

## VALUABLE RELICS FOUND IN CORNERSTONE OF HIGH SCHOOL

Mt. Pulaski, Ill., Dec. 6, 1911—George Snyder and Frank Field, the young men who took the contract to tear down the walls of the Mt. Pulaski high school building that was destroyed by fire on the night of Oct. 28, Tuesday removed the cornerstone that was placed there on Sept. 4, 1877, thirty-four years ago.

The copper box inside of it was taken in charge by Charles Schmitz, secretary of the board of education, and opened, and was found to contain many valuable relics. Among them were several copies of the Chicago Inter-Ocean, Chicago Times, Chicago Tribune, Springfield State Journal, Lincoln Herald, Logan County Volksblatt, Capp's Annual Journal, gotten out here by Jabez Capps & Sons, owners of the Capps Nursery, and the Mt. Pulaski Citizen, edited by P. J. Conklin, now a banker of Wichita, Kan. The latter paper contained a programme of the laying of the cornerstone with Masonic honors, preceded by a parade, in which Mt. Pulaski commandery, two local I.O.O.F. lodges, Knights of Pythias, village officials and school children took part. Other interesting objects were a Bible and badge, deposited by the late S. Linn Beidler, a paper giving the names of the president, trustees and clerk at that time, the marriage certificates of William Derby and Miss Adelaide Simms, George Sawyer and Miss Phoebe Hubbard and Dr. W. S. Mendenhall and Miss Anna Capps, deposited by the officiating minister, the Rev. L. M. Robinson, now an aged and retired preacher of this city.

### Contents of the Box

At that time the town had a population of 1,200 people and seven churches. 57 architects submitted plans for the building, the contract going to N. C. Terrell of Kankakee. The brick for the building were made here in the south part of town by a Springfield firm, which sent several gangs of men here to work in the brick yard. It also contained the school books used in the schools here at this time and numerous business and other cards. Of all the business firms represented that of C. F. Schafer, the hardware man, is the only one in existence today. Miss Maude Capps, now Mrs. W. H. Stafford, and daughter of Jabez Capps, the founder of the town of Mt. Pulaski, was the only scholar to deposit her card. Miss Jennie Gore of Mechanicsburg was the only other miss to deposit her card.

### Stamps Found in Box

Our present mayor, John W. Seyfer, then postmaster, deposited stamps from one to fifteen cents in denomination. He was also a member of the village trustees at the time, as was the late W. A. Schafer, Dr. J. N. Pummelly, S. C. Bean, C. J. Hurt, and John Krieg, while Charles S. Capps was the clerk, all of these names, along with that of Uriah Snyder, the village president, were on a paper in the copper receptacle. Mayor Seyfer

is the only living representative of the board at that time. He also served at one time nine years as secretary of the school board, and never missed a meeting. Some joker had also deposited a meal ticket, "good for one meal." In coin of the realm there was 72 cents, and one photograph, that of Henry Mayer, long since dead.

### Contents in Good Condition

Everything in the box was in perfect order and the school books were as new, and fresh as though deposited there yesterday. Everything will be turned over to the school board, which will have charge of their disposal. It is presumed that some of the things will be placed in the corner stone of the new building when it is built next summer. The building was first class in every particular, and cost \$22,000, and one like it would cost twice that today. The contractor lost money on the job. The members of the board of education at the time were Dr. Cass, G. C. Huck, and John M. Tomlinson, the latter being the only one alive and still an active farmer of this community. Their names were carved on the corner stone.

## VETERANS IN ARKANSAS RECALL SERVICE UNDER 'TEDDY' ROOSEVELT

### One Of These Vets Former Resident, Robert P. Seyfer

Robert Paranteau Seyfer, was born in Mount Pulaski, Ill., 87 years ago, the son of Jacob and Katie Paranteau Seyfer. He graduated from the old Mt. Pulaski high school in the Class of 1891, and learned telegraphy in the Illinois Central Station. Following his profession in several cities and towns about the midwest he located at Fort Smith, Ark. and for a long period of time has been a well known and respected citizen there.

A veteran of the Spanish-American War in 1898, he has been an interesting subject for writers to tell of that war, and the many experiences.

Lucy Thomas, writing for the Southwest American, Fort Smith, Ark., under date of Monday, June 22, 1959, tells the following story about Robert P. Seyfer and a couple of his old friends:

### Looking Back 61 Years

"A button made from metal of the Battleship Maine, a 60-year-old blanket and mess kit, a silver medal from the Cuban government, are proud memories of patriotism. And the leaping death rate among their comrades.

These were some of the thoughts of several Fort Smith United Spanish War Veterans, the second oldest living veterans—there is one Civil War vet still living in Texas.

Robert P. Seyfer, Sr., 87, of 1200 N. 33 St., proudly wears the silver medal from the Cuban government every Memorial Day.

The button belongs to George H. Wright, 80, of 1116 N. 37th St.

## NEW BUS LINE SERVICE TO START

(Feb. 6, 1942)

Transportation facilities for this community and other towns along the Springfield - Clinton hard road will be greatly improved starting Feb. 7, 1942, with the operation of a new bus line over the route.

The Black Hawk Bus Lines will inaugurate bus service between Petersburg and Champaign via Mt. Pulaski, Chestnut, Kenney and Clinton; and Petersburg to Springfield via Mount Pulaski, Lake Fork, Cornland, Buffalo Hart, Barclay, Spaulding and Bissell.

Good connections will be made at Champaign for Chanutte Field, Danville, Indianapolis and Eastern points. At Springfield for Jacksonville, Alton, St. Louis and all Western points.

## NEW GROCERY STORE TO OPEN SATURDAY

(Nov. 17, 1938)

The Zimmerman and Horn Happy Hour grocery store will be open for business on Saturday of this week in the new building just south of the Myers Bros. clothing store on South Washington Street. Frederick Zimmermann and John Horn are the proprietors.



ROBERT P. SEYFER

America's war with Spain began in April, 1898, after the Battleship Maine was sunk in Havana Harbor, Cuba. Two hundred and sixty-six died aboard ship.

The blanket—it's still good—was issued to John J. A. Collins, 75, of 525 Melrose St., one of the younger volunteers, when he signed up with the Arkansas troop.

John O. Scott, of 1809 N. "I" St., owns the mess kit.

Seyfer, who organized both Spanish war veteran camps in Fort Smith, was "in the trenches 17 days" in Santiago de Cuba, and was brigaded with Col. Theodore Roosevelt. He was in Cuba during most of the fighting—June, July, August, and part of September, 1898.

Seyfer said he knew Roosevelt well enough to be called by his first name. "When I married he

wrote me a note of congratulations," Seyfer recalled. He described Roosevelt as the kind of man "who did not care whether you were a private or a general. He treated everyone alike. Roosevelt was a fine man. I was proud to have served under him."

Seyfer also claims among his souvenirs a Spanish battle cross he picked up on the battlefield at Santiago after that major battle. He said it had apparently been lost by one of the Spaniards.

His silver medal and citation was presented to him by the Cuban government. "The citation is in Spanish," he pointed out as he showed a photostatic copy of the citation and medal.

Collins, who is a former state commander of the veterans' group, was sent to San Francisco after his induction at Little Rock.

"That West Coast fog and dampness sent me to the hospital with rheumatism. I received my discharge from the Army after three months in that hospital, he recounted. Collins explained that he listed his age as 18 instead of 17, when he enlisted.

Wright spent his time in Alabama, where he volunteered, and in Florida. He is also a former Arkansas state commander of the veterans.

Scott also fought in Cuba. He recalled: "I was a fireman on a steamboat on the White River in Arkansas. A recruiter stopped by and asked three of us if we wanted to enlist, and we all did."

Scott said he was sent to Jefferson Barracks, Mo., for training. He then went to Cuba, where he fought in several skirmishes. "I went over after the battle on San Juan Hill and helped with the cleaning up." He was in Cuba nine months. "We had a choice of staying on in Cuba to help with the cleaning up or to go to the Philippines and fight in that insurrection. I stayed in Cuba," he said.

From stories he heard first-hand while there, Scott said that the Maine was being moved from buoy 5 to buoy 6 in the harbor when it touched a mine and blew up.

The hulk of the Maine was protruding out of the water when he arrived at the Island. Scott said he was able to get a close look at it but was unable to touch the battleship. "We weren't allowed to get that close. He described the hulk as looking like an old sawmill." Scott said the Maine was sunk in deep water off the shore of Cuba in 1913.

The veterans, who figured their age average at 85 for the 28 local

members, showed pride in the patriotism of their generation. President William McKinley called for 180,000 volunteers, and more than 400,000 responded within 24 hours," they recalled, and "most of those sent to Cuba were from south of the Mason-Dixon Line".

However, they were quick to add that the war with Spain did more to cement the North and South than anything since the Civil War. "When the Maine was sunk there was no North, no South, no East, no West, but one people," they emphasized.

They explained that the uniform of the Spanish-American War veteran consisted of grey trousers and blue coat. This symbolized the Confederate and the Union Armies, they explained.

"We wore pure wool uniforms and underwear. And don't think it wasn't hot down in those tropics," Scott recalled.

Collins said that in 1925 when the second charter of the United Veterans in Fort Smith, the DeRosey Cabell Camp, was recorded there were 160 members. Today there are only 28. And we have lost all these members through death. None dropped out, he stated.

On a national average, 7,000 veterans are dying each year, he pointed out.

Seyfer organized the first camp the Robert D. Kuhn Camp, in 1916. This was dissolved at the beginning of World War I. After the war he organized the Cabell Camp. Among his treasures is a letter written to him in 1926 by the sister of General DeRosey Cadell, who lived in Charleston and Paris, Ark., for a time.

Mrs. William M. Greenwood, of Paris, Ark., who is dead now, in the letter pointed out that General Cabell was one of the officers who captured and brought in the Indian Chief Geronimo and band; and fought in the war with Spain. The Boxer Rebellion, the Mexican War, the Philippine Insurrection, and in World War I. He was made a Brigadier General by President Wilson.

The Kuhn Camp Charter is on display at the Old Fort museum. Other mementoes there on exhibit include uniforms worn during that war; a piece of submarine cable destroyed by Richmond P. Hobson at Santiago; Kansas City Star accounts of the war; knives, a bayonet, and a Spanish Machete used during that period.

**Tidy Sum:** What you have when you've been cleaned out.

View of High School Following 1911 Fire



## BEST WISHES

From our location here in Mount Pulaski we serve a large portion of the central midwest with hand tools and similar items.

We are indeed proud to be a part of this fine community . . . a town that has many achievements to be proud of.

On this, the 125th Anniversary of the founding of the city, we offer our congratulations and best wishes to the residents of Mount Pulaski.

# Minnesota Tool Co.