

History of Greene County, Missouri

1883

R. I. Holcombe, Editing Historian

Chapter 32

North Springfield

Part 1

Origin--A Rival City--First Comers--Hotels--R. R. Shops--Fire--Bank--Opera House--Items and Incidents--Churches--Lodges

The town of North Springfield dates its existence from the completion of the Atlantic and Pacific railroad to the present site of the town, But for the stinginess and selfishness of some of the moneyed men of old Springfield, the busy town of North Springfield, with all of its importance, would never have existed.

As has been stated on other pages of this work, when the railroad was first projected to Springfield, there was no thought that there would ever be another town or city within half a dozen miles of the corporation of old Springfield. There was a belief, however, that the depot would be on the north side of Wilson's creek, or a quarter of a mile or so away on top of the ridge, and that the city limits would be extended still further to the north of the depot. Col. S. H. Boyd, who had been a partner of Gen. Fremont's in his purchase of the railroad in 1866, carefully observed the progress of the enterprise after its affairs had passed into the hands of the Boston and New York capitalists in 1868.

Becoming well posted in the probabilities involved in the construction of the road, Col. Boyd purchased a half interest in a large tract of land lying in the north part of Springfield and adjacent to its northern limits. Messrs. Robberson and Boyd then purchased all lands lying in the southeast part of the city which would be available for depot grounds; and when at last, a meeting of the stockholders of the company was held in Springfield, to negotiate with the city for the location of the depot, it

was found that suitable grounds within the city limits could only be purchased from these parties, at prices which, although very reasonable under the circumstances, the Scrooges of the old town were unwilling to pay. Many of them were opposed to paying a cent themselves for depot grounds, saying, "that the depot will be built here anyhow." [839]

Messrs. Robberson and Boyd then offered the railroad company a half interest in the lands first mentioned, provided the depot should be erected where it now stands, and this proposition was finally accepted. This led to the organization of the Ozark Land Company, consisting of the South Pacific Railroad Company, Dr. E. T. Robberson and C. H. Harwood, who had purchased the interest of Col. Boyd.

In the early spring of 1870 a town was laid out adjoining the city of Springfield on the north, and North Springfield sprang into existence as if by magic. The first building erected was the small frame building erected by the company, and used for some time as a real estate office, at the corner of Jefferson and Commercial streets. The next was the residence and store of J. J. Barnard, who opened the first stock of groceries and provisions. Next came Mr. Payton's residence and Dr. Hansford's drug store. Mr. Barnard's was the first family that came to town, but was soon followed by Mr. Payton's, Dr. Hansford's, Mr. Mumfort's, and other families too numerous to mention.

THE FIRST BUSINESS MEN.

Among the pioneers to the now town was J. C. Jackson, grocer, who came when the town first began to build up, in the spring of 1870, and erected a two-story brick building, 20 by 64 feet, on the south side of Commercial street, near the corner of Jefferson avenue. H. H. Kaufholz, grocer, came in March, 1870, and began the erection of a two-story frame building, 23 by 50 feet, with a wareroom about the same size, on the corner of Commercial street and Robberson avenue, in which building he opened a general store in May following. This building was destroyed by the fire of October, 1872. The lumber trade was among the important business interests of North Springfield in 1870, and was represented in that year by T. R. Johns, Theodore Bloess, J. C. Degenhardt, McAllister & Barber. J. G. Raithel and Kennedy & Druhe. Mr. Johns was from Ohio, Mr. Bloess from Sedalia, Mr. Degenhardt from St. Louis. All three of these gentlemen failed in a short time. [840]

RAILROAD LAND OFFICE.

Prominent among the business interests of North Springfield, in its infancy, was the real estate business, and in the little building, before mentioned, on the corner of Commercial street and Jefferson avenue, it is said that \$90,000 worth of town lots were sold during the first six months. Besides this, thousands of acres of farming lands were sold during the same time, by Messrs. C. E. and Alfred Harwood, who occupied this office, and were several years the authorized agents of the railroad company. In the spring of 1878 the Harwood brothers resigned this position.

THE "OZARK HOUSE".

One of the first buildings erected in North Springfield was the Ozark House, a fine large frame hotel, built by the railroad company in the spring of 1870, at a cost of \$30,000. The erection of the Ozark House stirred up the people of Old Town and caused the erection of the Metropolitan. The Ozark enjoyed an excellent patronage while it stood. April 7, 1875, it was totally destroyed by fire, at a loss in the aggregate of building and furniture of nearly \$65,000. There was an insurance of \$24,200, after the time it was owned by Dunlap & Harwood. The Ozark stood just south of and opposite the present railroad depot.

THE "SOUTHWEST" PRINTING OFFICE.

In February, 1869, the *Southwest* was first issued by Col. H. Lick, from an office over Dr. McAdoo's store in Springfield. In March following, Z. T. Hedges bought an interest in the paper, and in August of the same year Mr. Lick sold out his interest to D. B. Taylor, when the office was removed to North Springfield and the name changed to the *Springfield Republican*, Taylor Hedge & Co. being the publishers. In the spring of 1871 the partnership was dissolved, Mr. Taylor retiring, and Mr. Hodoes remaining in North Springfield and reestablishing the *Southwest*. Under this style it continued until 1875, when Mr. Lick returned and took charge, soon after which the office was destroyed by fire. The office was at that time in a building erected and owned by D. B. Taylor, who still had some claim on the office, and held insurance policies to the amount of \$1,900 on the building, and office. Soon after this a new outfit of material was purchased by Mr. Lick, who changed the name of the paper to the *Southwester*, and continued its publication until the spring, of 1878, when W. R. B. Trantham became the editor and proprietor, and the paper, which had been published as an "independent" sheet, became the organ of the

National Greenback party of this county. The *Southwest* was the first newspaper in North Springfield. A publication called the *Town and Farm* was started in November, 1882, by Sanders & Haswell. It succeeded the *Little Joker*, a unique journal established by Mr. Lick. [841]

THE FIRST SCHOOLS.

Not long after the laying, out of the town and the commencement of business Mr. Geo. S. Escott opened school in a small frame building, known as the chapel, which stood on the west side of Jefferson street, where Locust street now crosses. Here, during the winter of 1870-71, he had a private school of from sixty to eighty students. Miss Bills also had a small school on the north side of the railroad. In the spring, of 1871 a public school was established and the private schools discontinued. Since that time there has been public school in the district from six to ten months every year, and in 1872 a fine brick public school building was erected in the north part of town, at a cost of \$17,000.

In July, 1877, a Mrs. M. Louisa Durham started a kindergarten in North Springfield, which was something of a success for a time, but did not live long.

INCORPORATION.

On the 4th day of July, 1870, the county court of Greene county made an order incorporating the "Town of North Springfield," which then included the southwest quarter of the southeast quarter, and all of the southwest quarter of section 12, and the east half of the east half of the southeast quarter of section 11, in township 29, range 22.

At the same time and by the same authority, J. J. Barnard, L. Hansford, M. V. Smith, H. H. Kaufholz and William Turk, were appointed trustees of said town. These orders were made "on petition of two-thirds of the citizens" of the town, but were afterwards discovered to be illegal, from the fact that scarcely any of said petitioners and not even the gentlemen appointed as trustees, had been in the State long, enough to become citizens. Therefore the original orders of incorporation were rescinded, and on the 8th of May, 1871, the town was again incorporated including the same amount of territory though differently described. [842]

From the *Southwester*, newspaper of February 31, 1877, it is learned that upon the

granting of the last act of incorporation the following trustees were appointed: J. J. Barnard, J. C. Jackson, W. M. Turk, H. H. Kaufholz, and A. P. Harwood. November 12, following, the trustees met by consent, and J. J. Barnard was appointed chairman and D. B. Taylor clerk. The board then proceeded to enact bylaws and regulations for the town. W. M. Turk was chosen the first marshal; A. M. Haswell, assessor; L. Hansford, collector; T. E. Johns, treasurer, and J. C. Jackson, street commissioner. L. Hansford resigned the office of collector, and the marshal, W. M. Turk, was appointed. A few days later Mr. Barnard removed outside of the corporation and A. P. Harwood was elected chairman of the board of trustees. Marshal Turk resigned and thus there were three vacancies in the town board, two councilmen and the marshal and collectorship. At a special election, J. G. Raithel and W. M. Payton were chosen councilmen, and A. J. Russell was elected marshal in place of Turk.

By order of the county court, January 7, 1873, a voting precinct was established at North Springfield, and on petition of J. J. Barnard and others, the corporate limits of the town were so extended as to include the northwest quarter of section 12, before mentioned.

THE ST. LOUIS & SAN FRANCISCO RAILWAY SHOPS.

What gives to North Springfield, its principal importance, and especially the large share of its population, is the fact that it is the location of the extensive car and locomotive repair shops of the St. Louis and San Francisco railway. Up to 1873 the principal shops of this road were located at Franklin or Pacific, as it is now called, but in that year the round house was erected here, with accommodations for twelve engines, and shops large enough to admit five engines at a time for repairs, besides a large blacksmith shop, with all the latest appliances for utilizing and saving labor.

In 1876 a sixty-horse power stationary engine was put in to run the machinery, and the car shop, brass foundry and oil house were erected; also a large lumber and dry house. In 1877 there was a considerable increase in the machinery, including a steam punch and shears, and a steam hammer of 36,000 pounds stroke, but so regulated that the force may be diminished even to the weight of an ounce. In 1877 these shops employed about 170 men and turned out over one hundred new cars, besides keeping up ordinary repairs for the whole road of 363 miles. In 1880 large additions were made, and since their first establishment the facilities of the shops

have about doubled, owing to the improvements made from time to time. Adjoining the shops is a building where all supplies are kept in endless numbers and quantity. A look through that collection is surprising to one who has only a general idea of what is used by a railroad company.

North Springfield is the terminus of all the divisions, and all the railway employees have their homes there. There is a fine railroad eating house where good meals are furnished to passengers. Two fast trains leave daily for St. Louis. [843]

A large portion of North Springfield is supplied with water from the large natural spring one-half mile north of the passenger depot. This spring also furnishes water for the motive power of the extensive machine shops of the company, and for all locomotives running over this division of the road. The reservoir of the spring is 19x70 feet, and about six feet deep. From this spring the water is forced up to the tank, at the machine shops, and the one from which the locomotives and the town are supplied, by means of a powerful engine and pump with fifty feet of suction pipe, and 2,640 feet of 3-inch discharge pipe.

The town of North Springfield is connected with Springfield by two lines of street railway, having new and elegant cars, and the railway is well patronized.

The first postmaster in North Springfield, was Dr. Fisher, and the office was established in August, 1870.

In 1874 there was a bill introduced in the State Legislature to extend the limits of Springfield far enough north to include North Springfield, and the bill was passed, providing that it should be so extended, if a majority of the tax-payers of both towns should vote in favor of such extension. The vote was first taken in North Springfield, and stood 72 opposed, and 1 in favor--Frank Lawson casting the vote in favor of the extension merely as a joke. Learning what the result was here, it was not considered necessary to take a vote on the proposition in Springfield.

Although North Springfield still retains its autonomy, and the right of local self-government, of which right it is very jealous, yet it does not require much of a prophet to predict that at no very distant day it will lose its identity as a distinct town and be merged into and become a very important part of the great city of Springfield. But any movement looking to the consolidation of the two towns must be begun by the old town. North Springfield is too important a municipally *per se*,

and too capable of managing well its own interests, to beg that it may be swallowed up by some other big town in order that it may be "protected. " Its heart is not troubled at the recent progress made by "old town, " as it has too much of prosperity itself to be envious, too much proper spirit to be jealous. It can rejoice with its older sister at her prosperity, and in time may come to share it with her, but whenever the partnership is formed, North Springfield must be invited and must be permitted to come in as an equal partner--at least so far as to be allowed to fix the terms of upon which the consolidation shall be effected. [844]

INCIDENTS IN THE HISTORY OF NORTH SPRINGFIELD.

October 12, 1872, the Fellows' grain elevator was burned, involving considerable loss. Other buildings near by were ignited from the elevator and consumed. Among these was Mr. Kaufholz's grocery, which was on the opposite side of the street, and more than a hundred feet away from the elevator. Mr. K.'s loss was about \$7,000; insurance, \$4,200. The total loss in this fire was fully \$15,000. In connection with the elevator before mentioned Mr. Fellows lost a large forwarding and commission house, which stood near the corner of Commercial street and Robberson avenue.

In 1873 Dr. Hansford's two-story boarding house was destroyed, but the doctor set to work as soon as the embers had cooled a little and erected the Lyon House, named in honor of the Union hero of Wilson's Creek, a fine three-story brick hotel, on the south side of Commercial street.

The life led by railroad men on our Western railroads, especially about the divisions, is almost as perilous as that of a soldier. Numerous accidents, many of which are fatal in their nature, are constantly occurring at the various principal offices and headquarters, and at all times the railroad men carry their lives in their hands, when on duty, and often their hands are made to loosen their grasp and allow the precious burden to escape. The general public is not much given to contemplation upon the thought that so very much is due to the brave railroad men, who so frequently imperil their own existence and the happiness of those near and dear to them, in order that a trip may be made on time, or a car load of hogs sent safely to market.

North Springfield has had its full share of railroad accidents. About the middle of March, 1876, Mr. I. N. Mellinger, a foreman of the A. & P., while coupling cars in the yard here was caught between two cars and instantly killed. August 6, 1877,

Yardmaster James Osborne lost his life while engaged in coupling cars in the yard here. Accidentally he caught the heel of his boot in the frog of a switch, and was thrown upon the track, the car wheels passing over his legs and almost severing them from his body. He died about 10 o'clock the same night. [845]

The murder of a man known as Capt. Johnson, a few years since, was a mysterious as well as a dreadful affair. The captain had kept a hotel or eating house at Verona and also at Vinita. He came up to North Springfield and was here some days. One morning he was found, with a bullet in his brain and stone dead, lying in a bed in John's lumber office. Some thought it a case of suicide, but circumstances disproved this theory, although the murderer was never suspected. His wife came on and saw the body and cared for it. Addressing the corpse she said: "Ah! you are dead, my darling -dead -dead ! But you never, never killed yourself? Did you? I know that *too well.*"

THE BANK OF SPRINGFIELD.

The bank of Springfield was incorporated September 16, 1882, with a capital of \$50,000, of which 50 per cent was paid up at the start and the remainder in January 1, following. It owns the building, in which it, is located a fine two-story brick, on the corner of Commercial street and Benton avenue. It is well furnished, with first-class appointments, a large fire-proof vault, in which is a Herring burglar-proof safe, with a Yale time lock. The present officers are C. W. Rogers, president; B. F. Hobart, vice president; F. E. Atwood, cashier.

"FRISCO" OPERA HOUSE.

The "Frisco" opera house, on Commercial street, near Benton avenue, North Springfield, was built in the summer of 1882, by G. W. Turner, J. W. Spencer, and R. G. Parker. It is now owned by E. L. Fay. The building is a two-story brick, has two large business rooms on the first floor, and the hall above is capable of seating from 500 to 700 people.

The Anchor Mills were built by Mr. Coleman in 1872, and attracted a great many people to the place, proving one of the most valuable among the interests of the place. May 1, 1881, A. R. Sprague & Co. purchased the mill, and in the summer following rebuilt them inside, put in new machinery, etc. February 1, 1882, Mr. Brooke purchased an interest, and the firm is now Sprague, Brooke & Co. The mills

have a run of five buhrs.

The real population of North Springfield in 1880 was 1,388, instead of the 900 as published in the census bulletins. [846]

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

The congregation of the First Congregational church of North Springfield was organized in 1871, the following being among the first members: Dr. E. T. Robberson, S. Burton, C. J. Burton, C. E. Harwood and wife, A. P. Harwood, wife and sister, and J. H. Harwood and wife. At first the congregation met in a small frame building, on the corner of Boonville and Chestnut streets in old town. The building was rented of Col. Richardson, and it is now used as a butcher shop. The next meeting house was a frame store on the southwest corner of Jefferson and Locust streets, which was rented of Whitfield Matty. It is now owned by Prof. Paul Roulet, and has been removed to a site on Commercial street and rented for a barber shop. The present church building, was built in May, 1871, and dedicated on the 29th of that month, being, enlarged in 1881. It cost about \$5,000. The pastors of the church have been J. H. Harwood, D. D., J. C. Plumb, N. J. Morrison, D. D., Prof. O. Brown, E. B. Burrows and C. H. Crane. The present number of members is 189. The Sunday school in connection therewith has a membership of 225.

M. E. CHURCH.

St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal church is located on the corner of Benton avenue and Pacific street, North Springfield, and was organized in 1873. The original members were S. P. Hatfield and wife, G. W. Burge and wife, and Mrs. A. D. Starks. The building is a brick, and was erected in 1879 at a cost of \$2,500. It was dedicated December 18, 1881. Rev. G. W. Hughey, D. D., of St. Louis, preached the dedicatory sermon, by invitation of the presiding pastor, Rev. J. Hervey Dobbs. The pastors have been J. Gardner, S. H. Mortland, B. F. Poole, A. E. Day, E. E. Condo, J. W. Bushong and J. Hervey Dobbs. The present membership is 100. Prior to the above organization, a class was hold for a short time at the residence of Mr. Lawrence Kellett, now deceased. The St. Paul's Sunday school numbers one hundred and ninety, including officers and teachers. The superintendent is Rev. J. Hervey Dobbs. [847]

CATHOLIC CHURCH.

The congregation of St. Mary's Catholic church was organized May 29, 1882. Some of the first members were August Lohmeyer, J. R. McCabe, M. Kearney, J. L. Kennedy, Frank Doyle, Joe Kennedy and Cor. Carr. After a hard struggle against strong opposition for about two years, the Catholics of North Springfield succeeded in getting their petition granted by Bishop Hogan and the diocesan council to have a Catholic church built in North Springfield, and a now parish organized independent from that of old Springfield, where they formerly belonged. The church building was erected in 1882, at a cost of about \$6,000. It is built of brick, after the Gothic order of architecture; covers an area of 70 by 36 feet, and stands on the corner of Webster avenue and Locust street. The architect and superintendent was Aug. Lohmeyer. The congregation of St. Mary's, including children, numbers about 500. Its pastor is Rev. Father O'Neil, a young priest, who resides in the parish now for about one-third of the year.

MASONIC LODGE.

Gate of the Temple Lodge No. 422, A. F. and A. M., was organized under a dispensation bearing date October 13, A. L. 5871 (A. D. 1871). The charter was granted Oct. 6, 1872. The names of the charter members were T. U. Flanner, B. F. Lawson, E. A. Finney, E. B. Sears, W. J. Rountree, Luther Hansford, and E. T. Robberson. The first officers were T. U. Flanner, W. M.; B. F. Lawson, S. W.; E. A. Finney, J. W.; W. J. Rountree, S. D.; J. J. Barnard, J. D.; E. T. Robberson, treasurer; R. B. Sears, secretary; L. Hansford, tyler. The present officers are F. W. Laker, W. M.; E. L. Fay, S. W.; T. Thorson, J. W.; E. T. Robberson, treasurer; John LaClair, secretary; Alex. Knox, tyler. The lodge meets in a rented hall over the bank of Springfield. The present membership numbers 59.

ODD FELLOWS.

North Springfield Lodge (I. O. O. F.), No. 218, was instituted by R. W. West, P. G. The dispensation was issued Dec. 25, 1869. The charter bears date May 19, 1870. The charter members were Jesse D. Six, Charles E. Pemberton, J. S. Tilton, Julius Cohn, and E. T. Robberson. The first officers were Jesse D. Six, N. G.; Charles E. Pemberton, V. G.; J. S. Tilton, secretary; Julius Cohn, treasurer. The present officers are Hans S. Ostergard, N. G.; A. N. Brannock, V. G.; F. M. Martin, recording secretary; George F. Baltz, permanent secretary; Thomas E. Wright, treasurer. The lodge meets in the Temple of Honor hall, which is rented. The lodge is in good financial condition. The present membership is 40. [848]

ORDER OF THE PALM AND SHELL.

North Springfield division of the Oriental Order of the Palm and Shell was instituted by Henry R. Coleman, grand chaplain of the State of Kentucky. The dispensation was issued August 23, 1882. The charter members were Fred W. Laker, Rev. Corona, H. Briggs, James B. Milliken, Harry C. Lindsly, Wm. B. Searcy, George W. Morelock, John Potter, and Edwin L. Fay. The first officers were Fred W. Laker, chief; Rev. Corona, H. Briggs, and James B. Milliken, aids. The present officers are the same as the first. Rev. C. H. Briggs is grand chaplain of the Grand lodge. The number of present membership is 8.

TEMPLE OF HONOR.

North Springfield Lodge No. 23 was instituted by James Barton. The dispensation was issued in April, 1878. The charter bears date May 3, 1878. The charter members were Geo. Hitchens, John T. Williams, E. B. Payton, and others.

UNITED WORKMEN.

Wentworth Lodge No. 113, A. O. U. W., was instituted by H. W. Busse. Its charter and dispensation are dated February 25, 1879. The charter members were J. E. Wentworth, F. J. Underwood, E. T. Robberson, Alex. Veech, A. B. Clayton, T. P. Young, D. H. Nichols, J. T. Gray, Alex. Knox, and Arthur Ball. The first officers were T. J. Underwood, P. M. W.; Alex Veech, financier; D. H. Nichols, M.W.; J. T. Gray, receiver; A. B. Clayton, G. F.; Alex. Knox, overseer; A. Ball, guide; F. P. Young, inside watchman; J. E. Wentworth, recorder; E. T. Robberson, outside watchman. The present officers are T. Ball, P.M. W.; C. B. Wilson, recorder; John D. Boosert, M. W.; C. J. McMasters, receiver; Jacob Goodlar, G. F.; Ezra Berst, F.; J. F. Miller, O.; E. E. Berst, W.; I. H. Price, G. The present membership is 48.

BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE FIREMEN.

Frisco Lodge Division No. 51 B. of L. F., was instituted by S. M. Stevens. The date of the charter is August 7th 1881. The names of the charter members are Arthur Ball, C. C. Bidwell, Geo. W. Daniels, J. W. Marrow, M. A. Frame, W. A. Noleman, H. R. Favor, Wm. Palmer, John Hulse, Elijah Smith, Alex. Knox, John Schepper, John Truesdale, Charles Waites, Isaac Waites.

The first officers were W. A. Noleman, master; Alexander Knox, vice master; M. A.

Frame, secretary; W. R. Favor, financier; John Truesdale, magazine agent. The present officers are Joseph Dryden, master; John Hulse, secretary; M. W. Burwell, financier; Wm. Geister, magazine agent. The present membership is 40. [849]

BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS.

Pacific City Lodge, Division No. 83 Grand International Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, was chartered January 1, 1871. The charter members were J. L. Parrish, Benjamin Smith, A. Maloney, James Smith, J. R. Moore, R. W. Robinson, Thomas Murray, Geo. W. Hitchens, Frank Caton, Albert Start, Wm. Willis, James McCourt and A. Casbourn. The first officers were Frank Caton, C. E.; J. L. Parrish, F. A. E. The present officers are Joseph E. Moore, C. E.; John Egan, F. E.; D. Stephenson, S. E.; F. W. Laker, F. A. E.; T. B. McLean, S. A. E.; George M. Huston, T. A. E.; John Monaghan, guide; Edward Beer, chaplain. The present membership is 44. The lodge meets in the North Springfield Masonic Hall. The lodge has connected with it, the Locomotive Engineers Mutual Life Insurance Association, in which there are 30 members. Joseph R. Moore is the secretary and treasurer for division 83.

There is also a weekly benefit association connected with division 83. In case of sickness or accident a member so disabled receives \$10 per week for the time he is unable to work, which is paid by assessment on other members of the association.

The Frisco Locomotive Engineers Health Association was organized July 1, 1882, and the first officers were T. B. McLean, president; F. W. Laker, vice president and secretary; T. L. Hasler, treasurer. [850]

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