

"ALLEN INN" HISTORIC HOME POPULAR PLACE 100 YEARS AGO

(July 10, 1958)

By Paul E. Beidler

The farm formerly known as the J. B. Harrison place, located half way between Mount Pulaski and Chestnut, and north of the IC railroad, is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Carl Stoll. During the past year they built a new home to take the place of the old Harrison House, and tearing it down brings to mind some early day history of the old building, constructed more than a hundred years ago, and known at that time as "The Allen Inn".

William M. Allen was born Aug. 16, 1805, in Morris county, New Jersey, and at the age of 9 years moved with his parents to Knox County, Ohio. He was married there to Miss Jane Lyon on Oct. 20, 1828. They left Ohio in October 1839, for Logan county, Illinois, coming through in wagons which took 18 days. They located northeast of Mount Pulaski, where Mr. Allen bought 100 acres of land for which he paid \$6.00 per acre. He added to this 100 acres by land warrants at 71c per acre; also, 40 acres more, which was purchased at administrator's sale for the sum of \$70. It was on this land that Mr. Allen built his home. His first wife died May 19, 1867. He later married Mrs. Orpha Wright.

Allen Inn Popular

There were just two families in Mount Pulaski when Mr. Allen arrived. In those early days he called his home "The Allen Inn," and many early travelers would stay at his place overnight. There were no railroads here until 1872, and people traveled horseback, in buggies, wagons and other conveyances.

For several years mail was brought from Springfield by carrier on horseback. After arriving in Mount Pulaski with the mail he would ride on out to "The Allen Inn" for the night. The next morning he would proceed about three miles more (to the northeast) to the settlement known as "Yankeeetown". That being the end of his route he would return to Springfield, expecting to arrive there by night fall.

"The Allen Inn" became well-known to many people in central Illinois, and was the stopping place for a great number of people in those pioneer days.

In the 1880's the farm became the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Harrison and family. The school house close by, for years, was known as the Rosedale school. In the Allen school, and one of the pupils then was Miss Meta Clark of Mount Pulaski.

Because "Yankeeetown" was mentioned in this story, the following information is given, since after Chestnut was founded in 1872, Yankeeetown no longer became a growing community.

Village of Chestnut Founded

"Yankeeetown" was a community on the road running west of Chestnut, where homes and small business concerns had been built many years before. The coming of a railroad changed things in that area. The Logan County History of 1878 gave the following information:

"Chestnut is on the Gilman, Clinton & Springfield Railroad, about six miles northeast of Mt. Pulaski. Two attempts to found a town were made here before it was accomplished. The third attempt succeeded. Chestnut was laid out by David W. Clark, on the land of his brother, Isaac Clark, in April 1872.

Lawrence B. Stringer's Logan County History, Vol. 1, says about Chestnut:

"The town of Chestnut was laid out in 1872 by David Ward Clark, administrator for the heirs of Isaac Clark, deceased, in conjunction with the directors of the then newly completed Gilman, Clinton & Springfield Railroad, now the Springfield Division of the Illinois Central Railroad. The land was surveyed April 24 of that year by Thomas G. Gardner, Logan county surveyor. Two years prior thereto a town had been laid out, platted and sur-

veyed on the same section by William B. Allen and S. Linn Beidler, and a post office had been established there under the name of "Allenville", in honor of Mr. Allen.

"On the laying out of Chestnut the town of 'Allenville' was abandoned. Chestnut was named in honor of one of the directors of the Gilman, Clinton and Springfield railroad, he being a Mr. Chestnut. The Britten Bros. erected the first store, having moved the building from Yankeeetown a short distance to the west. Dement & Clark erected the second store."

Editor's Note: David Ward Clark mentioned in the above information, was the grandfather of Miss Meta Clark and Mrs. Edward O. Mayer, of Mount Pulaski.

Fondest Memories

(Continued from preceding page)

Indiana, Kentucky, and some few as far away as Tennessee.

There they were on their own, picking corn by the bushel, and the harder they worked, the larger the nest egg to take back home. As I recall they were given two or three cents a bushel, and as we experienced a slow but steady improvement of the commodity price level, there was a commensurate advancement in the price of shucking, and the price eventually got up to 5c and better. I have forgotten the extreme top.

35 to 40 Teams Helped Move Corn

In the not too distant past, much corn always moved to market in the winter time, roads permitting. Weather reports were watched closely, and in advance of impending cold snaps, the road - and the colder the better. That was corn shelling weather. If you lived 5 or 6 miles from town, and you were considered to be good help, it meant that there would be 35 or 40 teams there to help you move your crop to market. And by the time you repaid all that help, you spent a lot of time on the road. Oftentimes the ground was covered with snow and it was bitter cold. You could hear the steel tires whine for a long ways. Drivers walked to keep warm. It was too cold for handkerchieves and you saw a lot of slick coat sleeves from the elbow down. You know, I take my hat off to those people - they were a hardy breed and have certainly earned a place in your historical document. And, if I might add a personal touch, I spent many days in an elevator driveway when it never got too far above zero. It is only when you ponder this difficult task that you appreciate the impact of the gravel road and the big truck.

Remembers Coal Mine

I presume our greatest source of employment - that is, from an industrial standpoint, was our coal mine. It served our local fuel needs for many years. Inasmuch as the coal was a little soft and free burning it was considered to be an excellent steam coal and mighty good for household purposes, too. When consumed locally, and handling was held to a minimum, it held up very well. But these very qualities that made it desirable for home use were not desirable for shipment, which of course involved additional handling and excessive breakage. Then, too, there was much competition from the larger mines scattered all over central Illinois. Diggings were not too extensive, so it is there for posterity. As I recall it was not a heavy vein—somewhere between 3 or 4 feet. It does have this advantage of not being over 350 feet below the surface. Who knows - it could be the boon of tomorrow?

I must not forget to mention our water system, good schools, and a fine fire department. Oftentimes these things that are of the utmost importance, become commonplace by virtue of the great service they render.

I think this would be a good time to compliment you on your paper. Your weather report is a fine addition. In the 4½ years

STOLL BROS. USED "BREEZY TYPE" TO ADVERTISE CARS

"LITTLE SIX" POPULAR IN EARLY DAYS OF AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY

The popularity of the "Little Six" automobile handled by Stoll Bros., of Mt. Pulaski, increases daily and the number of sales made by this firm within the last month is unprecedented in this territory.

Mrs. John L. Meister is seen almost daily in her "Little Six", with Miss Bertha Zeiman at the wheel. And Chester Hughes, who traded his Ford in on a "Little Six", is very much in evidence, pulling the Mt. Pulaski hills at five miles per hour - he drove his "Little Six" over to the Atlanta Fair one minute and thirty seconds after purchasing it, with practically no instructions whatever, and said the only trouble he had was with his conscience. The roads were dusty and Mr. Hughes said, "he hated awfully to make the other fellow eat so much of it."

From all quarters of the county we hear complimentary remarks about this wonderful "Little Six". Harry Reed, living several miles east of the city, drove his "Little Six" in Mt. Pulaski Sunday and stated that his car was running so far on one gallon of gasoline that he thought he was doing the Standard Oil Co. an injustice. Mr. Reed formerly drove an Oakland.

Stoll Bros. make it a point to keep all cars sold by them "tuned up," and when August Hahn pulled into their garage a few days ago—by the way, he bought the first "Little Six", wise head Gus—the boys wanted to know if she needed tuning, but Mr. Hahn said "nothing doing, she's running sweet as sugar."

Alfred Loetterle, when interviewed about his "Little Six," said his main trouble was with the boys and girls, "who would a riding go," and claimed that it kept him busier making excuses than taking care of his car.

The "Little Six" is extremely flexible, very simple in operation and easily controlled, and being the finest product for the money that can be had, we agree with Elmer Turley when he said, "before long we will have more 'Little Six' automobiles around here than Fords."

Let's all buy one, what do you say? —Adv.

JOHN GRATHWOHL BUYS CAR

Stoll Bros., the well known automobile dealers, sold a fine Jackson car Tuesday, to John Grathwohl, living four miles southeast of the city. It is wine color, and a four-cylinder, five-passenger machine.

that we have been here the paper has been late only a few times. It comes regularly Monday mornings.

Sincerely,
Mike.

CAPT. VANHISE FOUNDED BRICK AND TILE FACTORY IN 1897

Clay Used For Brick In Some Early Buildings

(By Paul E. Beidler)

On land in the southwest corner of Mount Pulaski, over 80 years ago, began what formed and made the Vanhise ponds, the clay being hauled in wagons to the block-long tile and brick factory constructed in 1879 at the end of West Cooke St., across the street north of the old Peoria, Decatur & Evansville Railroad Depot.

At that time there was a great demand, especially for tile in this area. The factory, in season, was an industry good for the growth of the city. The source of the clay soon began to form the ponds as the material was hauled away in wagons, drawn by horses, on a route to the factory, first entering South Spring street, going north two blocks to the main P.D. & E railroad, then following the railroad curve around to Cooke Street to the factory.

The factory continued in operation for many years, and the children of that generation had much fun at the source of the clay, fishing there in summer and

especially at night, when the spot was flood-lighted and had a good bonfire to add to the scene.

Capt. David Vanhise

The younger generation may wonder who Capt. David Vanhise was. He was one of Mount Pulaski's well-known, substantial, and civic-minded citizens. Born Aug. 22, 1822, in Fairfield County, Ohio, he was reared on a farm. In 1856 he came to Mount Pulaski and entered into partnership in the general mercantile business with George Mayer and William W. Martin.

On August 1862, he enlisted as a private in Co. D, 106th Illinois Infantry, but was immediately elected Captain of the Company, commanding it through the movements and preceding and during the siege of Vicksburg, and after the surrender of the stronghold, followed by the guerrilla campaigns in Arkansas, a difficult, dangerous service. In 1865 he was promoted to Major of the 106th.

Upon his discharge he returned to Mount Pulaski and resumed his business association with Mayer and Martin. In 1876, 1877 and 1878 he was engaged in the lumber business, and in 1879 constructed the tile factory, which



SITE OF TILE FACTORY at the west end of West Cooke Street which played an important part in the development of Mount Pulaski. The clay for most of the brick buildings around the square came from the Van Hise pond on the southwest edge of the city.

skating in the winter, as many will remember.

The promoter of the tile factory was Capt. David Vanhise, and he was associated in this venture by Harvey Gordon and William Hagel. Many men were employed.

The site of the ponds, after the factory was dismantled, became a refuge for birds, rabbits, etc. The city took over the ownership of this property, and when the WPA was in active work for the government, the large space of the pond was filled up, and has since been used as a park.

Ice Skating Revived

It is here in this new year of 1961 that during the winter a sizeable place was flooded and many people enjoyed ice skating,

proved to be such a substantial benefit to the community.

Mr. Vanhise was a prominent member of the Mount Pulaski Methodist Church. In Pickaway County, Ohio, on Oct. 17, 1842, he married Catherine Martin, a sister of William W. Martin.

The two-story brick building in which Mr. Vanhise was associated with George Mayer and William W. Martin, is now more than 100 years old, and stands near the middle of the block on the south side of the square and is occupied by Dannenberger's Modern Plumbing and Heating.

The Vanhise home still stands at the corner of Vine and Morgan Sts., across the street south of the Methodist Church Parsonage.

NO ROSE COLORED GLASSES!



MOUNT PULASKIANS have no need for Rose Colored Glasses, for with normal vision they are able to see their city as the growing, progressive place it is.

For the past 42 years we have been keeping the vision of the Mount Pulaski Community at its best with "Lenses from Lenz's".

We pay tribute not only to Mount Pulaski on its 125 years of progress, but also to our father, Oscar Lenz, who founded this business 42 years ago.

LENZ

**DR. Louis W. Lenz
Dr. Herbert F. Lenz**

510 BROADWAY

LINCOLN, ILLINOIS