

Cedar & Vernon County, MO Genealogical Society

218 West Walnut Street, Nevada, MO 64772

Society email: Cedar.VernonCoMO@centurytel.net

Society website: www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~motcogs/

Vernon Co research: www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~movernon

Cedar Co research: www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mocedar

Genealogical Society Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, April 18, 2017, 10 a.m.

El Dorado Springs Library Meeting Room

808 S. Main Street, El Dorado Springs, MO

Orphan Trains to Missouri

More than 100,000 orphaned, abandoned, or neglected children were sent on 'orphan trains' from New York and Boston to the farming communities of the mid-west between 1853 and 1930. The dream was that America's Christian farmers would welcome the homeless children, give them work, and treat them as new sons and new daughters. This would remove the children from the streets and orphanages of the large cities. Many came on orphan trains to Missouri. The children were given to families, and no formal adoption was required. Many were taken in by good, kind and caring families; some children were not as fortunate. The program guest speaker will be Kathy Dains, who worked twenty eight years at the State Historical Society of Missouri as a research assistant, associate editor of the Missouri Historical Review, and associate director of the State Historical Society.

Following the April 18 program, a **DNA mini-seminar** will explore considerations when contacting DNA matches in your research. Anyone requiring assistance in creating or uploading a GEDCOM family tree file to a DNA website or other help with their DNA test results is welcome to bring their laptop or make an appointment to meet at a later date/time.

The monthly genealogy society meetings are open to everyone interested in family history research; invite a friend. Meeting locations alternate between Nevada and El Dorado Springs on the third Tuesday of the month at the local library. If questions, please contact the society by email.

In Sacrifice for Liberty and Peace

Centennial Commemoration of the U.S. Entry into World War I

The ceremony hosted by the U.S. World War I centennial Commission at the National World War I Museum and Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri on April 6, 2017 can be viewed online at <http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/>

U.S. Enters World War I

For three years, President Woodrow Wilson strove to maintain American neutrality. Anti-war sentiment ran across the political spectrum. In January of 1917, British cryptographers deciphered a telegram from German Foreign Minister Arthur Zimmermann to the German Minister to Mexico, von Eckhardt, offering United States territory to Mexico in return for joining the German cause. This message helped draw the United States into the war and thus changed the course of history. Public opinion changed. On April 2, 1917, Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war, warning that "the world must be made safe for democracy." On April 6, 1917, the United States formally declared war against Germany and entered the conflict in Europe. Fighting since the summer of 1914, Britain, France, and Russia welcomed news that American troops and supplies would be directed toward the Allied war effort. Under the command of Major General John J. Pershing, over two million U.S. troops served in France during the war. [Information from the Library of Congress and the Archives.org websites]

Sgt. John Yowell, Killed in Action in France, 29 Sep 1918

The President of a Memorial Historical Society in Alsace, France and member of the Alsace-United States Friendship Association contacted the Genealogical Society regarding Sergeant John Yowell who was born 19 Oct 1892 near Harwood, Vernon Co, MO. Sgt. Yowell served with the 54th Infantry and was killed on 29 Sep 1918 near the village of Linthal in the Vogesian Mountains in eastern France. He was buried in the military cemetery of Oberlauchen.

Through additional emails with the gentleman in France, photographs of the original military cemetery and commemorative plaque were received. Additional details explained that the original commemorative plate at the military cemetery was destroyed by the Germans in June 1940 as they invaded Alsace during World War II.

A new plaque will be dedicated during a ceremony in September 2018. This ceremony will be a commemoration for Sgt. Yowell and the 48 other U.S. soldiers who died in that area, ensuring that these men are not forgotten.

The Genealogical Society was asked for information about John Yowell and a photograph of him, and the following information is shared from some of the research conducted to assist with commemorating and honoring this young man who was killed while serving our Country.

A search of the Vernon Co MO Cemetery Directory 2010 showed the following listing in Green Lawn Cemetery near Schell City: YOWELL, John B.; Oct 29, 1892-Sep 29, 1918. HQ CO 54 INF INTEL SEC. DIED IN ARGONNE FOREST. WW I. A visit to the cemetery was made, and the gravestone was washed and photographed. His stone is located between those of his parents which gave the sense that they were holding him between them.

John Yowell's World War I Draft Registration Card (available on ancestry.com) shows that he was 24 years old and lived in Lamar, Barton Co, MO, when it was signed on 5 Jun 1917. The card further shows that he was a natural born citizen,

born on 19 Oct 1892 in Vernon Co, was single, and a self-employed farmer. He was tall in stature, of medium build with blue eyes and dark brown hair.

The 1900 Vernon Co MO Census, Bacon Twp (census records on familysearch.org) shows a household consisting of 55-yr-old James B. Yowell, farmer, and wife Eva, 35 yr old. Also in the household is 8-year old son Johnie who was born Oct 1881 (sic) in Missouri, and 2 yr old daughter Lizzie born in Missouri. Additionally there are two older children who were determined to be children by James Yowell's first wife.

The 1910 Vernon Co MO Census, Bacon Twp shows John Yowell as a 17-year old farm hand on the family farm, with his parents, younger sister, and older half-brother.

In the 1920 Barton Co, MO Census, Lamar, James B. Yowell is living with wife Eva in the city of Lamar.

By the 1930 Barton Co, MO Census, Lamar, James B. Yowell is a widow.

A search in the Missouri On-line Death Certificates show several Yowell family members.

The book, Readin' 'Ritin', 'n' 'Rithmetic: The Story of Vernon County's Country Schools compiled by our own Neoma Alexander Foreman shows that in 1908, John Yowell graduated from 8th grade at the Schell City School (page 195). Two older half-siblings are in a picture of Robinson School in 1890 (page 143).

The 1903 Plat Map of Vernon County shows that John Yowell's father, James, owned 60 acres in the north center part of Section 21, Bacon Township, about 2 miles northeast of Harwood.

Various World War I Casualty Lists were searched online; however, the name John Yowell was not found on any list except at www.genealogybuff.com.

John Yowell's name was not located using the online U.S. Dept of Veterans Affairs, Nationwide Gravesite Locator.

In Vol. 2 of the 3-vol set of Soldiers of the Great War (available online), John Yowell, Sarmar, (sic) is listed on page 173.

Online searches also revealed that the Lamar, MO Veterans of Foreign War Post is named Yowell-Frow VFW Post 3691. No VFW phone number could be found, but a local funeral home provided contact information for the Lamar Post. A phone conversation with one of the men allowed sharing of information about John Yowell, details of his death in France, and his burial information. The VFW was scheduled to meet the following week and they are to look for a picture of the young man.

Further research was conducted to determine if the gravestone in Green Lawn Cemetery was in fact a grave marker or a cenotaph (a monument erected in honor of a person whose remains are elsewhere). Information found on various government and nongovernment websites explained that during the war, casualty remains were buried at or near the location of death, and neither the U.S. nor the French government wanted thousands of remains being returned in the middle of the war effort. Three years after the war, France agreed to allow U.S. casualty remains to be repatriated so families could bury their dead, if they chose to do

so. A small paragraph in the 2 June 1921 Lamar Democrat newspaper announced that the casket containing the remains of John Yowell would arrive in Lamar for interment sometime in the immediate future. On 9 June 1921 the same paper announced "The body of John Yowell, one of the first of Barton County's gallant boys, to give his life for his country...leaves New York, Sunday" and was expected to arrive in Lamar by the middle of the week. A 16 June 1921 Lamar Democrat article expresses much regret that a downpour of rain interrupted the funeral services being held in the Courthouse yard on Wednesday afternoon. "The bandstand on which the casket reposed was heavily draped in the national colors, and the big flag on the 80-foot pole nearby flew at half-mast. The members of the local legion were drawn up in double line in front of the stand in honor of their fallen comrade whose remains had just returned from France." The Katy flier [the train] agreed to make a special stop at Schell City, so that the party would not have to wait at Nevada on Thursday when John Yowell was interred in Green Lawn Cemetery.

These two pictures from France were provided for our information:



Relying on Google Translate and editing, the original memorial plate that was destroyed during WW II reads:



Ancient Military Cemetery
Franco-American of Oberlauchen
1914 - 1918

In this soil rests 63 Sub-officers and soldiers of France.
1 officer, 48 non-commissioned officers and American soldiers who died during the Great War for France and civilization.

Here to remember
them to immortality

It is impossible to research only one man whose life was given in the Great War without considering the other Vernon Countians who also gave their lives and the way in which we memorialize and honor them.

More research is being conducted regarding Vernon County war casualties, and the following names are submitted in addition to those engraved on the Courthouse monument.

Thomas J. Curry died 14 Feb 1918 and is buried in Turley Cemetery.

Ralph B. Palmer died 2 Aug 1918 and is buried in Newton Burial park.

Fred A Stone died 13 May 1918 and is buried in Click Cemetery.

An updated and corrected list of Vernon County World War I casualties will be published later this year.

*May there always be men and women willing to serve when our Country calls,
and we may we never forget the sacrifices of those who gave all.*

Clark Cemetery

Many pioneer cemeteries across the country are unmaintained and are being lost to time. In Vernon County, we have a pioneer cemetery located northwest of Metz that has been rescued! Clark Cemetery is located on S. 650 Road near West Fork Pryor Creek in Section 36 of Henry Township. When it was visited in 2004 in preparation of the 2010 Cemetery Directory, machetes were required to chop brush and briars to look for gravestones. Thanks to the generous efforts of Joe and Carol Brooks, the cemetery has been cleared and is being mowed two or three times a year. Stones were reset and broken stones were repaired. The lane to the cemetery had trees growing in it and they have been removed. A beautiful new entrance gate and sign was fabricated and installed. A mapped listing of burials was made and will soon be available in the Nevada Library Genealogy Department for researchers.

Lawrence Cemetery

In addition to their work in Clark Cemetery, Joe and Carol Brooks have also repaired broken stones in Lawrence Cemetery, straightened stones, and cleaned up brush, etc.! They will be verifying and updating the cemetery listing for Lawrence Cemetery.

Our tremendous thanks to Joe and Carol who saw a need and stepped forward to take care of it!

Free Computer Classes – Nevada Library

Using a computer and the internet is essential in today's genealogy world. If you would like to learn more about using computers, how to set up an email account, and how to access and use the internet, please register for the free classes which are regularly held at the Nevada Public Library.

National DNA Day – Apr 25

April 25 is National DNA Day and it is anticipated that DNA testing companies will be offering test sales at that time. If you are waiting for a sale for yourself or a family member to test, this will be it! The 3 primary testing companies are

www.familytreedna.com (uses cheek swabs)

www.ancestry.com (spit in vial; can be difficult for some people)

www.23andme.com/ (uses saliva collection kit)

Autosomal DNA (also called Family Finder) tests both the maternal and paternal side of a family, and is the test recommended for genealogical research purposes.

New Resources in the Nevada Library Genealogy Department

The following book has been donated and is being cataloged:

Grundset, Eric G. (2014). *Rhode Island in the American Revolution: A Source Guide for Genealogists and Historians*. The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution.

Best Choice UPCs and Labels for Education

Members are urged to save Best Choice UPCs and also Labels for Education and bring to any meeting.

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