

Brimfield

Oral

History

Project



Roger Higgs

Interviewed 30 June 2022

Higgs Family

Taken c. 1965 at the
Brimfield farm home. Front:
Estella and Gerald Higgs.
Back L-R: Gene, Roger, Arlen
Higgs.

Please note that Roger's parents' names are correct on this slide. His father's name was incorrect in the interview and on the interview slide. We apologize for this error.



Photo courtesy of Roger Higgs

Forney Farm



Photo taken of Forney farm c1901. Photo courtesy of Dorothy Jamison shared by Roger Higgs

Farm had 2 owners: Forney 1842-1944 and the Higgs family 1944 to present.
Barn built in 1890's and celebrated with a barn dance per family stories.

James Forney b 1863; left Theresa Frances McDonald b1867; Marguerite Forney B1900, 2 farm hands in center; Maude age 11 b 1890; Frances age 9 B1892.

Maude Forney Hasselbacher taught at the nearby Shane School 1944-1947. Stayed with Higgs family during winter.

Forney Family

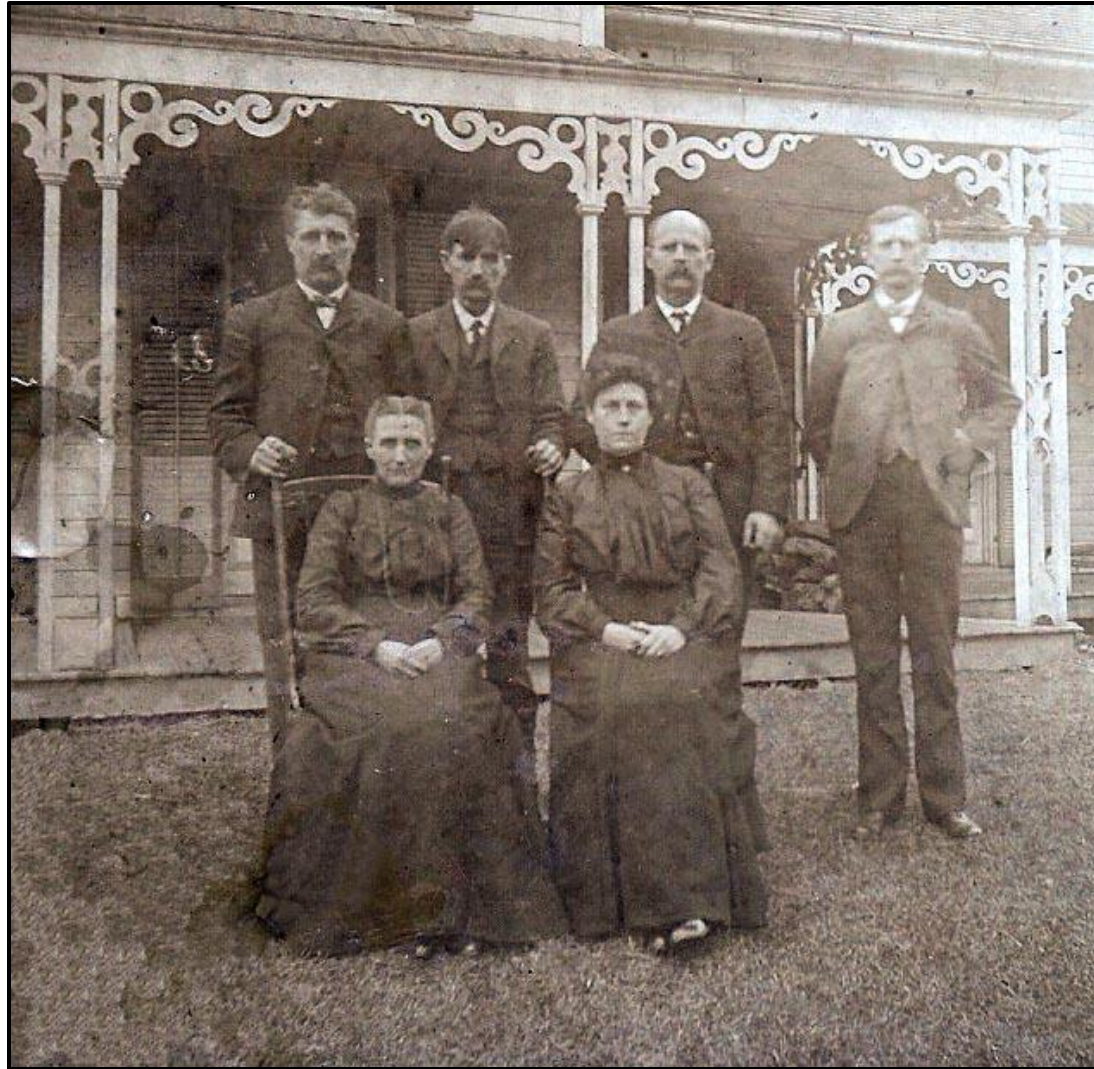
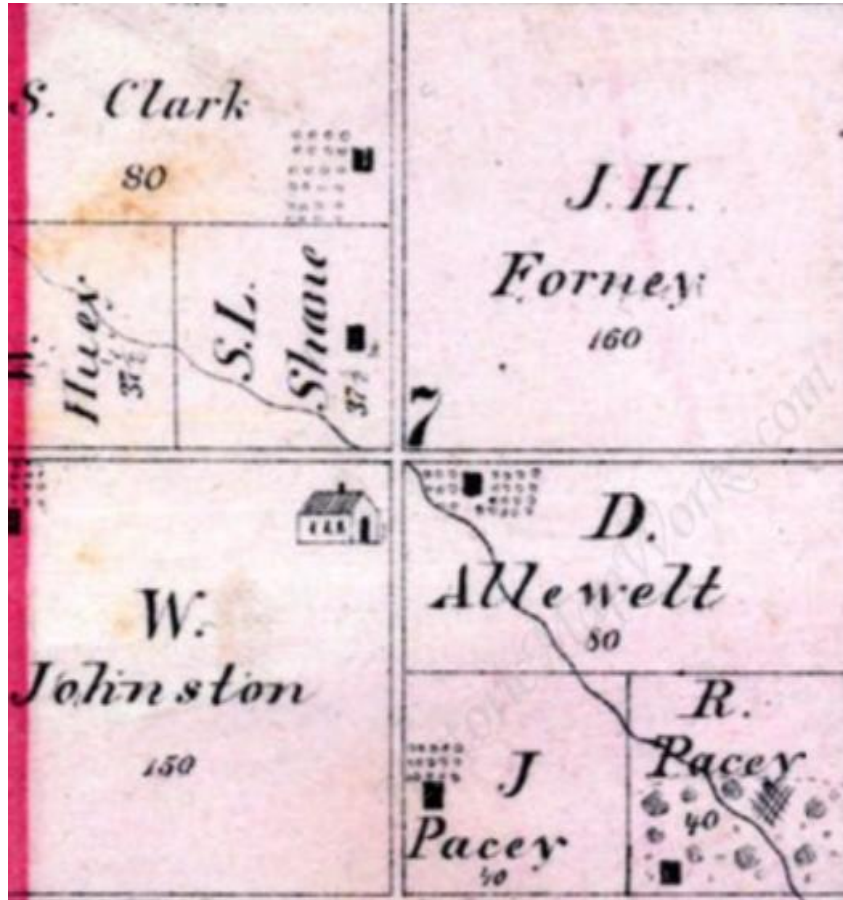


Photo in front of Forney farmhouse c 1905. Still standing today without the ornate porch.

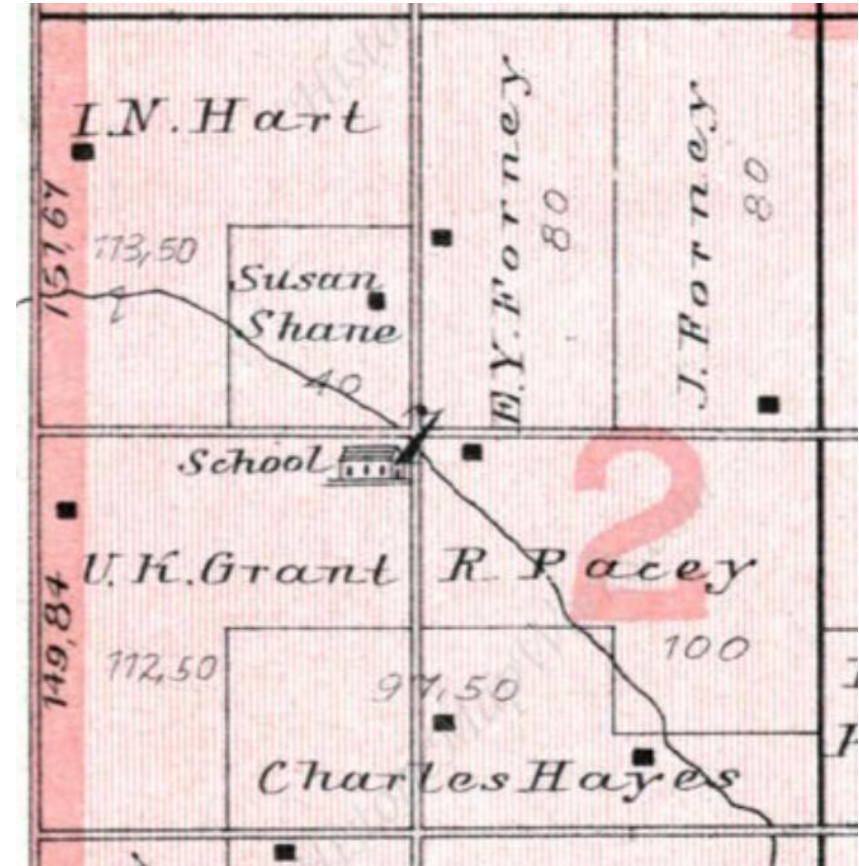
Photo of Descendants of James H Forney (1828-1892) and Margaret A Forney (1828-1905).

Ladies front L-R: Belle (1857-1930); Cora 1865-1936; Men L-R: Henry (1849-1920); James L (1853-1936); Ephriam (1850-1911); Leland (1859-1931)

Shane School



1873 Section 7 Jubilee Twp Peoria County History



1896 Section 7 Jubilee Twp Peoria County History

Filed for Record this 8th day of May A. D. 1877, at Peoria, Ill.

This Indenture WITNESSETH, That the Grantor...

William Johnston and Elizabeth Johnston of the Township of Jubilee in the County of Peoria and State of Illinois for and in consideration of the sum of Twelve Dollars

to have paid CONVEY AND WARRANT to The School Directors of District No 2 Township No 10 Range 6 East and to their successors in office of the Town of Jubilee County of Peoria and State of Illinois the following described Real Estate, to wit:

Commencing twenty three (23) rods South of the corner stone at the North East corner of the South West quarter of section Seven (7) Township, County and State aforesaid, thence West five and one-half rods thence South fourteen (14) rods thence East five and one-half (5 1/2) rods thence North fourteen (14) rods to the place of beginning containing 1/4 of seventy seven rods. And it is expressly understood that if the aforesaid lot of ground is ever abandoned from school purposes it shall revert back to the original quarter section.

situated in the County of Peoria in the State of Illinois hereby releasing and waiving all rights under and by virtue of the Homestead Exemption Laws of this State.

Dated this 8th day of May A. D. 1877

William Johnston Elizabeth Johnston



STATE OF Illinois County of Peoria

Thomas Pacey, a Justice of the Peace in and for the said County, in the State aforesaid do hereby certify that William Johnston and Elizabeth Johnston were personally known to me to be the same persons whose names are subscribed to the foregoing instrument, appeared before me this day in person, and acknowledged that they signed, read and delivered the said instrument without force and voluntary act, for the use and purpose therein set forth, including the release and waiver of the right of homestead.

Given under my hand and seal this 8th day of May A. D. 1877 Thomas Pacey Justice of the Peace

Land for Shane School Deeded 1877

8 May 1877 William and Elizabeth Johnston deeded land for \$12 to the School Directors of District No 2 Township No 10 Range 6E, Jubilee Township for the sole purpose of school purposes. South 1/4 of Section 7...of the corner stone at the NE corner of the SW

Peoria County Land Records online SD 439

Shane School Memories

Every woman in Dist. 46, Jubilee, is now registered. This is the old Shane school district and it is sure an evidence of the spirit of patriotism that pervades the community. Miss Hilda Grant of this district has been of valuable assistance in registering the women of Jubilee, assisting the regular committee in the work. The ladies of the east side of the township have opened a sewing room at the home of Mrs. R. P. Miller, meeting every Thursday afternoon

WW1 Patriotism 1917

ate her seventh birthday.

New residents in the Shane school neighborhood are Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Marks who are living in the James Forney house, and Mr and Mrs Homer Lauderbach who recently moved from Toulon to the old Hayes place now owned by K. Gilfilian,

Dr. A. L. Corcoran drove out from

New Residents in the Shane School Neighborhood 1937

Walked to One Room School House: Shane School

Roger (L) and Arlen (R) Higgs walking to Shane School one half mile from home in an ice storm carrying their lunch pails. Photo courtesy of Roger Higgs



Box Supper by 4 Horse Team 1905

The Brimfield News, page 4, March 9, 1905, online brimfield-
advantage.preservation.org

back pads, no machine work goes.

A large number of young folks from town attended the box supper at the Shane school house Saturday night, a big four horse team and farm wagon taking them out to their destination.

A nice program was given and the affair was successful in every way, the proceeds amounting to about \$20.

The school is under the supervision of Miss May Hayes.

The Shane school house was slightly damaged by fire Monday morning. The blaze originated in the ceiling where the chimney passes through. The teacher, Mrs. Lloyd Hasselbacher, pupils and neighbors, organized a fire brigade, and squelched the flame before it had done very much mischief. A few dollars will repair all damages. The Brimfield fire company and truck responded to the call but when they arrived the blaze was under control.

Fire at Shane School House 1924

The Brimfield News, page 4, Nov 27, 1924, online brimfield-
advantage.preservation.org



Shane School Picnic. Jubilee Park. Summer 1947. Pictured: Mary Ann Cluskey (front); Maude (Forney) Hasselbacher-teacher 1944-1947 right of Mary Ann; Mrs. Charles Welch-4th person seated; Bernice (Miller) Johnson-teacher 1943, 6th person seated; Roger Higgs standing, in rear

Transitioned from Shane School to Brimfield Grade School

Roger Higgs practicing basketball
at the farm c. 1950. Note the
brooder house, chicken house,
machine shed, 1895 barn in the
background.

Photo courtesy of Roger Higgs



Brimfield Community Consolidated Grade School



Photo courtesy of
Charollette Woodward
Fletcher

Brimfield High School

SPORTS: Baseball (1956) and Basketball (1955)

We Win A Couple

The Brimfield Indians pounded three Princeville pitchers for 18 hits and 13 runs in a 13-2 contest Friday. Wyman, Plack and Cecil shared the pitching chores.

Six runs were scored in the second inning. Johnson doubled, R. Higgs singled, Shane and Dungan walked to force in one run. Wyman singled two runs home. Ashley brought in another. Allen singled and Carmen tripled to drive in two more. He was out at the plate trying to stretch it into a home run.

Jim Wyman pitched and batted Brimfield to a 7-5 victory over Williamsfield high school here Tuesday afternoon.

In addition to limiting the losers to four hits. Wyman slammed out a home run in the 5th inning. Others contributing runs were Dungan, Cecil Ashley, Plack and Ekena.

We Lose Two, Win One

Brimfield arrived at their winning plateau Friday night, defeating Williamsfield there 63-43. Nival Cecil scored 31 of the points. Wyman 9, Dungan and Ashley 6 each, Hurdner and Higgs 8.

Brimfield held a 22-18 lead at half time and 41-34 going into the last period.

In the first game at Touion Brimfield lost 68-35. Wyman and Dungan led with 8 points each. R. Ekena had 6. C. Ekena and Barnes 4 each. Hurdner 2, Miller, Ashley and Higgs each 1.

Elmwood defeated us on our home floor 70-54 Friday night. Wyman led the scoring with 17 points, Cecil 10, Ashley and Dungan 6 each. Barnes and R. Ekena 4 each. Hurdner and Higgs 2 each.

This Friday night will be the Lafayette-Brimfield basketball game at the local gym. The doors will be open at 6:30 p.m. First game starts at 6:45.

Co office in Peoria.

The Pilgrim Fellowship of the Union Church met Jan 9 for their monthly meeting. The officers for this year are Roger Higgs pres; Nancy Emerick, vice pres; Mary McLouth sec-treas.; Jerry Vohland, Worship; Nancy Coon, Recreation. The worship service and business meeting was followed by a recreation period in the basement.

Pilgrim Fellowship at Union Church

The Brimfield News, page 4. 13 Jan 1955. accessed online brimfield.advantage-preservation.com

Loyal Leaders

The Jubilee Loyal Leaders 4H Club held their local achievement and pot luck supper November 16 at the Town House. Forty members, parents and friends attended the affair. Guest speaker was Hugh Ross, county extension agent. After a short business meeting Roger and Arlen Higgs gave their demonstration on ear marking which was presented at the county and state contest. Roger Higgs and Clarence Catton reported on First Aid Camp and Mary Mae Kelly gave a talk on her first year in 4H. Hugh Ross then gave a short talk on the basis for selecting members for county and state 4H awards. Club leader Ronald Slane gave out the premiums for the county 4H show at Princeville along with county and state awards which were received as follows:

County project honor in dairy: Anita Hasselbacher, Jean Felton and Betty Slane.

Sheep Marilyn Jones.

Beef Dennis Porter.

Swine Clarence Catton, Arlen and Roger Higgs.

County Outstanding awards Clarence Catton, Arlen and Roger Higgs

State Outstanding awards Roger and Arlen Higgs.

County Project Honor member award Roger and Arlen Higgs.

The Brimfield News 1 Dec 1955.
accessed online
brimfield.advantage-
preservation.com

Jubilee Loyal Leaders 4H, Future Farmers of America, Salutatorian

Future Farmers

At the FFA meeting May 3, the new officers were installed as follows: president, Bart Nelson; vice president Rolland Ekena; secretary, Larry Dungan; treasurer, Roger Higgs; reporter, Bill Hank; sentinel, Arlen Higgs.

Chapter awards were given to Larry Dungan, poultry; Frank Kingdon farm mechanics; Roger Best, soybeans and swine; Jim Johnson, corn and small grain; Bart Nelson, beef. Roger Higgs received award for Star State Farmer of Section 5

Delegates were elected to attend the state convention, were Bart Nelson and Roger Higgs with Roger Best and Rolland Ekena as alternates.

It was decided that FFA pay the room rent for the delegates and alternates and Mr Cox.

The Brimfield News, page 4. 5
May 1955. accessed online
brimfield.advantage-
preservation.com



Roger Higgs 4H/FFA Hereford steer with corncrib in back. Taken 1953. Photo courtesy of Roger Higgs

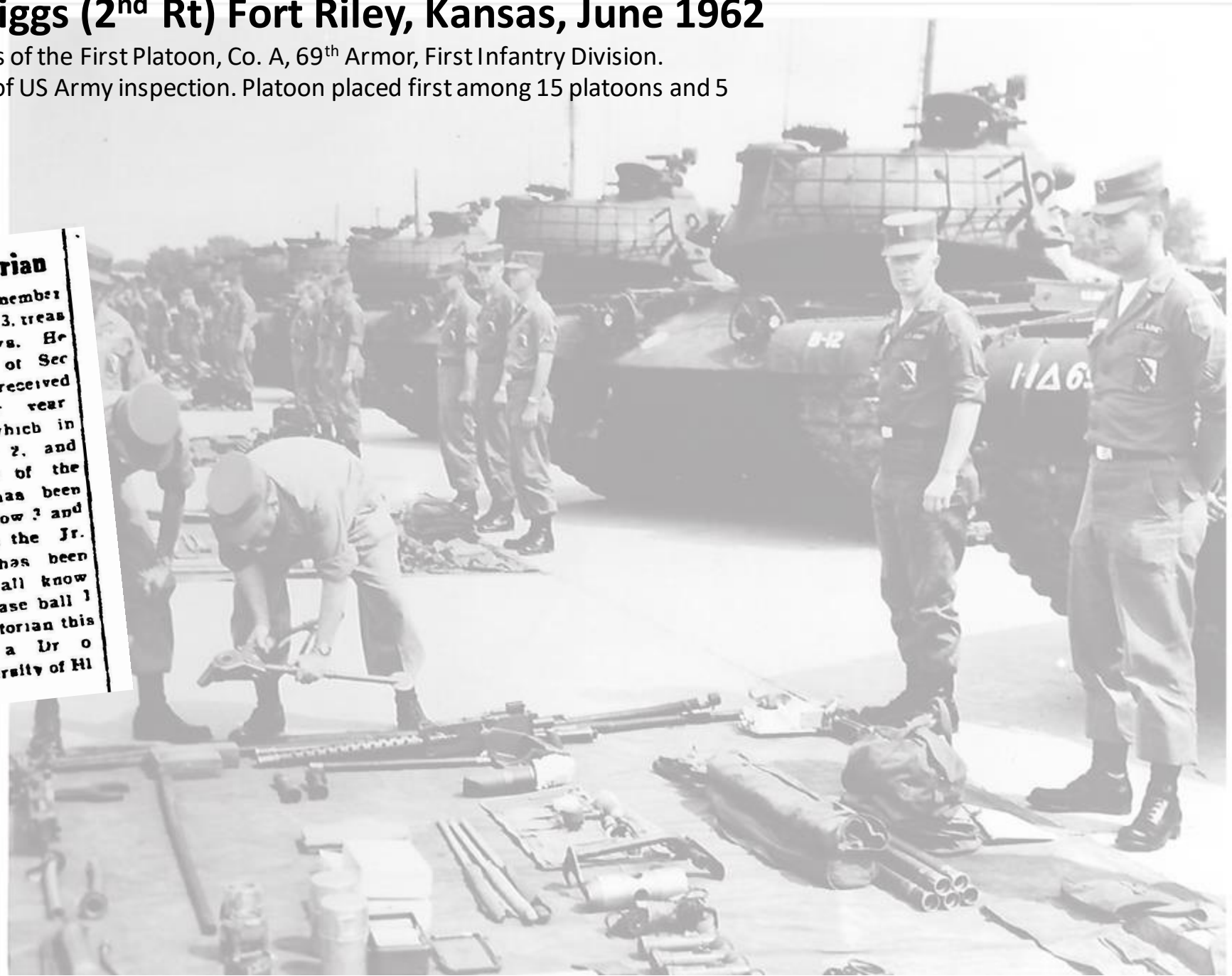
Lt. Roger Higgs (2nd Rt) Fort Riley, Kansas, June 1962

20 men and 5 tanks of the First Platoon, Co. A, 69th Armor, First Infantry Division.
Inspector General of US Army inspection. Platoon placed first among 15 platoons and 5 companies.

R. Higgs, Co-Salutatorian

Roger L. Higgs 18. was a member of FFA for 4 years. was reporter 3. treasurer 4. and Section 5 reporter 4 years. He was made Star State Farmer of Section 5 in his Jr. year. Roger received the DeKalb award his Senior year. He has held 3 class offices which include vice-pres 1. reporter 2. and sec'y 3. Roger is the editor of the Spectator year book and has been sports reporter for the PowWow 3 and 4. He was a member of both the Jr. and Sr. playcasts. Roger has been active in sports as we all know basket ball 1 2. 3. 4; and base ball 1 2. 3. 4. He is the co-salutatorian this year. Roger plans to get a Doctor of Veterinary degree at University of MI

The Brimfield News, page 4,
17 May 1956. accessed
online brimfield.advantage-preservation.com



Grad's class places first
Under the instruction of Dr. Roger Higgs, graduate of Brimfield High School and son of Mr and Mrs. Gerald Higgs, the University of Wisconsin-Platteville team placed first at the 1976 National Collegiate Soils Contest. Higgs received his bachelor's and master's at the University of Illinois and his doctorate at Iowa State. He has been on the faculty at UWP for 10 years. He has coached soil judging teams for four years and his team has qualified for the national contest each year.

The Princeville
Telephone, page 7, 20
May 1976. accessed
online
brimfield.advantage-preservation.com

Photo courtesy of Roger
Higgs



Brimfield Community Company Capitol Stock 1919

Brimfield Historical Society. Capital Stock
\$20,000.00. Geo, Corney one share fully paid and
non-assessable 1 Nov 1919.
Donated by Larry Corney son of Elmer Corney,
Grandson of George Corney

Brimfield Community Company.

Meeting held at Community Building 16 March 1920.

Meeting called to order by Pres. J.C. Moore,
The following officers were then chosen for the ensuing
J.C. Moore, President, L.G. Cady Vice President, O.F. Kelly Sec-
Tr. O.F. Kelly J.C. Moore and D.H. Johnson were chosen
managers for the next year.
The following committees were selected to take care of
Dedication Week festivities -
Monday-Moving Pictures-D.H. Johnson
Tuesday-Home Talent Play-O.F. Kelly, Miss Steel, Miss Maher
Wed.-American Legion, J.C. Moore
Thurs. Supper-L.G. Cady A. Pacey, H.A. Blundy
Friday-Dance-O.F. Kelly
Saturday-Carnival Dr. T.J. Foley, C.M. Travis, D.H. Johnson
Adjourned, D.H. Johnson [signature] sec-tr

Brimfield Historical Society records

MINUTES OF

Directors of the Brimfield Community Co., 1920

MEETING HELD AT Community Bldg.

DATE Mch. 16th HOUR 8 P.M.

Copyrighted, 1906, by A. L. Ringo, Chicago

Meeting called to order by Pres. J.C. Moore,
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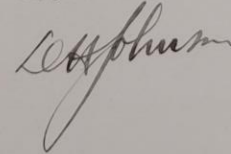
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Thurs. Supper -L.G. Cady A. Pacey, H.A. Blundy

Friday-Dance-O.F. Kelly

Saturday-Carnival Dr. T.J. Foley, C.M. Travis, D.H. Johnson.

Adjourned.

 Sec.-Tr.

Brimfield Community Building Gains Nationwide attention

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KANSAS MUNICIPALITIES

Brimfield, Ill., Moves Into Its New Community House

By D. H. Johnson, *Secretary The Brimfield Commercial Club, Brimfield, Ill.*

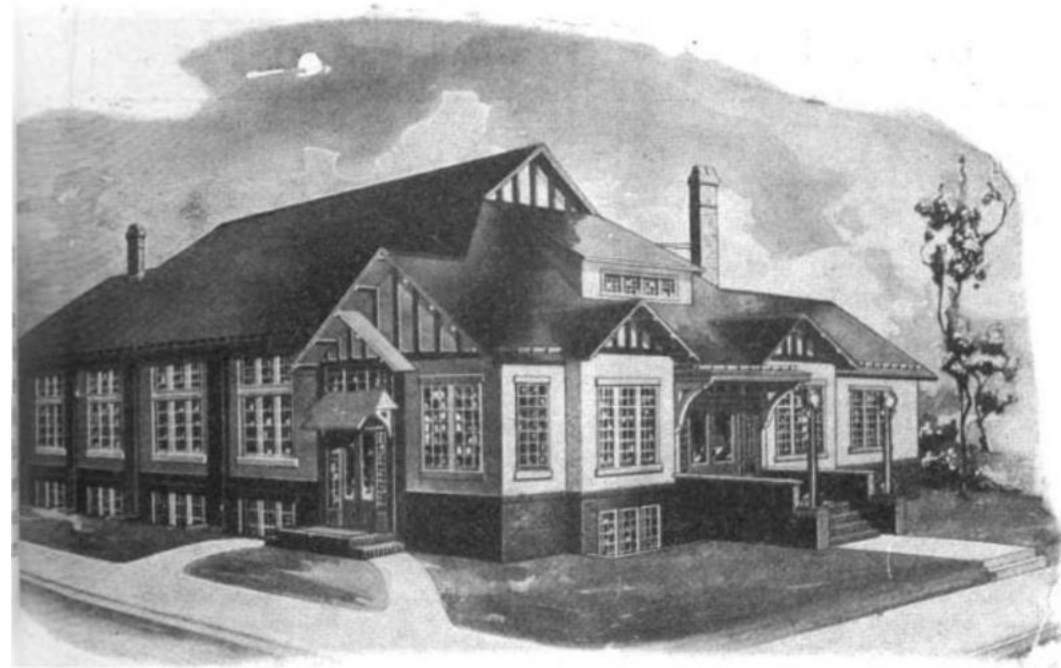
Brimfield, Ill., a town of only 600 people has constructed a community house at a cost of \$30,000.

The **Brimfield Community Building** is the result of the awakened community feeling that our boys and girls are entitled to the best that can be provided in the way of legitimate and wholesome amusement and entertainment. A stock company was formed and incorporated for \$20,000.00, no stock holder being privileged to hold more than ten shares. This assured a wide distribution of the stock and a very general feeling of personal ownership and interest in the building. The stockholders at present number about two hundred men and women, holding from one to ten shares each.

Kansas Municipalities, Vol V, Sept 1919 #9, page 8,9 found online on google books,
https://www.google.com/books/edition/Kansas_Government_Journal_and_Kansas_Mun/sQRGAQAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=%22brimfield%20community%20building%22&pg=RA14-PA8&printsec=frontcover

KANSAS MUNICIPALITIES

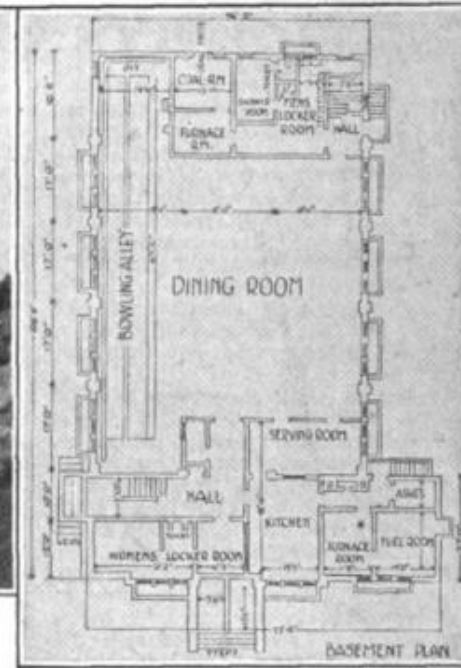
9



Brimfield's Community House



This is Why the People of Brimfield Don't Have to Go Away From Home for Their Good Times. They Find Them in This Modern Community House



IN A GROVE of trees on the road from Peoria to Brimfield, Illinois, was a squat shanty of rough boards, a popular dancing pavilion.

Late one night, in the fall of 1917, on the way to his home in Brimfield, O. F. Kelly came within sight and sound of that pavilion, saw its lanterns gleaming amid the trees, heard its squeaking fiddles and the loud laughter of men and girls, saw the

earnestly at the two young men there before him.

"Here's where we are at fault," con-

This Illinois Town Knows How to Keep the Young Folks at Home

By A. B. Macdonald

sentiment out of it and put it on a basis of dollars

and cents, I'm here to tell you that if the

place, mind you; a modern, up-to-date place that will furnish entertainment to old and young."

"How will we get it?" asked Johnson. "A thing like that will cost like sixty. Where is the money coming from?"

"I'll show you," said Kelly, and he called his stenographer in and dictated the following:

"We, the undersigned, do agree and



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O. F. Kelly, the Man Who Put Across Brimfield's Community House

O. F. Kelly, the Man who Put Across Brimfield's Community House

WAR MEMORIAL FEATURE.



FIG. 20.—Community house at Brimfield, Ill.

Dedicated in 1919 in a village of 700 population as a memorial to the soldiers who served in the World War. A well-planned building, serving a town and country community of 2,000 people. Building unfurnished cost \$23,654, and the plant was financed by the issuance of 600 shares of stock to 265 holders, one-half being farmers, and a loan of \$10,000. A motion-picture machine, part of the equipment, helps maintain the building. Seating capacity of auditorium and balcony is 1,200. Building has a fireplace, two heating plants, electric and ventilating fans, air pressure tank, and electric lights.

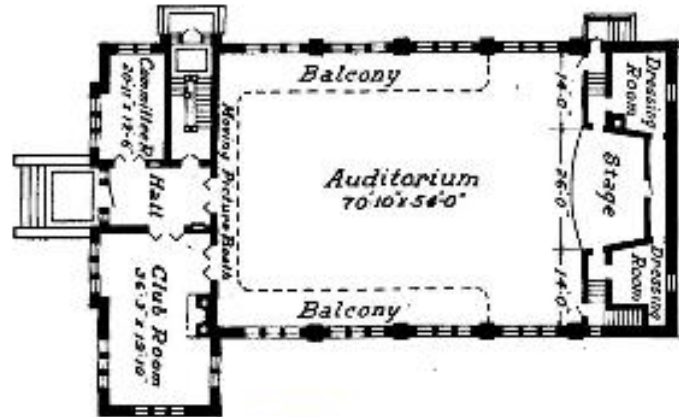


FIG. 21.—Floor plan of Brimfield building. (By courtesy of Robert J. Hotchkiss, architect.)

FARMERS' BULLETIN 1173
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

PLANS OF RURAL COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

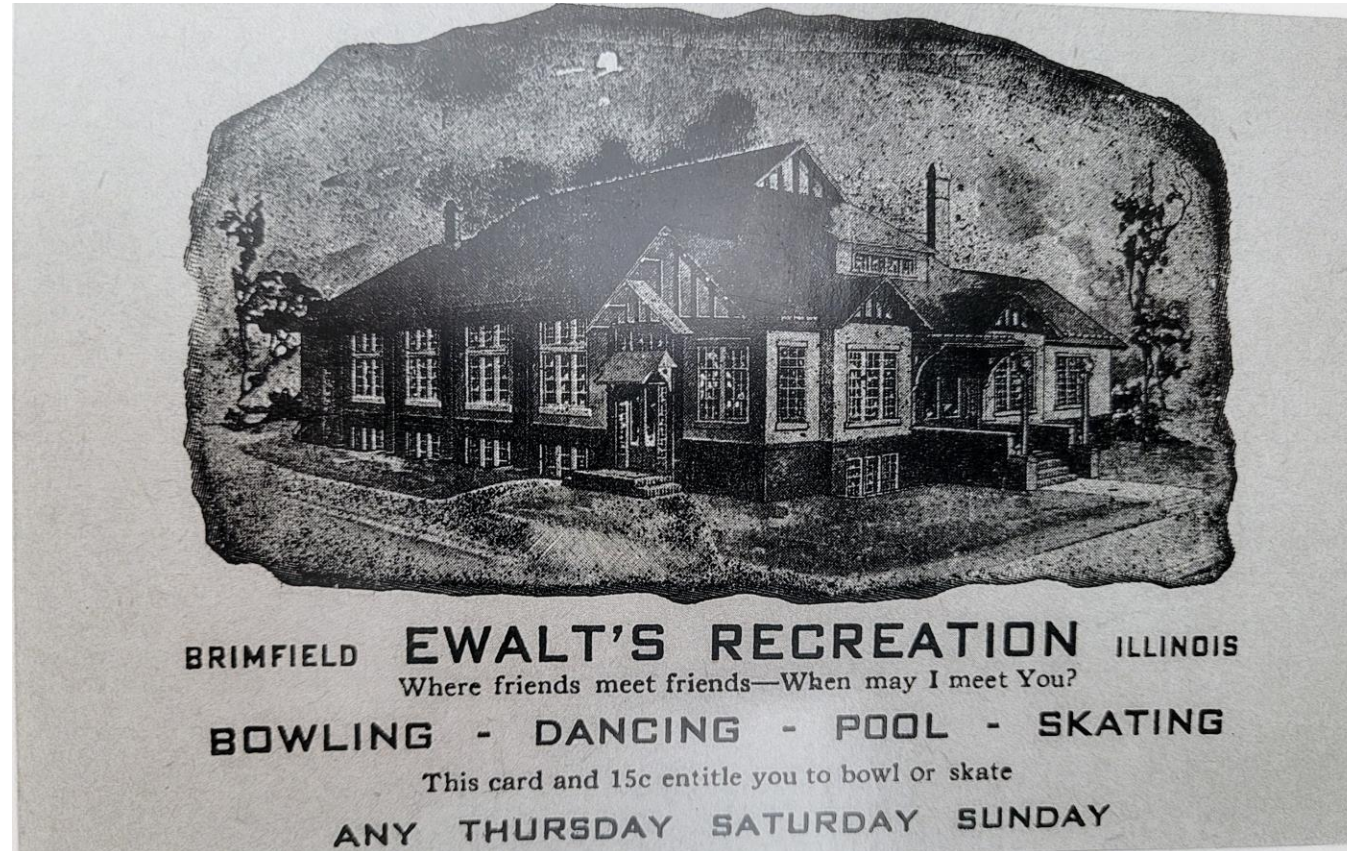
Plans of Rural Community Buildings.



FIG. 22.—Basement plan of Brimfield building.

Farmer's Bulletin, 1173 pp 18,19, 1921, Publication of US Department of Agriculture found on UNT Digital Library, <https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc3492/?q=%22Farmers%20Bulletin%22%201173>

Ewalt's Recreation



Postcard photo courtesy of Brimfield Area Historical Society

Bowling Team 1950-1951



Top Row: Norma
Harlan, Bernice Bragg
Blundy, Unknown,
Bernice Purcell
Johnson, Aileen
Bollman Corney
Front Row: John R.
Powers, Donald (Dutch)
Corney, unknown,
unknown, Raymond
Blundy, Bob Miars

Photo courtesy of the Brimfield
Historical Society.

Ewalt's Recreation

Skating and Bowling
and Dancing and Pool
Label on photo says Recreation
Building

Photo courtesy of Charolette Woodrow
Fletcher



Recreation Building, Brimfield, Illinois