

**PERSONAL REMINISCENCES AND FRAGMENTS
OF THE EARLY HISTORY OF SPRINGFIELD AND
GREENE COUNTY, MISSOURI: RELATED BY
PIONEERS AND THEIR DESCENDANTS AT OLD
SETTLERS' DINNERS GIVEN AT THE HOME OF
CAPT. MARTIN J. HUBBLE, MARCH 31, 1907,
1908, 1909, 1910, 1911**

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Personal Reminiscences and Fragments of the Early History of Springfield and Greene County, Missouri: Related by Pioneers and Their Descendants at Old Settlers' Dinners Given at the Home of Capt. Martin J. Hubble, March 31, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911 by Martin J. Hubble

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MARTIN J. HUBBLE

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1914
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FOREWORD.

This book would not have been published except for the suggestion of Father J. J. Lilly, after he had read of the first dinner I gave to the old settlers of Springfield. He suggested that my guests were the only persons now living who could tell of the early days as they really were, and of matters and things as they really existed, during the first few years of the settlement of Greene County. Realizing the truth of his statement, I herewith present the recollections of my guests, largely in their own language, which may not attract the hypercritical, but will satisfy all those wanting to know our early history and of early settlers, their integrity, perseverance and forcefulness. There is nothing about the late Civil War or things which occurred during or after it, except as to the death and burial of General Nathaniel Lyon, which is truthfully told by the only man living who knows the facts, Dr. S. H. Melcher, now of Chicago, Illinois.

The first dinner I gave was on the last day of March, 1906, fifty years after my arrival in the city. I sent out invitations written with a goose quill pen on a sheet of foolscap paper, and folded as we used to fold letters before envelopes were invented. They were all sealed with red wafers. The invitations were given to J. M. Kelley, J. E. D. Thompson, A. H. Wilson, Captain John L. Holland, J. L. Carson, Judge J. Y. Fulbright, Hon. L. H. Murray, Dr. E. M. Hendricks, F. M. Shockley, and T. B. Holland. The invitation read:

"On the last day of March, 1856, I rode into Springfield on a red sorrel horse having four white feet and a white nose, a flax mane and tail. The tail touched the ground and his mane reached his knees. I sold him to Hugh T. Hunt, who knew his stock, for \$250. I was twenty years old, and now at the end of fifty years, I want all of the men who lived in the city or county

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES

then, and live in the city now, to take dinner with me on that anniversary.

There will not be many of you, so I urgently ask you to dine with me at my house at 12 o'clock noon next Saturday, the 31st day of March, 1906.

Yours truly,

(Signed) MARTIN J. HUBBLE."

MENU.

Turnip Greens	Hog's Jowl
Corn Bread	Buttermilk
Boiled Custard.	Pound Cake

The thirty-first of March, 1906, was a beautiful, sunshiny day and all of the guests were present. The next day Father Lilly met me on the street and made the suggestion that those assembled at the dinner write the early history of the city and county, and he was added to the list of guests. What occurred at the dinners afterwards will be found in the following pages.

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY SETTLERS.**REV. J. J. LILLY****Toastmaster**

Hon. Chairman and Gentlemen:

Twelve months ago I had the pleasure of meeting our excellent host and urging him to continue the meetings of the Pioneer Citizens of the County and City, as the different papers, prepared and read, depicted the trials, toils and sacrifices they made, also facts placed on record would be of historical interest, and only the sons of the fathers can state these FACTS correctly.

I am pleased to be with you today, to "Sit at the feet of the Elders and Ancients of the People," and listen to the words of wisdom that fall from your lips, hear the history of those days, days of anxiety, peril and hard labor, changing prairie into fertile fields, clearing forests and abundance of harvests.

The sincere friendship that existed between neighbor and neighbor, helping and assisting each other in health, and when sickness came to offer all kindness, and in death, sympathy and condolence. The widow and orphan given help with an open hand.

You taught the children patriotism and the upholding of law and government, moral and divine—in a word, our "American Institutions." You were the incentives to thrift.

All these and more are the sureties of good citizenship. All having passed your "three score years and ten" and some "four score," I know you will join me in thanks to our Heavenly Father for the blessings he has showered upon you, long life, good health, happy surroundings and the hope of many happy days to come in the country and city you have helped to create. For myself I hope your days may be long and pleasant and when the time comes for the "Master's call," you may be ready, and receive the welcome plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

JUDGE J. Y. FULBRIGHT**The Reason Why We Had an Honest Community in the First Settling of This Country.**

The early settlers were mostly from the old hardy stock from Tennessee, Virginia, Kentucky, Pennsylvania and other older states. They came, viewed the country, were well pleased with the climate and topography; hence, determined to make for themselves and families permanent homes.

The next thing was to purify the community and make it a desirable and pleasant community in which to live. And as newcomers moved in, their conduct was carefully scrutinized and if serious objections were found, some of the older men would go to them quietly and inform them that their conduct was such that they preferred that they move on, as there was plenty of other territory elsewhere, and by that means got rid of them without arrests, fines or imprisonments, and probably no one would ever know of it except the parties themselves.

You ask how this could be done? I will illustrate by one or two instances. There was an old man who lived in the west portion of this county, familiarly known as Uncle Davy Reynolds. It was his custom when he came to Springfield to stay one night at my father's house and, as a boy, I had heard him tell of the working of this plan. On one occasion a man moved in and stopped near his place—had four horses to feed—and he, Uncle Davy, soon found that he was not buying corn sufficient to feed those four horses, for the county was sparsely settled and he knew every man who had corn to sell. He watched his crib and found his corn missing. He went to his crib on Saturday, selecting the day on purpose, arranged his corn so that he would know if any was taken, and in the cobs of several ears inserted a slip of paper with his name written on it. Next morning it was gone. On Sunday he visited this man and while there walked out to the lot, and on examining the cobs, found several with his name in them. He suggested to the man that it was a strange incident. Of course the man was confused. Uncle Davy suggested the best way out was for him to move and by the time the sun was an hour high the next morning he was gone.

One other instance—a neighbor of Uncle Davy's—kept missing his meat and suspected a man living on his place, in a cabin with stick and mud chimney, and large loose stones for hearth stones. He walked over, seated himself by the fire with the family, and soon found that one of the stones had been moved recently; suggested that he saw signs of the wood rats bothering them, raised the stone and found his ham of meat. The man soon left the county, never to return.

In this way they eliminated the objectionable element. In after years I spent the day socially with Solomon Owens, the father of Capt. Baker Owens. During the day we talked of the early settling of the county and I spoke of these things and he replied that he, too, had resorted to these measures often to rid the neighborhood of objectionable characters, and that the custom in those days was frequently resorted to by the older and better settlers.

J. R. D. THOMPSON

My father's name was Edward M. Thompson. He came to Springfield from Tennessee in 1829. He had previously lived in Kentucky and moved from there to Tennessee. He was raised in Maryland. After coming here he first settled on the headwaters of the James river at what was known as the Sam'l Caldwell farm. He afterwards moved from that place to the Joe McCraw farm at Cave Spring, which was then generally known as the Eastman farm, six miles from here on the Rock Bridge road. He then moved from there to Kickapoo Prairie, where I now live. He there entered 640 acres of land, on which I was born, and part of which I now own. I was born on the 12th day of July, 1836.

My earliest remembrance of the inhabitants of Springfield is of one DeBruin, who had a store on the corner of College street and the Public Square, where the old court house now stands. The next building was the State Bank, located on the corner of Boonville street and the Public Square. On the northeast corner of Boonville street and the Square, General N. R. Smith operated a hotel. The next house was Jacob Painter's gunsmith shop, located where Reys Dry Goods Store now stands. The next house

was over on the south side of St. Louis street and the corner of the Square, occupied by D. D. Berry's store. The next house was at the southeast corner of the Public Square, owned by Benjamin Andrews, and occupied as a grocery, confectionery and bread store. The next house was at the southeast corner of South street and the Public Square, where Sheppard & Jaggard ran a store. Right across from the latter store was a log house where Braddock Coleman occupied a building as a saloon. The next house was Judge Farmer's store, in which was located the postoffice, at that time, about where the O'Day Book Store now stands. The next house was the Rube Blakey saloon, situated on the west side of the Square, in the southwest corner, being a building about 12 feet by 14 feet square, where the O'Day Clothing Store now stands. There was nothing else on the west side of the Square at that time except the Blakey saloon. These are all the houses on the Public Square when I first came here that I can remember.

My mother's brother, Judge James Dollison, came here with my father. Judge Dollison entered 160 acres of public land, the southwest corner of which was Dollison and Cherry streets. My cousin, Mrs. Sample Orr, inherited one-fourth of that land, and she offered it to me for \$2,000 in 1866. I have since purchased a lot 75 feet by 185 feet cut out of that tract, for which I paid \$1,600, having made the purchase 25 years later.

Junius Campbell and my father and James Blakey owned the only farms then occupied between my house and Springfield on the Kickapoo Prairie. This constituted all the farms there were on Kickapoo Prairie at that time. James Dollison planted the first orchard that was ever planted in Greene County. I can remember when my mother rode over on horseback and brought home apples in her apron from that orchard and we thought that those were the best apples ever grown, for they tasted long and rich.

In those days we went to Cason's Mill, where the James River bridge is now located near Galloway. The Yoakum mill was then in existence, but there was no mill at the Jones Spring at that time. Old Uncle Bennie Bashears at Beaver Gap had a corn cracker, which consisted of two little stones of about a foot or 18 inches across, and those old stones were lying about there in