

THE TUBBS - VACIN BARN

With attention on the Vacin Barn as it is being shingled this fall, it seems of historic importance to review the history of that particular barn. It was built in Levant by George Tubbs Sr., then purchased by Frank Vacin and moved to the west edge of Colby and later presented by the Vacin Family to the PRAIRIE MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORY.

We are pleased to have the Tubbs Family telling the story, originally written by Minnie Tubbs Deaver. We are grateful to her.



George A. and Pearl Carpenter Tubbs

George A. Tubbs and Pearl L. Carpenter were married in Colby, Kansas on June 19, 1907 in the new Thomas County Court House by Judge Young. Their first home was twenty-two miles northwest of Colby where George was engaged in farming. He liked to tell his family about his boyhood when he herded cattle for his neighbors for 25 cents a day. He saved his money and then bought a quarter of land for \$1.00 an acre.

While on the farm, the two children Wayne and Isabella were in country school at "Center View" District in Barrett

Township. The teacher was Cecelia Severn who later became Mrs. Bryon White. George took these two children to the Andrew Duden home about one half mile away. Then Mr. Duden took his and the Tubbs children about two miles in a wagon to school. Some others attending there were Floyd, Ralph and Carl Brown. Members of the school board were George Tubbs, John Brown and Andrew Duden.

The last year school was held there was 1947. It was known at that time as the Mead School. Minnie Tubbs Deaver was the teacher.

George and Pearl lived on the farm for ten years. George always wanted to live in town and have a business. In 1916 he bought property in Levant and built a barn. In 1917 he sold his home and farm land to Robert Carpenter and moved his family into the barn. On the north side of the barn he made a car garage with a cement floor. That became the family kitchen and living room. The bedrooms were in the hayloft. At this time they had Wayne, Isabella, Lorraine and Elon. A couple years later, George finished building a house a bit south, on Highway 24. It was there that Blanche, George Jr., Minnie, Gerald and Jim were born. The kids went to a one-room school in Levant which is still there. Wayne and Isabella's teacher was Beulah Mallory. She later married Ted Touslee.

George then built a garage and filling station in Levant. It was next to Highway 24, so he was always busy.

As time went by, Levant grew and needed a larger school house. A new brick school was built and the old one was moved to Colby by Glen Dougherty where it is located on West 5th Street. The new Levant



Wayne, George, Jim, Gerald
Blanche, George A., Pearl, Elon
Minnie, Lorraine, Isabella

School in 1924 had all 12 grades. The school was well known for its good basketball teams. The boy's coach was Earl Morrison.

When Highway 24 was changed to the north in Levant, George built another garage and filling station on the north side of the new highway. He was in business there until son, George Jr. came home from the service and took over the business.

George Sr. made his old garage into a dance hall. He loved to play the fiddle, so on Saturday nights, he and his brother Charlie played for the dances and Meda Harner played the piano. Lloyd and Lucille White and Gerald and Rita White played for many of the dances.

George Jr. was at the station until 1950 when again Highway 24 was changed back to the south. So George Jr. once again built a station next to the highway where he was in business until



Family with their cars in front of the barn

1957 when he was awarded a Ford dealership. He then moved to Atwood. In 1967, he moved the dealership to Colby where THE TUBBS AND SONS MOTOR COMPANY is now located on Range Avenue.

The picture of the barn and all the cars was taken in 1950 on a Sunday when all the kids came home to have dinner with Mom and Dad. They brought covered dishes and stayed to enjoy the day. The barn that was home for a couple years is in the background.

In 1957 George and Pearl celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary. Their families and children, as well as friends and neighbors were present. It was a beautiful day. The tables were set up in the yard with lots and lots of food as there were over 100 for dinner.

George and Pearl enjoyed being with their children and loved every grandchild. They were very good parents. Minnie states "Mom was a very good cook. We always had hot bread, pies, and cakes, clean clothes and a clean house. She was always there when we needed her. If we were sick or hurt ourselves, she could make us well. She worked hard but always had a smile for everyone."

In 1962, George had a heart attack and was rushed to St. Thomas Hospital. He lived three weeks. Some of the family were with him day and night. He passed away on February 13, 1962.

Pearl lived in Levant where she was close to her kids. In 1963, she sold the barn to Frank Vacin. It was moved just west of Colby Plaza until it was moved again in



George and Pearl on 50th wedding anniversary in 1957

1985, having been donated by the Vacin Family, to the PRAIRIE MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORY.

Dale and Minnie Tubbs Deaver now have Butler and Morton buildings in the same place where the barn used to be.

In 1972 Pearl bought a house in Colby on South Garfield Street, next door to Isabella and Carl Brown. That was one time when all her kids went to work for Mom. They put on new siding, shingled, laid carpet and painted the inside. They then moved her furniture and she was at home in Colby.

She enjoyed being in her new home and soon was busy making dolls. The Colby Free Press had a feature story about the "Doll Lady." Each of the children now have those pretty dolls and ornamental chickens and cats.

In 1982, Pearl became sick and was taken to St. Thomas Hospital. She had surgery but could not get well. She passed away February 7, 1982.

The Tubbs family express their joy about the barn being preserved at the PRAIRIE MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORY. They will always proudly say "Our Dad built that barn."

George and Pearl were preceded in death by an infant daughter; Viola, 2 years old; Evelyn, five years old and a son, Fred Dale, 18 months. Others who preceded them in death or have

passed away since are: daughter Lorraine Stickel in 1971, son Wayne in 1994; two daughters-in-law, Rosa Anna Tubbs, Gerald's wife and Irene Tubbs, Wayne's wife; two sons-in-law, Ira Stickel, husband of Lorraine and Chester Bottorff, Blanche's husband. Also two grandsons, Lloyd Stickel and Arthur Tubbs; two great grandsons, Darren Miller and Rick Schroeder.



At the VFW in 1993 for thanksgiving Back row: Jim, Minnie, Gerald, George. Front row: Blanche, Elon, Wayne, Isabella

In 1994, there are seven living children--they are; Isabella and her husband Carl Brown; Blanche Bottorff, Elon and her husband Willard Miller; George and his wife Erma; Minnie and her husband Dale Deaver; Gerald Tubbs; Jim and his wife Hedy.

Minnie Tubbs Deaver recently stated "We are still a close family as our folks always said 'be good to each other.' At Thanksgiving last year, we all gathered at the VFW Club in Colby for a carry-in dinner. We had four turkeys and two hams. There were 58 of us and we had a good time. I hope we can keep it up."

Minnie Tubbs Deaver, 1994

