

The Butler Banner

Newsletter of the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies

Volume 14, Number 3

Summer 2012

Butler Center Events

2nd Friday Art Night

5 to 8 p.m.

Arkansas Studies Institute
401 President Clinton Ave.

Friday, August 10, 2012

Hope and Despair: Farm Service
Administration Photography
in Arkansas during the Great
Depression

Friday, September 14, 2012

Art of Living: More Artwork
from the Rosalie Santine Gould
Rohwer Collection

Friday, October 12, 2012

Arkansas League of Artists

Legacies & Lunch

Noon to 1 p.m.

Darragh Center, Main Library
100 Rock St.

Wednesday, September 5, 2012

In conjunction with the Arkansas
Sounds Music Festival, Little
Rock musician Kevin Kerby will
discuss his career on the local
and national music scene.

Arkansas Sounds

September 28 and 29, 2012

Arkansas Sounds Music Festival,
featuring Arkansas music and
musicians

Finding Family Facts

A monthly genealogy course

Aug. 13; Sept. 10; Oct. 8

3:30 to 5 p.m.

Room 204

401 President Clinton Ave.

This free class takes place the
second Monday of every month.



BUTLER CENTER
FOR ARKANSAS STUDIES

Visit www.butlercenter.org
for more information.

Sterling Cockrill Collection Available

Sterling Cockrill, a direct descendant of Arkansas pioneer Chester Ashley, was active in Arkansas politics during an important transitional time, and his political career was marked by the struggles that brought about that transition.

The Sterling Cockrill Collection, now available in the Research Room at the Arkansas Studies Institute (ASI) building, contains scrapbooks and other material from the time of Cockrill's first election to the Arkansas House of Representatives in 1957 through his failed 1970 campaign for lieutenant governor. This collection provides a comprehensive picture of this transformative period in Arkansas's political history.

As a Democrat in the Arkansas House of Representatives in the 1960s, Cockrill often found himself at odds with the Old Guard Faubus-era party leadership. He frequently supported the efforts of Republican governor Winthrop Rockefeller against the leaders of his own party. When asked by the Republicans to switch parties and run for lieutenant governor alongside Rockefeller in 1970, Cockrill was ready for the change. He and Rockefeller, however, had not counted on the presence in the election of a new kind

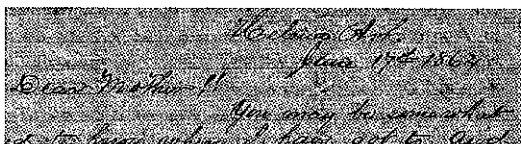


Sterling Cockrill

of Democrat in the person of a young lawyer from Charleston named Dale Bumpers.

Sterling Cockrill Jr. was born April 7, 1925, in Little Rock. He served in the U.S. Navy during the closing days of World War II and again dur-

Cont. on page 2



Civil War Letters Collection Open

When the Civil War broke out in 1861, sixteen-year-old Henry T. Phillips of Unionville, in Appanoose County, Iowa, was too young for the army. Three years later, however, when the governor of Iowa called for 10,000 men to serve in support areas for the Union, Phillips enlisted in the 47th Iowa Infantry.

In April 1864, Iowa joined four other states in providing men to serve in support areas, so that more of the experienced troops could participate in the fighting. In making this offer, the governors of Iowa, Wisconsin,

Illinois, Indiana, and New Jersey hoped to hasten the end of the war. The 47th Iowa Infantry was one of five Iowa units recruited as "100 day men."

The Henry Phillips Civil War Letters Collection, now available in the Research Room at the Arkansas Studies Institute (ASI) building, contains letters written by Phillips to his family during his 100 days with the 47th. He began writing upon his arrival at Camp McClellan near Davenport, Iowa, and wrote frequently during his travels down the Mississippi and his months of

Cont. on page 3

From Sterling Cockrill, page 1

ing the Korean War. Between these periods of military service, Cockrill completed a degree in business from the University of Arkansas and joined his father's insurance agency in Little Rock. Cockrill married Adrienne Storey in 1945, and they have two daughters.

The highlight of Cockrill's service in the Arkansas House of Representatives was his election as speaker of the house for 1967–68. After he lost the 1970 lieutenant governor's election, Cockrill accepted a position in the Little Rock office of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, where he worked

until 1978. He subsequently served as the executive director of organizations involved in the revitalization of downtown Little Rock.

Cockrill retired in 1990. He remains active in the art community of Little Rock.

The scrapbooks that form the core of this collection include newspaper clippings, documents, and memorabilia covering Cockrill's service in the Arkansas House of Representatives and his run for lieutenant governor. Items that were loose in the scrapbooks were removed and processed as individual documents. The contents of the document folders in box 1, therefore, are generally represen-

tative of the content of the scrapbooks.

The collection also contains a small number of photographs, as well as Cockrill's copies of the *Arkansas Legislative Daily Digest* for each legislative session from 1957 to 1969. Each volume of the *Digest* contains related documents, as well as Cockrill's notations. Of particular interest in the collection is a two-volume scrapbook with political ads and published results of the 1970 election, covering each county of the state.

The Butler Center's Sterling Cockrill Collection can be viewed in the Research Room at the ASI. The finding aid can be accessed online at www.butlercenter.org. ■

Butler Center Books to Publish New Charles Portis Collection in October

It has been more than twenty years since fans of Charles Portis (author of the classic American novel *True Grit* and other works of comic fiction) have held a new Portis book in their hands. But Portis devotees will soon get that chance. Butler Center Books will publish *Escape Velocity: A Charles Portis Miscellany* in October.

The book, a collection of Portis's non-fiction, short stories, memoir, and drama, spans his career, from the early journalism of the 1950s when he worked for several newspapers up to more recent magazine stories published in the *Atlantic* and *Oxford American*. Known as a master of deadpan humor, Portis has seen *True Grit* made into two award-winning films (in 1969, starring John Wayne, and in 2010, directed by the Coen brothers) and his four other novels become cult favorites. *Escape Velocity* will bring together almost everything that Portis has written outside the novels, both never-before-published work as well as hard-to-find stories that fans have known about for years and that will delight new readers.

Escape Velocity is edited and introduced by Jay Jennings, a journalist and humorist who, like Portis, is a Little Rock resident. A former reporter for *Sports Illustrated* and frequent contributor to the *New York Times Book Review*, Jennings is the author of *Carry the Rock: Race, Football, and the Soul of an American City* (Rodale Press in 2010), a book about

the football team at Little Rock's famed Central High School, fifty years after the desegregation crisis in Little Rock.

One previously unpublished work is included in the collection: a comic three-act play, *Delray's New Moon*, which is set in Arkansas at a hotel and café off the interstate. The play follows some elderly residents being forced out so the place can be turned into a night club. The play was produced by the Arkansas Repertory Theatre in 1996, but it has never appeared in print.

Also new to most readers will be the wide selection of Portis's journalism, including a striking section of his reporting on the civil rights movement for the *New York Herald Tribune*. He covered many major events in the summer of 1963: protests in Birmingham, the assassination of civil rights leader Medgar Evers in Mississippi, and Alabama governor George Wallace's stand to prevent admission of African American students at the University of Alabama. Other newspaper stories include Portis's coverage of the funeral of Elvis Presley's mother, humorous columns written for the *Arkansas Gazette*, and a *Herald Tribune* story about his comic attempt to quit smoking by spending a week in a rehabilitation facility.

Portis's travel pieces for national and regional magazines will be gathered in *Escape Velocity*, along with four previously published short stories. In addition,

the book will feature his only memoir, "Combinations of Jacksons"; a rare interview (with former *New York Times* journalist Roy Reed); and appreciation pieces by Roy Blount Jr., Wells Tower, Donna Tartt, Ed Park, and Ron Rosenbaum—who considers Portis to be America's "least-known great novelist."

About the author

Portis was born in El Dorado (Union County) in 1933. His family later settled in Hamburg (Ashley County). In the early 1950s, he served in the Korean War with the Marine Corps. He graduated from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville in 1958.

After starting his journalism career at the *Commercial Appeal* in Memphis, Portis worked for the *Arkansas Gazette* in Little Rock for almost two years, writing among other things the "Our Town" column, a standard feature of the paper for several decades. After leaving the *Gazette*, Portis got a job at the *New York Herald Tribune*, where he spent four years, the last as London bureau chief. Among his colleagues there were Tom Wolfe, Lewis Lapham, and Art Buchwald, all of whom would become well-known authors.

In 1964, he left the *Herald Tribune* and returned to Arkansas to write fiction. His first novel, *Norwood*, was published in 1966. His next novel, *True Grit*, was serialized in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1968, published as a book the same year, and made into a movie the next year. Veteran actor John Wayne won an Oscar for his portrayal of U.S. marshal Rooster Cogburn. Also appearing in the

Cont. on page 3

A Word from the Center

David Stricklin, Head of the Butler Center



As you can see on pages 5 and 6, we're getting lined up for our first Arkansas Sounds Music Festival, which is creating a lot of excitement.

Music festival coordinator John Miller has done a great job getting bands in place. We are getting a great response from people who want to volunteer. We'll have a fun and varied set of things going on. It's going to be a wonderful event celebrating Arkansas music—past and present. One thing we're going to do is pay tribute to two great Arkansas musicians, Michael Burks and Levon Helm, who both died this year. This year's festival will also present rock 'n' roll pioneers Sonny Burgess and the Legendary Pacers as well as Sleepy LaBeef, along with Black Oak Arkansas and up-and-coming performers Lucero, Velvet Kente, Bonnie Montgomery, and many others. And everything's free because, as I often say, it's CALS. We're the public library!

September 28 and 29 will be the official dates of the Arkansas Sounds Mu-

sic Festival, but the festival brand, you might say, will be rolled out during a series of events throughout the month of September. We are partnering with radio station 103.7 The Buzz to present Big Downtown Thursdays, an early-evening musical event that will attract people getting off work in downtown Little Rock. We also will have events every day of the last week of September, leading up to the festival. In fact, Arkansas Sounds will be the organizational umbrella for events around the state at various times of the year, not just the weekend of the festival in Little Rock. More about that in days to come.

We will have music for kids, sessions for aspiring songwriters, a talk by internationally prominent music journalist Greil Marcus (courtesy of CALS's Arkansas Literary Festival), filmmaker Richard Matson screening and talking about his groundbreaking documentary *Towncraft* on the 1980s punk rock scene in Little Rock, and a bunch of other things.

Arkansas Sounds has a strong social media profile, including a Facebook page and its own website: www.arkansasounds.org. So, check it out, and plan

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Volume 14, Number 3

From Civil War Letters, page 1

service in Helena, Arkansas. His last letter was written when he was back at Davenport and hoping to be home within the week.

Henry Theodore Phillips was born in Indiana in about 1845 and moved to Iowa with his family in 1859. He worked in his father's dry goods store, first in Eddyville and then in Unionville, Iowa. His skills in the mercantile field earned him a position with a commissary in Helena. After he returned home in September 1864, he worked for a short time in a mercantile busi-

ness in Burlington, Iowa. He married Mattie Sawyers in 1869 and returned to work with his father in Unionville. He died on April 15, 1911.

Phillips was an observant man and a thoughtful, articulate writer. His letters contain vivid descriptions of Davenport and the army camps near it, and of the town and military post at Helena. He wrote about his work in the commissary and the advantages it provided him, including more comfortable living conditions and more food than others in his company had. He gave news of people from home who were also in Helena,

writing especially about the illness experienced by so many soldiers.

This collection includes thirty-two letters, thirty of them from Phillips to his family. Also included is a letter written to Phillips from one of his fellow soldiers, and a letter written from David Sawyers, stationed in Little Rock, to his sister Mattie Sawyers, who later became Phillips's wife.

The Henry Phillips Civil War Letters Collection can be viewed in the Research Room at the ASI. The finding aid can be accessed online at www.butlercenter.org.

From Portis Collection, page 2

film was Portis's fellow Arkansan, singer Glen Campbell, who is from Delight (Pike County). *True Grit* was reprised in 2010 by film directors Joel and Ethan Coen. Their version of the film gave new life to the book and helped it reach the top of the *New York Times* national best-

seller list. Portis is also author of the novels *The Dog of the South*, *Masters of Atlantis*, and *Gringos*. All of his novels are available from Overlook Press.

Portis, a long-time resident of Little Rock, received the *Oxford American's* first Lifetime Achievement in Southern Literature award in 2010.

The official release date for *Escape Velocity: A Charles Portis Miscellany*, edited by Jay Jennings, is October 1. The book will be available from local, national, and online booksellers. It may also be ordered through the distributor, the University of Arkansas Press (www.uapress.com; 800-626-0090).

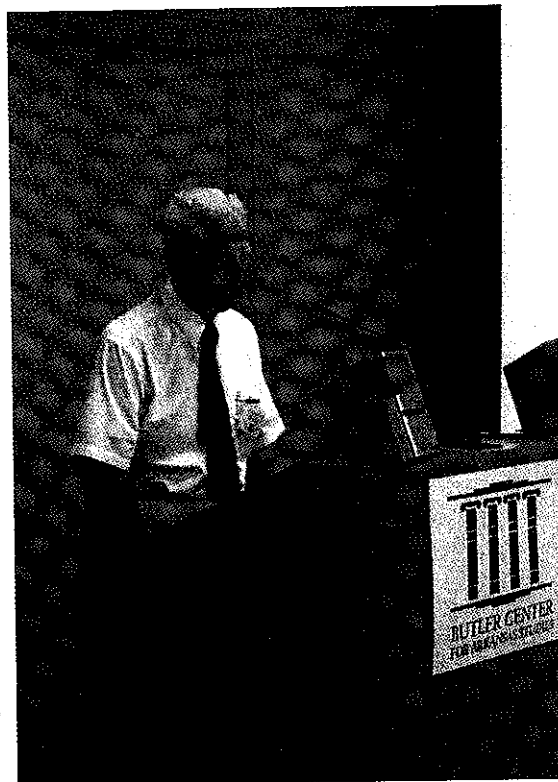
2012 Genealogy

The 2012 Genealogy Workshop was a huge success! Featuring Jim Edgar and Lisa McKinney, the workshop covered the 1940 census, how to write family history, working with gravestones, and much more. Thank you to everyone who attended—we'll see you next year!



Rhonda Stewart, our local history and genealogy specialist, has been hosting the annual workshop for years. She's instrumental in crafting the program, choosing our speakers, and getting great giveaways for the crowd (the best part!).

Jim Edgar, with Little Rock's Latter-day Saints Center, discussed what is available through FamilySearch.org (a new Butler Center resource that can be accessed in the Research Room).

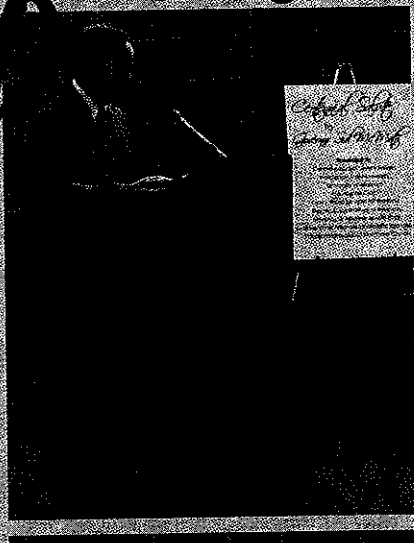


... Butler Center Events in the Spotlight

flash



Ruth Hawkins, guest speaker at the July Legacies & Lunch lecture, signs copies of her book, *Unbelievable Happiness and Final Sorrow: The Hemingway-Pfeiffer Marriage* (UA Press).

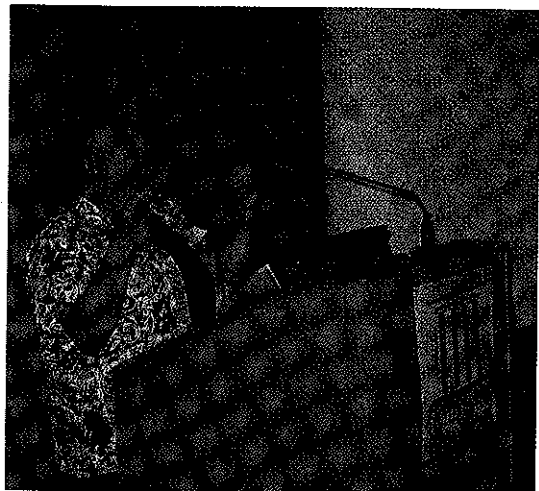


David Stricklin, head of the Butler Center, addresses a crowd at the Governor Sid McMath Centennial celebration at the library's McMath branch.



Artist Marlene Gremillion works on a watercolor painting in the Butler Center Galleries. Gremillion is one of more than sixty Arkansas artists the Butler Center represents in our Retail Gallery.

Workshop



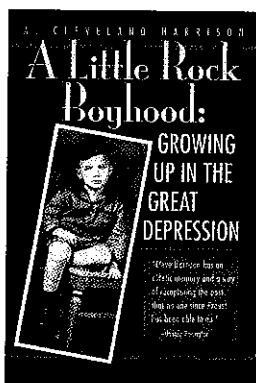
Lisa McKinney, our main speaker for the conference, discussed several topics including understanding sources, guidelines of genealogy, the "new" 1940 census, and starting genealogy research with a gravestone.



We had the most attendees ever this year. Thanks to everyone who came out!

Author Remembered

In 2010, Butler Center Books had the pleasure of publishing A. Cleveland Harrison's memoir, *A Little Rock Boyhood: Growing Up in the Great Depression*. Dr. Harrison—a World War



II veteran who taught theater for forty-five years (retiring from Auburn University in 1991)—died on June 16, 2012, at the age of eighty-seven. Although he grew up in the bustling city of

Little Rock during the Depression, he was born in the small farming town of McRae (White County). He included this quote in his richly detailed memoir, which seems appropriate in honoring his contributions to Arkansas history: "Deciding to remember, and what to remember, is how we decide who we are" (Robert Pinsky, "Poetry and the American Memory").

The Butler Center for Arkansas Studies
Presents the first
Arkansas Sounds Music Festival
September 28 & 29, 2012



Featuring
Sleepy LaBeef
Sonny Burgess & the
Legendary Pacers
Lucero
Black Oak Arkansas
And Many More!

Arkansas Sounds events will be held at the Riverfest Amphitheatre, Rivermarket Pavilions, and the Main Library campus in downtown Little Rock.

Find us on Facebook or www.ArkansasSounds.org

The Butler Center for Arkansas Studies is a department of the Central Arkansas Library System



THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARKANSAS HISTORY & CULTURE

WANTED: Arkansas Music!!!

The Encyclopedia of Arkansas is planning a foray into print by publishing an Arkansas music encyclopedia, using EOA entries and media, to coincide with the 2013 *Arkansas Sounds Music Festival*. But we need your help to make it complete! We are seeking the following entries and media.

Entries Needing Media (photographs, etc.):

Luther Allison
Cate Brothers Band
E.M. Bartlett
Sarah Caldwell
Carolina Cotton
Ronnie Gene Dunn
Fred Calvin Marshall
Patsy Montana

Moondog
Robert Nighthawk
Walter Norris

Opera in the Ozarks

Charlie Rich
Frank "Son" Seals
Roosevelt "The Honeydripper" Sykes
Johnnie Harrison Taylor
Sister Rosetta Tharp

Howlin' Wolf

If you have pictures or other media, please contact Mike Keckhaver at mkeckhaver@encyclopediaofarkansas.net

Entries Needing Authors (by musical genre):

Bluegrass:

Bluegrass overview

Blues:

Melvin Endsley
Floyd Jones

Snub Mosley
Washboard Sam

Classical/Opera:

Classical overview
Opera overview
Nola Locke Arndt
John S. Hilliard

Jeff Hitt

Buryl Red

Thomas Stacy

Country:

Country overview
Barbara Fairchild
Kye Fleming
Wayland Holyfield
Morrison Twin Bros.

Folk:

Kelly Race

Gospel:

Gospel overview
Smokie Norful

Jazz:

Jazz overview
Junie Cobb

Rock:

Tommy Aldridge
Mike Saunders

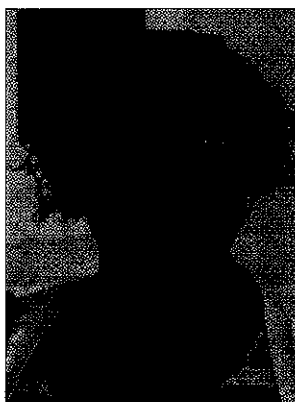
Misc.:

Rogerline Johnson
O. C. Smith
Elton and Betty White
Joseph Jackson
Harry Fritzius
Alvin Bennett

If you would like to write one of these entries, please contact Guy Lancaster at glancaster@encyclopediaofarkansas.net



The Butler Center would like to welcome three new employees, Tonya Eatmon, John Miller, and Fiona Dudley. Our new administrative assistant, Tonya Eatmon, said, "I wanted to work at CALS because the library gives the community opportunities." Fiona Dudley, our new Retail Gallery page, is a recent UALR graduate who has always dabbled in art as a hobby and enjoys working with locally based artists. The Butler Center also recently hired John Miller to be the Arkansas Sounds Music Festival coordinator. A native of Little Rock, Miller is a twenty-year veteran of the music industry. As the lead singer



Tonya Eatmon



John Miller



Fiona Dudley

of the Big John Miller Band, Miller has spent the past seventeen years recording, touring, and performing music throughout the South.

"The Hardships of W. C. Hall": A Civil War Diary

Wesley Clark Hall kept a diary throughout his service in the Civil War and for a brief time following the war. In 1907, he transcribed and edited his wartime diary. While Hall's diary entries are brief and factual, the title he gave to it speaks to the experience behind his few words. He called it "The Hardships of W. C. Hall in the War of 1861-1865."

This diary, along with Hall's transcription and related documents, is now available to researchers in the Research Room of the Arkansas Studies Institute (ASI) building. The materials provide a remarkable view of the day-to-day life of one soldier through three and a half years of service in the Trans-Mississippi.

Wesley Clark Hall was born in Greene County, Missouri, on March 16, 1836, the youngest of thirteen children. He trained as a carriage maker and was working in Fulton, Missouri, when the Civil War broke out.

On September 4, 1861, Hall and his friend, R. C. Stephenson, left to join Sterling Price's Missouri State Guard. They were sworn in for service of a period of six months. Price's unit later transitioned into the regular Confederate army; Hall was assigned to Company A of the 9th Missouri Infantry, CSA.

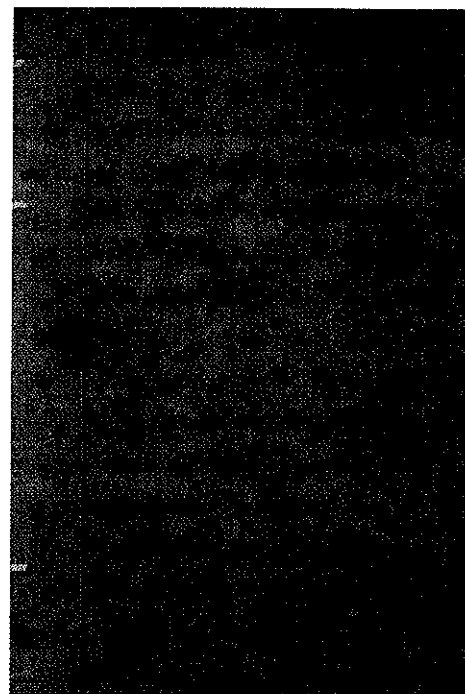
Hall was most often attached to the

quartermaster as a wagon maker and carpenter. He mentions the various battles and skirmishes that his unit encountered, but it does not appear that he participated directly in them.

Hall writes of his work, his health problems, the food the soldiers had to eat (or did not have at some points), and the foraging it took to obtain that food. He writes about the long marches through often difficult weather, forays that took the men from southern Missouri into Arkansas, back and forth across southern Arkansas, into Louisiana, and finally into Texas.

Throughout April and May of 1865, Hall and his company heard news of the surrender of Confederate units east of the Mississippi. Their own last days with the army were spent working in a timber operation on the Trinity River near Halls Bluff, Texas. The soldiers' period of service officially ended on May 18, and Hall wrote, "Myself and all of the hands got [furloughs] to go to the [country]. That was all the discharge we ever got." While others in the unit followed General Price into Mexico, Hall and a few companions started for home.

Hall initially went to the farm of his brother, Thomas Hall. He worked for his brother until August of 1866, when he returned to his home in Missouri. Hall mar-



Sample of Hall's diary entries

ried Mary C. Holt in 1868. He worked as a wagon maker and later as a farmer. He died on July 5, 1924.

The Butler Center's Wesley Clark Hall Collection, MSS 12-20, contains the original diary kept by Wesley C. Hall, with entries beginning September 4, 1861, the day he left home. The last entry is August 10, 1866, when he returned home. The collection also includes the 1907 copy Hall made of the diary, along with additional supporting documents. The collection can be viewed in the Research Room at the ASI. The finding aid can be accessed online at www.butler-center.org.

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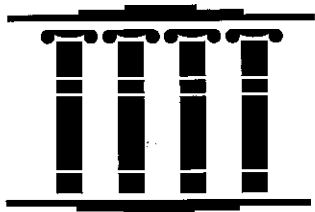
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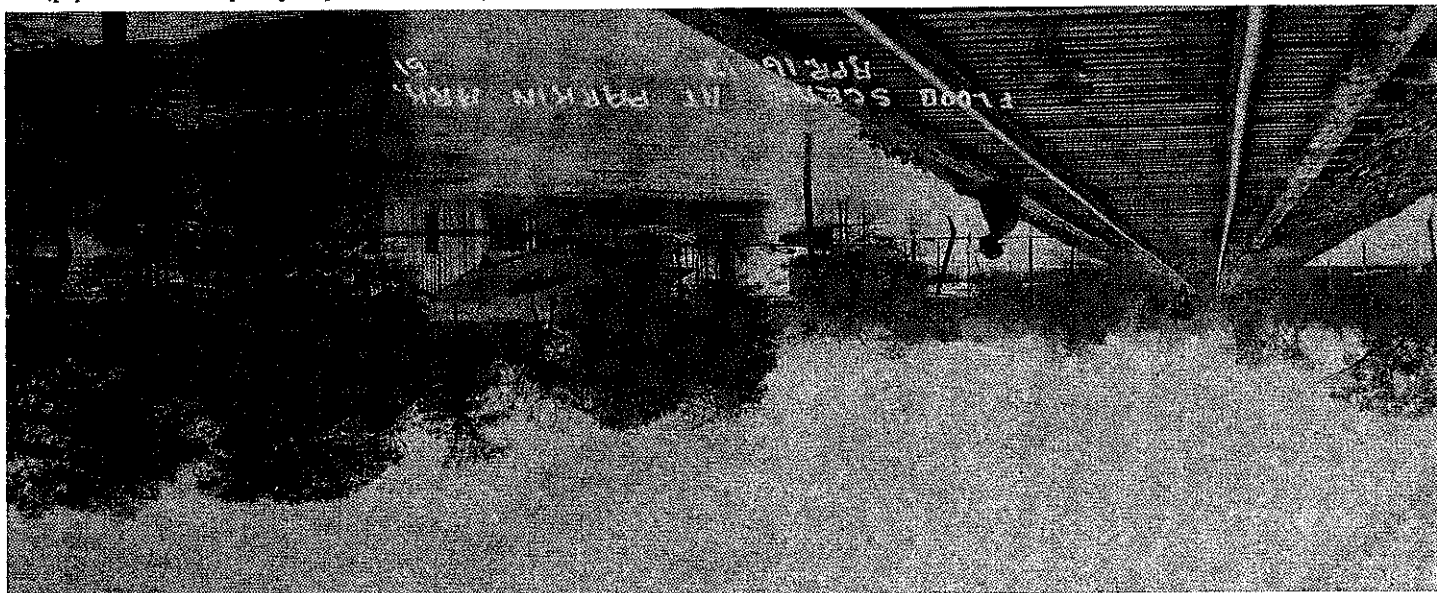
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Flood scene at Parkin, April 16, 1912. Throughout the first thirty years of the twentieth century, Parkin faced many natural disasters that would cause its residents to rebuild and start over. The St. Francis River on the west side and the Mississippi River less than forty miles to the east of Parkin caused this town to be located in the center of devastation for four major floods in the early twentieth century. In 1912, for example, the St. Francis River and Mississippi River levees broke, causing four to thirty feet of water to inundate Parkin. Residents fled to government tent camps located on Crowley's Ridge and to live with families in other locations. The 1912 flood was the shallowest when compared to the subsequent devastating floods. In 1928, a tornado ripped through the town, scattering lumber from the Northern Ohio Coopersage Lumber Company, once again causing a large portion of the town to be rebuilt. The Great Depression and the droughts of this time also took a major toll on Parkin, and it took years for the town to completely recover from all of these disasters.



Images from Our Collection