally again, the Squires brothers put together a good dance orchestra. We did a lot of dancing in those days. After automobiles came in we rammed around the dirt roads to dances in towns all over the county. I specially remember an open-platform dance in Auburn—Irving's park I think they called it. These weren't bored-faced acrobatic dances either; these were soul-and-body satisfying cheek-to-cheek dances.

Let's see... when I get on the subject of my favorite town, I get to wandering. Back to my father—and maybe what the old timers remember best about him is his automobile. Dad had the first automobile in town: a 1905 model, 2-cylinder, iron wheel, wooden dashboard Autocar Runabout. (My mother, who had no love for machinery, paid Virgil Boblitt ten dollars to get the old thing out of the barn after its day had passed.) But has its day passed? The last I heard it was exhibited at the Illinois State Fair in all its refurbished glory. It is probably the only one of its kind in existence and I suppose graces somebody's antique collection—a jewel now of great price.

Anyhow, the Autocar arrived in Divernon in a boxcar that was shunted off on the grain elevator sidetrack. Most of the people and dogs in town were there to see it rolled down an improvised ramp. And I guess nearly everybody in town took a turn at cranking it while Dad stood reading the instruction book (which I still have) that told how to run it. Dad fiddled with switches and levers and finally got the thing started on magneto. It banged like a string of six-inch firecrackers going off. Blue smoke bloomed out behind it; and people, dogs, and chickens scattered—also horses; especially horses, some of them along with their buggies—as Dad took off with the steering lever in one hand, and in his other hand the book that told how to run it.

The town has never been quite the same since. (Well, the country hasn't either, has it?) Other automobiles followed along in Divernon. Mr. Wells, President of the First National Bank of Divernon, got the second one, I think, and it seems to me it was Overland, a two-seater with the crank on the side, and a steering wheel instead of a steering handle.

WELCOME TO OUR TOWN—KEEP CUTOUT CLOSED
SPEED LIMIT 10 MI. PER HR.

That was the sign that went up on every dirt road coming into town. Progress was coming fast. The young fellows in town began buying up cars that people had purchased new and then had second thoughts about. They'd strip these cars to the chassis and make big-hood, open-seat racing cars out of them. Ben Herlan and Howard Wells were a couple of the first to do this. Roaring down the dusty roads with the cutout open, and a tree-high cloud of dust and gasoline fumes behind them, they were something to admire or swear at, largely depending on how old you were, and whether or not you were contesting their right-of-way with a horse and buggy. I drove to Detroit some years later with Paul Zatyko in one of them. We made it, but I'm not sure everybody else on the road did.

Tires were a real hoo-doo. They cost more than they do now and in the early days on the 28-mile trip to Litchfield we always allowed for two punctures or blow-outs, and we weren't surprised if we had more. We patched the tires on the road and pumped them up by hand.

Gasoline was another thing. The White Rose gasoline truck came around and delivered the gasoline to your door. We kept it in a tank back of the barn. When we drew some off to put in the Autocar's copper gasoline tank, we had to strain the water out of it through a chamois skin. There was supposed to be some explosion hazard as the result of a static spark when you did this... but it never happened. And you had to get that water out some way.

Mr. Nicholson was the first to have an automobile garage in Divernon. He was followed quickly by Virgil Boblitt and Earl Ford who set up across the street in what had been the Shively and Neeson Livery Stable.

Dad's license plate was a little two-inch disk of aluminum, which was rare stuff in those days. I still have it—#2448, which is how many cars there were in Illinois in July that year. By the time I was 12 I was running the Autocar. We had a lot of adventures in it. Among the more memorable were those run-of-the-mill occasions when we raced other cars for a bridge. The bridges weren't wide enough for two cars to pass on them. It was a matter of sporting honor to be the one to cross first. You'd see a car coming at you from the other side of the bridge. You'd race as fast as you could to beat him to it. He'd race to beat you. It was kind of like the modern game of chicken. The one to scare first, jammed on his brakes and stopped in an ignominious cloud of dust, and the winner jounced triumphantly across. Dad was most often the winner. However conservative and careful he was in other ways, in the Autocar he was King of the Road. The brakes didn't work too well on those old cars, so that race to the bridge was doubly exciting. You sometimes ended up in the creek. We never did, but I saw a few that did. Also there was most always a three to six inch difference in the level of the wooden bridge platform and the road where the dirt had worn away. As we bore down on this hazard Dad would holler, "Hold tight... bump ahead!" You'd brace yourself, and let it happen. It would jar you, teeth and bones.

On a straightaway it was not only a question of honor to stay ahead of all other cars; it was almost a question of survival because the car behind had to eat dust. That dust was inches thick on the roads in summer, and most of it went into the air behind a fast moving car. You couldn't see anything; you drove by blind reckoning. I have several times ended up in a grassy ditch.

One last remembrance: my sister, Marion, sailed right out of the open-sided Autocar one time into roadside weeds as Dad took a corner a little fast.

Dad used the Autocar for country calls in good weather. For muddy weather and snow, we still used Bonny and the buggy. Also at night, because the carbide lamps didn't work too well. Illinois gumbo mud in the days before "hard roads" were

something almost unbelievable. Thick black glue. Outside the cobbled-street cities there were practically no paved roads anywhere in America. Once when I rode with Dad on a country call we reached the old covered bridge on Brush Creek just as the rain started coming down hard. We had to walk out and leave the car. It was two days before the mud firmed up enough so that we could navigate on the road. And the wagon ruts by that time were like canyons. This business of "hard roads" was one of the main reasons people gave when they said "an automobile will never be anything more than a rich man's toy." They said, "You have to have hard roads for anything except fair weather, and can you imagine building a brick or cement road clear across the country from one ocean to the other? It'd bust the government—and one end of the road would be all busted up before the other end could get built." Well, we've bust the government all right, but we can't put all the blame on the hard roads for that. The sad, colossal blunder of that bridge we tried to build to Viet Nam has got to be responsible for some of it.

Back to my father: another milestone in his life besides the first automobile, was when he was elected President of the School Board on the occasion of the building of Divernon High School. The town celebrated that night, honoring everybody who was elected to anything, and I remember that Dad, when he became surprisingly aware that the friendly mob was descending on him, sent me scurrying up town to buy a box of cigars to pass around.

Dad was big on tennis. He couldn't play much himself because he had a bad leg, a relic of infantile paralysis which he had when a child. But the game greatly interested him. Tennis was practically unheard of in middle-west small towns. A lot of people thought of it as a "rich man's indulgence". But he somehow pressured it through the school board and when the high school was built, it was with two tennis courts attached, a dirt court and a grass court. Dad was ahead of his time in a lot of ways. Tennis at the high school never did catch on importantly, but it survived at the farm of Fred Brown southwest of town where we'd hike out for games with Fred and Grace. I remember Fred and Grace with incredible fondness. Fred would come to town with that twinkle in his eyes, and the little pipe he smoked upside down. It drew better that way, he claimed. He was scout master for a while, and his troop ranged through his big hay barn having corn-cob fights. And afterwards watermelon or ice cream or something under the maples around the tennis court.

Fred was one of the most relaxed people I ever knew. He ran that farm; he didn't let it run him. If there was something better to do than work, he did it. And somehow the farm got tended to in proper manner also. He was the only farmer who ever paid me a man's wages for a man's work. It was \$5.00 a day shocking wheat in those days. Boys got \$4.00. I'll never forget a farmer who dropped in at Dad's office one day to pay me for some work I'd done. I wasn't home and he gave the money to my Dad.

"Your kid's a good worker, Doc," he said. "I'd have to a man \$5.00 for the work he did."

The deepest swimming pool in Brush Creek was in one of Fred Brown's pastures, out by the graveyard. That swimming pool was something! The gathering place for every boy in town. In the dog-days of summer we'd draw lots to see who was first to dive off the swinging footbridge. To break the green scum on the surface of the water. We swam in the water, and "chewed beef" on the banks—and tried to keep from stepping on the vicious locust thorns which abounded. I got one of them in my foot that three months later Dad took out of my ankle. That swimming hole brought boys of all ages together. There were a few years difference between my brother and me, but that was one thing Warren and I could share. Especially after the time, as a small child, he crawled up on the back axle of the buggy and rode there to the swimming hole without me knowing it, after I tried to sneak away from him.

Brush Creek was something to remember in flood. It spread out in places like a lake, and sometimes came clear down the street to our house. We could embark in the creek near the graveyard and float all the way down past the town to the covered bridge. You had to be careful not to get degutted going over the barbwire fences that were strung across the creek here and there.

In the winter the creek was a winding two-mile skating rink. The creek isn't used much any more is it? Catfish, suckers and perch were there for anyone's taking. Mrs. Frank Monroe took the most, I think. Her long bamboo pole held a fish-catching magic that no one else could equal.

And now we come to the bad part. Old timers will remember when that terrible flu epidemic hit the United States. Around 1918. Spanish influenza I think they called it. I remember it well because I was working the wheat harvest in North Dakota that year, and I came down through Fargo and Minneapolis on the way home to find everybody wearing gauze masks on their faces in the vain hope that this would protect them from the foreign virus. It was scary. Nobody really knew what to do about it, and half a million people died from it in the United States; and in the world, I read in the encyclopedia, 20 million.

Well... Dad and Dr. Mathews and Dr. Wright worked day and night, nursing everybody in Divernon through the flu menace the best they could; and after everybody was either cured or dead, after it was all over, then Dad got it.

He never really recovered. I remember a bitter day when I happened to be the only one home, and Dad was lying in bed, waxen faced, and more dead than alive. He said to me, "Go down to my office and get a book—it was a certain medical book—and read what it says about a treatment that a German doctor is reported to have used on a patient whose symptoms seem to me similar to mine." Words to that effect he said in his very weak voice. The treatment the doctor had prescribed was an enormous dose of powdered acetylsalicylic acid. In other words, aspirin. I read Dad the amount it said.

"Double the recipe, he said.

With more apprehension that I had ever felt about anything, I did as he told me. I doubled the recipe and brought it to him. He washed it down. Whether it helped or not, I will never know. But there was a dramatic turn in his condition. He didn't die. But he never really recovered either. His last years were plagued with enciffilitus, or sleeping sickness, as they called it then. Maybe they still do. His motor coordination progressively failed him, and he didn't in every way relate to what was going on around him. The people of Divernon who had known him in his robust years were kind and understanding... and, well; Dad died.

Mom, who had sided him all through these years, now emerged as a very positive personality. Her family was growing up, and she had more time. She had always kept her hand in at news—paper writing. She wrote for years for I. S. Dunn's Divernon News, and later for Ted when he had the paper. And she was Divernon correspondent for Springfield papers. Occasionally she sold a piece on birds or gardens to a national magazine. Mom was a pioneer anti-pollutionist and conservationist. And she liked birds and flowers.

During her life she dug up from woods and meadows a sample of about every kind of wild plant and bush that grows in Illinois. She had an incomparable Illinois garden. The big yard on the hill was a regular wild-plant arboretum. She even had ginseng and golden seal growing. She was always moving old things to make room for new ones. She certainly had a magic touch. I never could understand it. She would just yank things up and stick them down somewhere else and stamp around them, and they'd take firm root and grow. They knew she liked them I guess; don't they say today that plants know these things?

Dogs that trampled Mom's gardens were the bane of her life. She couldn't throw hard or straight enough to make much of an impression on invading dogs, so one time I made her a slingshot and went down the railroad track and got her a bucket of small stones. The first and only time she ever used the slingshot she stretched it out the wrong way and when she let go of it, she shot herself in the eye and broke her glasses. Technology just wasn't Mom's thing; like I said, she was a birds and flowers woman.

After she got her glasses fixed she read in a magazine about something called Dogs Off. You sprayed it on the dogs. It didn't hurt them, but it had a terrible smell and was supposed to make them go away and never come back. Mom sent for some of the stuff and put it in a big fly-spray pump gun. One day when an annoying fly was buzzing around in the house, Mom grabbed up the fly-spray gadget, forgetting it wasn't Flit in there, and chased the fly around the house spraying it with Dogs Off. I think it might have worked on the dogs all right. It certainly worked with us. For several days we all wanted to go away and never come back.

All those wild plants, shrubs, and berry trees that bloomed so lavishly in our yard had the additional value of attracting birds. Mom put out feeding stations and bird baths, and we had wild birds hopping and flitting around summer and winter. I will never forget the sight of six cardinals against an early spring snow. Bluebirds, orioles, grossbeaks, cat birds, mocking birds, blue buntings—name them; Mom had them.

The birds and the bees. Mom had the birds. Dad had the bees. I do need to mention about the bees. Dad started with two hives which I think he got from Mr. Coberly. At the end we had about 30 hives, because Dad sent to Italy for some very fertile queens. The bees would keep swarming and make more hives. Mom never liked the bees and she was always braced for an irate phone call that often went something like this, “All right, Doc, come and get your goddamn bees. They’re swarming all over my front porch and stinging my kids.”

So I would go with Dad, taking a new empty hive in the wheelbarrow. We’d wheel the wheelbarrow under a tree limb where the bees had swarmed in a bunch, and I’d climb up and shake them down. The ones that didn’t fall into the hive, Dad would scrape in with a big goose feather. So then we’d have another hive of bees. I made most of my money when I was a kid, selling honey around town at \$.20 a box. I remember once before Christmas Mrs. Soloy bought 8 boxes. My biggest sale of all time.

Dad was a firm believer that his kids should learn early the value of a dime, and that you never got anything for nothing, and that you had to work hard for a living. He contrived all kinds of schemes to keep us busy, and to “give us a sense of family identification and responsibility.” We had chickens that I, and later my brother, Warren, had to take care of. Warren also had rabbits. The chickens were always flying over the fence and up into trees and all over town, like the bees. They also laid their eggs all over town—when they laid any. I figure it cost Dad about \$.15 cents per egg to keep those chickens. The chickens started eating the bees, and that’s when we switched to rabbits.

We didn’t just do yard work. We worked inside as well. A penny a day. Adelaide washed, I wiped, and Marion who was too little then to handle breakables, wiped the cooking pots. On Saturdays we scrubbed rooms—a nickle a room. So we always had plenty of money for penny candy. Don’t think we didn’t know who among all the town’s candy-store clerks, dished out candy with the most generous hand. We’d watch outside the store windows for the proper person to appear behind the glass candy case. Mary Martin and pearl Able were high in our esteem.

Back to Mom. A very special interest of hers was the Divernon Federated Women’s Club. She was a charter member I believe, and remained active in it throughout her life. Birds, flowers, and conservation in general were her interests. If there is one word that sums up my mother better than any other, maybe it is beauty. Beauty was her life. Energy and determination rate high too. She had a never-flagging zeal to succeed in anything she attempted. She got involved in a project, and single-purposed, she bulldozed it through. She was scared to death to

talk in public, but she forced herself to do it, and as State Conservation Committee chairman for the Women’s Club, traveled all over the state making speeches in the interest of conservation and the preservation of the natural beauty of Illinois. Almost lone handed, she conducted a pioneer project against billboards along the highways. And she was once involved with planting holly-hocks along the half mile strip of road between route 66 and the town limits. It presented an inviting turn-off for people roaring along the new cement road between St. Louis and Chicago.

Another avid interest of Mom’s was the establishment of a Divernon Public Library. I have always thought that her veneration of the written word must have rubbed off on me somewhat and helped determine my going into the freelance writing business as a way to make a living. She worked constantly with “us kids” to “improve our English” and give us a sense of appreciation for good literature. We got more books for Christmas than we did toys.

I double-crossed Mom, I guess, for the first ten years of my writing life by writing nothing but western cowboy stories and hard-boiled mystery novels. But though she was baffled and to certain extent apologetic about the kind of things that I wrote in those days, she stayed with me. She was proud that I could write anything at all and get it printed. “Exposure” was important to Mom. She wanted us to “make our mark”, and She’d go the limit to see that anything we did, got aired in the public prints. But though she promoted my writing valiantly, I remember how pleased she was when a book of mine with the title, *Naked in the Streets*, sold for a French edition. (The book was very mild according to today’s standards, but I have to admit it was a bit far out for those times.) But now in a French edition she could leave the book on the parlor table for all to see and admire—and nobody could read it.

This business of promoting the best in anybody extended beyond her family. I don’t think she ever wrote anything to hurt anybody, and if she embellished things a little, making cool-aid sound like champagne, and bargain store party dresses like Paris fashions, what’s the harm? The way she wrote made people feel good.

Although I always thought that Mom’s feet were virtuously on God’s good ground more than her head was in God’s heaven, she was always a church person, and she involved herself more in church activities as the years went on. At first we all went to the Baptist Church because Dad had been reared a Baptist and there was no church of Mom’s faith in town, the Christian church. Dad loyally defended the Baptist Church against all others, but I don’t recall that he ever stepped inside it except at Christmas celebrations to see his children go through their paces.

He was a little more involved with the Masons. He was 32nd degree Mason. Mom joined the women’s branch of the Masons one time, the Rebecas, but on attending her first meeting she was assigned to bake a cake to bring to the next

meeting. She said she didn't even like to bake cakes for her own family, and she wasn't going to start baking for the public. I don't mean she told them that. She told us. And she never went back.

This is a good place to give Grandma Johnson her due. Grandma was very very much a church person. She lived with us. It was "her" room upstairs over the office. She'd sit in the window, quilting or sewing or reading the Sunday School lessons, looking up from time to time to watch us kids playing and shrieking in the yard below. Once in a while she'd lean out and shout at me, "Bossy Johnson, Bossy Johnson," when I must have been leaning too hard on the other kids.

Grandma had a cactus plant that inhabited the window with her. Each time it was about to flower, it fell out of the window and had to start all over again. Grandma never gave up on it.

Regarding church—she went to Sunday school and church on Sunday mornings, and to church at the night service, and to prayer meetings on Wednesday. She was big with the Ladies Aid and the Missionary Society. Her absorption with the "world to come" had some effect on all of us. I always somehow thought it was her fault that I could never go to ball games on Sunday, or even go swimming. About all I could do was play Bible Boys and read the Sunday school papers. (I could tell when the Divernon team was winning the ball game, because on those Sundays I could hear them cheering more at the ball park.)

Mom switched to the Presbyterian Church after Dad died, because she said most of her closest friends were there, and it was a little more like the Christian Church of her early faith.

Increasingly through the years she became more involved with community affairs. In the beginning Mom didn't like living in Divernon. She was a romantic, and yearned for a place with more glamour. But she came to identify herself with the town, and to love it above all others. Mom was very much a grassroots person. She spent little time in theorizing or wondering about things outside her immediate reach. But anything she could reach, she left her imprint on it. She structured things to her liking, and rarely looked beyond her structure.

She and Dad were both dyed-in-the-wool Republicans. Mom campaigned vigorously for Bill Beynon, that good and gentle man, when he ran for Sheriff of Sangamon County. We all did, though I was far from a Republican.

Does anyone remember those exciting occasions in Beynon's Opera House after the moving picture show on the night of national elections when they flashed the telegraphed reports on the screen? I was a slide marker-upper in one election. I'd get the reports hot from the boy who ran them over from the railroad station where they had clicked in on the telegraph keys. I'd ink the reports on slides and flash them to the popcorn and peanut eating audience. Like "17 precincts in Cleveland give 26,000 votes to Wilson..." This went on all night, or as long as anyone wanted to stay to watch. We

didn't have computers then to tell us the results practically before the poles closed. The suspense was dragged out more interestingly in the old way. We were a couple of days sometimes in finding out the answers.

In her later years when Mom was so intensely involved with Divernon community problems, I wasn't home much; some of you will know more about that phase of her life than I do. I know she was active in engineering a deal to put trees in the village park.

When I came home we never talked about politics or religion or anything socially important. Not on the big scene. Our views on social issues were at such cross-purposes that by a kind of unspoken agreement we kept it cool and talked about birds and flowers, and Divernon and books and old times. During the Great Depression Dad, like so many, was clubbed with the loss of all his savings and investments. I worked in the coal mine for a couple of years to get the money to add to what Dad could put up to complete my education. Those coal mine years gave me my first close-up look at the system's inhumanity to man. And about that time I had the rare good fortune to hear Gene Debbs talk in the miner's union hall in Auburn. And I discovered Bernard Shaw and Bertrand Russell. I moved on from there, and Mom stayed where she was. She could never understand why I had deserted "the faith of my fathers", and I soon found it was hopeless to try and explain. So like I said, we kept it on an incident and personal level.

Mom was a do-er. She like to move around and see things and do things and make contacts with people. We took quite a lot of auto trips over the country. She was fun to be with because she was so avidly interested in everything she could touch and hear and see. After she was 90 and half blind and stiffened painfully with arthritis, she flew out alone to visit Lois and Jennifer (my wife and daughter) and me in Hawaii where we lived for a short time. She thrilled to every minute of it.

She became increasingly blind until she couldn't read. That was a cruel blow, but she rallied and consoled herself with Listening Library "books" (records) that the State so thoughtfully provides for the blind. Her mind was sharp and clear to the end when she died at 93.

This wouldn't be complete if I didn't say something about Mom's "needle painting". She started out making bird pictures with applique and embroidery. She moved more and more into straight embroidery, and she was so intent upon getting her birds and the flower-and-leaf backgrounds lifelike, that she couldn't find enough silk thread of the precise colors. Lois dyed her innumerable shadings of threads of all colors. Mom completed I don't know how many, maybe 100, of her bird needle paintings, remarkable works of art I think, that her children will cherish and hand down through the generations.

Wrapping it up, I feel impelled to touch a few more specifics about our town, and one of them is trains. The importance that the railroad had in our lives. If you went more than 20 miles you almost always took a train. The locals, or accomidation trains, as they were called, went through Divernon morning and evening, carrying passengers from Clinton to East St.

Louis. The express trains didn't stop unless the station master flagged them. At night when no one was on duty at the depot, you had to do it yourself. It was an awesome thing when I was a child to see my father standing in the middle of the track when the train with its big headlamp was bearing down on him. At just the right second he'd light a piece of newspaper, wrapped cone-shape, and wave the flame in the darkness. If the engineer saw it, he blew the whistle and Dad got off the track in time to keep from being run over. And the long train slowed down with a squeeling of brake-shoes on the wheels, and stopped in a cloud of dust and cinders and smoke and steam.

Freight trains came whistling through at all hours, and the locals every day deposited small mountains of wooden boxes and jute bags on the station platform. And those freight trains served another purpose. I have always thought that for inland boys they substituted for boats and vessels. Boys on the coast took to sea for travel and adventure. Inland, we took to the trains. That highball whistle of those long trundling manifest freight trains as they rolled through town. Coming from somewhere. Going somewhere. Somewhere, but where? A lot of us swung aboard to find out. Days and weeks when the mine wasn't working, a lot of Divernon boys "grabbed a handful of boxcars," and started riding. Anywhere. Everywhere.

I'd hear them talking downtown when I was a young boy. Magic words: bulls, dicks, yards, jungles, hoppers, shacks, gondolas, catwalks, tops and blinds, boxcars—always boxcars and the names of far places. They put the smell of train smoke in your nose, and the whistle in your ears. So one day I went... One time down near St. Louis I climbed onto the blinds of a passenger train, and two other train hoppers got out of the ditch and swung on from the other side. They turned out to be a couple of hometown boys, Bud McGinley and Joe Fleizer.

My first long trip was to New Orleans. Dad and Mom didn't understand the urge, but they arose to the occasion in real style. Mom sewed me some special pockets in an overall jacket, with buttoned-down flaps, and Dad drove me down to the water tank south of town where I caught the night manifest... It was as good as I'd always thought it would be, and I didn't stop until I'd logged about 20,000 miles on freights and the tops and blinds of passenger trains. My last trip was in the tailing-off years of depressions, when people, men and women, were riding trains, not for the thrills, but to get somewhere and find a job. I had my degree from the University of Illinois, and I worked two weeks in Beynon's drug store, and then, with a stake of \$10 in my shoe, I rode the top of the Empire Express to New York City "to seek my fortune."

New York, too, was as good as I'd always thought it would be, and I stayed 20 years. I found my wife there and perfected my trade. But I can't forget the way Divernon was in the old days.

Dusting off another Divernon item or two: the ball park—the land donated, I think, by Dave Hair. The team I remember best was Phelps Furnishers. Jess Phelps supplied the gray uniforms from his haberdashery store on the north side of the square. And Jess played catch. The Young brothers, Dave and Herb, were star players—until Herb was killed in the mine. Somebody

must have a full list of the players on this team. For special games we'd import, and pay good money for a special pitcher. I seem to remember one named Bennet. Whatever town hired Bennet was practically assured of winning the ball game. Once we played a traveling woman's ball team: the Arkansaw Bloomer Girls.

Speaking of traveling women: a troupe of dancers played once for a week in Springfield: the Blue Chorus. The girls all had their hair dyed a bright blue. Sensational at first, but they circulated around town and by the end of the week, a blue-haired girl sipping a soda in a drug store seemed quite usual.

Those Hungarian wedding celebrations in Divernon! You danced and feasted for a couple days and nights I seem to remember. And there was a nice feature about the grapes. Grapevines were strung overhead with bunches of real grapes hanging from them. While the violins played and you danced, you could reach up with your hands or mouth and eat as many grapes as you wanted. But if the genial grape cops saw you, you had to chip in to the kitty.

The Divernon streets and sidewalks: saloon tax money build the sidewalks, they said. The sidewalk contractor was Mr. Martin. Those cement sidewalks really made us feel like a city. Before that, we had cinder walks, and before that, board walks. We didn't get any oil to lay the thick dust on the roads, and smooth out the ruts and chuck holes until some years later. As far as I know, Stricky Terescus was the first oil road casualty. He and his motorcycle went down in a pool of it on the north side of the square. Stricky brought another first to Divernon: He was the first to graduate from the Divernon ball team and play big league ball.

The tent shows that came to Divernon: chitaqua (I know I haven't spelled that right, and I can't find it in the dictionary) brought culture in the form of lectures, music, and genteel entertainment. The evangelists brought old-time religion. The tents of the evangelist set up in the various church yards or in the public square. Very dramatic, very emotional, and suspenseful to see who was going to feel the compulsion to "go down front" in response to the evangelists' exhortations. I remember that the gist of one fiery sermon was directed at my sister, Adelaide, who had been seen riding home from school sitting on the fender of Len Ford's automobile. The horrible excesses of the youth of the land! Adelaide came home after an interview with the evangelist much impressed that he had affirmed she was a leader of Divernon youth and, so, must at all times be circumspect in her conduct.

My younger sister, Marion, spent the rest of the summer looking for automobile fenders to ride on. The teachers I remember: Miss Schnider in high school who was the first to start me questioning about things, a delightfully wise and sensitive person. "Examine what you think. Maybe it's all right. Maybe you want to change. Are you sure? How can you be sure?" Before Miss Schnider alerted me to the infinite varieties of viewpoint, I'd always thought that whatever I thought had to be right... Mr. Huff, High School principal, a true scholar who later joined the English teaching staff at the University of Illinois...

Ethel Forsythe, and Miss Debershire (who married Willy Clow) warm and humanly understanding, who made me see that teachers are people... and Zeralda Davis, my second grade teacher, whom I passionately loved. So many many others...

Carl Dunn. He could throw a rock clear over the schoolhouse. We'd go around and see it come down on the other side. It never hit anybody.

Foddy Sabo. He could make a high dive with a lighted cigarette in his mouth, and come up with the cigarette still between his lips, lit and smoking.

Dan Griffith, with his shiny billyclub and back-up gun in his holster. He kept the law in Divernon.

Julius Nagy who had one of Divernon's most impressive store buildings constructed. His store and saloon downstairs, and the famous dance hall above, where once in a while someone went over the top-stairs railing.

Who else? So many. I know I haven't given proper consideration to the farmers around town for whom Divernon was a shopping center, grain shipping point; and for some, a retirement home. The farmers would come to town with black mud heavy on their felt-lined boots. And healthy tanned necks and faces, so in contrast with the white faces of those who worked "below".

Farming was so different then, before the days of the combines. Wheat threshing days are something I'll never forget. Pitching those bundles and loading the wagons so they wouldn't fall off. The steam driven thrashing machine was like a railway locomotive bumbling around off the tracks. And those big farmhouse dinners—man! ...A lot of different stuff was planted then: timothy and red clover, and later alfalfa. And wheat and oats in place of today's soy beans.

Anybody interested in my mother's lifelong diet? Starch, sugar, and fried stuff. In these years of health food stores and vitamins, it interest me to realize she lived to be 93 and practically never ate anything in her life that wasn't fried in lard. I was grown before I knew there was any other kind of steak except chicken-fried. With mashed potatoes drowned in crackling milk gravy. And apple pie for dessert. I can say without prejudice that Mom made the best apple pie in the Mississippi Valley. Thick, juicy, spicy, and sweet, with thick, crisp crust. How about that? She used Jonathons when she would get them.

Just remembered something from away back. Dewey Grant and his fine Spencerian hand-writing. We all used to get Dewey to write our names for us on a piece of tablet paper. I've still got mine around somewhere.

And bare feet. Except for a few cold months in winter when there was snow on the ground, nearly everybody under 14, and some over 14 went bare footed. Around our part of town you could pretty well tell how late in the summer it was by how much it hurt when you stepped on a honey bee. As the season wore on, your feet got so tough that a honey bee sting—you could hardly feel it. Now there's all this hassel about bare feet in public places. Why?

Who was the Divernon barber who played a banjo? That goes a long way back, too. When he wasn't cutting hair he'd sit outside in a chair tilted against his window, playing his banjo. I remember I wanted to be a barber when I grew up, so I could play a banjo.

Who remembers when Blondy Cook came to town? The first time I saw him he was up on top of somebody's house a little south of Covi's store, trying to keep it from burning down. People were handing up buckets of water from ladders on all sides, and Blondy, choking smoke, was balanced on the ridgepole, sloshing water at the flames coming through the roof. Blondy married Alice Backovich and stayed in town to run Blondy's Tavern all through the Depression. His daughter, Vi, inherited it. She still runs it today, with her mother, and if you want to catch a wisp and flavor of the harmony that wrapped old Divernon, look in there some time. You'll tune to vibes like you wouldn't believe, with three or four generations mingling. More like dropping into your next door neighbor's warm and friendly home.

Each of us would have dusted off different things in the old Divernon scene. Even if I'd written this a week before or a week after, I'm sure I would have had some different inclusions. This is only a quick doctor's son's eye-view from a very long way off. We need a farmer's eye-view, and a miner's eye-view. Maybe a merchant's eye-view, certainly we need a woman's eye-view. Then we'd have a really rounded-out picture. Any takers?

Now that I've gone this far I think I've built up enough momentum to get going again on a whole book about Divernon that I started 20 years ago and put aside in the interest of writing something for quick eating-money. If anybody has strong ideas of what ought to be in a book like that, let me know. And everybody—have a good life.

After numerous letters, phone calls, personal requests in the Divernon News we regret that more Divernon area histories were not forthcoming. To those our humble apology who submitted after publication commenced.

We would like to thank the families that submitted histories and photos to aid in the publication of this book.

Thomas R. Beynon, Diamond-Jubilee History Book Chairman

Leonard Emerson, Publisher

Emerson Press
Divernon, IL 62530